
National HIV Testing Day 2006

“Mobilizing Communities to Access HIV Testing, Prevention and Care: A Positive Perspective.”

June 27, 2006 marked the twelfth annual observance of National HIV Testing Day (NHTD) sponsored by the National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The theme of NHTD 2006 was “Mobilizing Communities to Access HIV Testing, Prevention and Care: A Positive Perspective,” underscoring the importance of reaching out to persons who are at risk so they may have the opportunity to know their HIV status and learn about access to both care and prevention services. Early detection of HIV infection empowers individuals to take control of their lives by beginning early treatment, which can both prolong and improve the quality of one’s life. Knowledge of one’s serostatus also enables the individual to take control of their own potentially high-risk behaviors. By knowing their status, individuals have the power to alter their behaviors and take steps to protect themselves and their partners from infection.

Bureau of HIV/AIDS (BHA) staff participated in local NHTD activities in Leon and Gadsden counties, as well as a press conference in Duval County highlighting the success of the Duval CHD mobile HIV testing program. In addition, statewide activities were promoted on the DOH “We Make the Change” website and the DOH, BHA Internet web site. A map of Florida was posted which allowed the user to click on a specific county to display a listing of all of the registered NHTD events taking place in each county. A clock that counted down the days to NHTD also enhanced the website.

The bureau took advantage of the popularity of the colored, vinyl promotional wristbands by distributing nearly 10,000 wristbands to community partners and county health departments throughout the state. The red bands were inscribed with the message “I know, do you?” in English, Spanish and Creole and were used to promote NHTD activities as well as an incentive item to either encourage people to get tested or to return for their results. The wristbands proved to be very popular among teens and young adults in Florida’s communities, and encouraged many among that age group to get tested. Local county health departments and community partners provided additional promotional items such as food, pens, flashlights and prepaid phone cards.

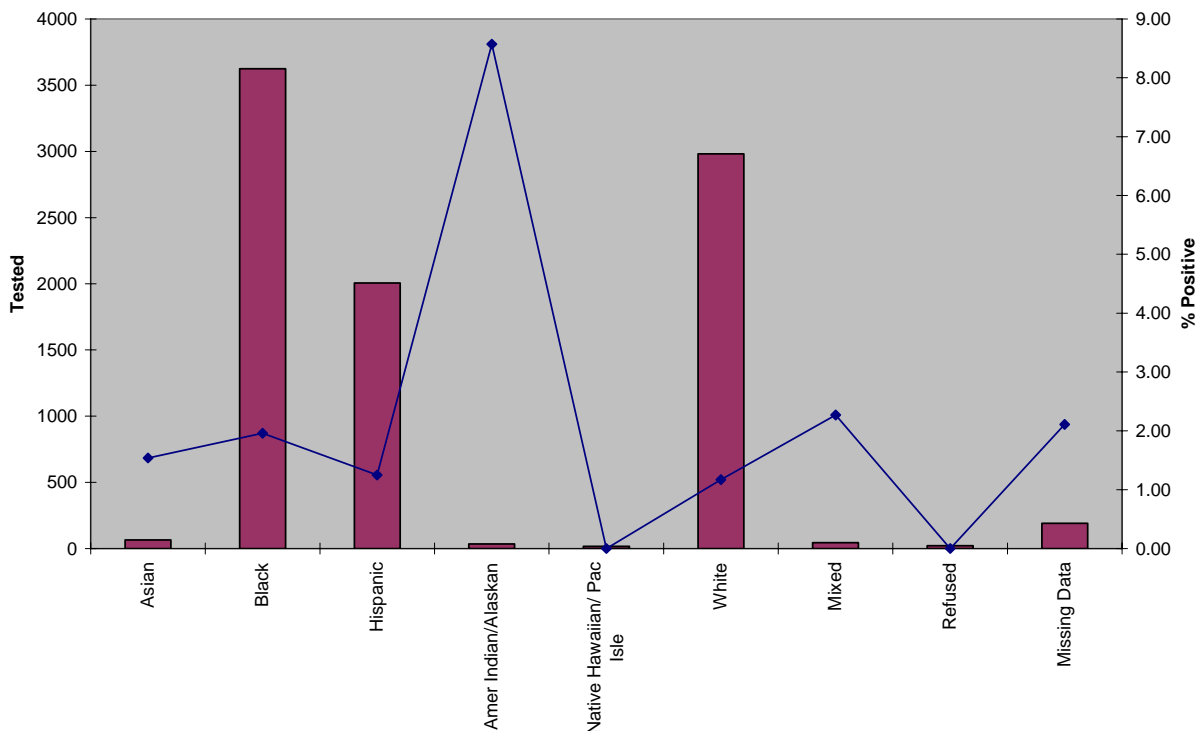
NHTD 2006 was also enhanced by the expansion of rapid HIV testing throughout the state. Rapid testing, which delivers results in as little as twenty minutes, was available from several community-based organizations and county health departments. Organizations offering rapid testing found that the convenience of receiving same-day results was a major incentive for testing.

Perhaps one of the greatest achievements of NHTD was the collaboration between DOH, BHA staff, county health departments and community-based partners. In addition to testing, collaboration on all levels is one of the greatest weapons in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Local county health departments collaborated with local organizations in providing manpower, incentives and testing supplies for NHTD events, and many local organizations were encouraged by the support and commitment of bureau staff in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Participation in National HIV Testing Day was very high and activities were well attended across the entire state. Statewide events included: free testing at expanded test sites and outreach locations; increased hours of operation for additional access to testing opportunities; health fairs that offered additional testing services such as blood pressure screening; community fun days; media events; and outreach activities that targeted high-risk and traditionally underserved minority communities.

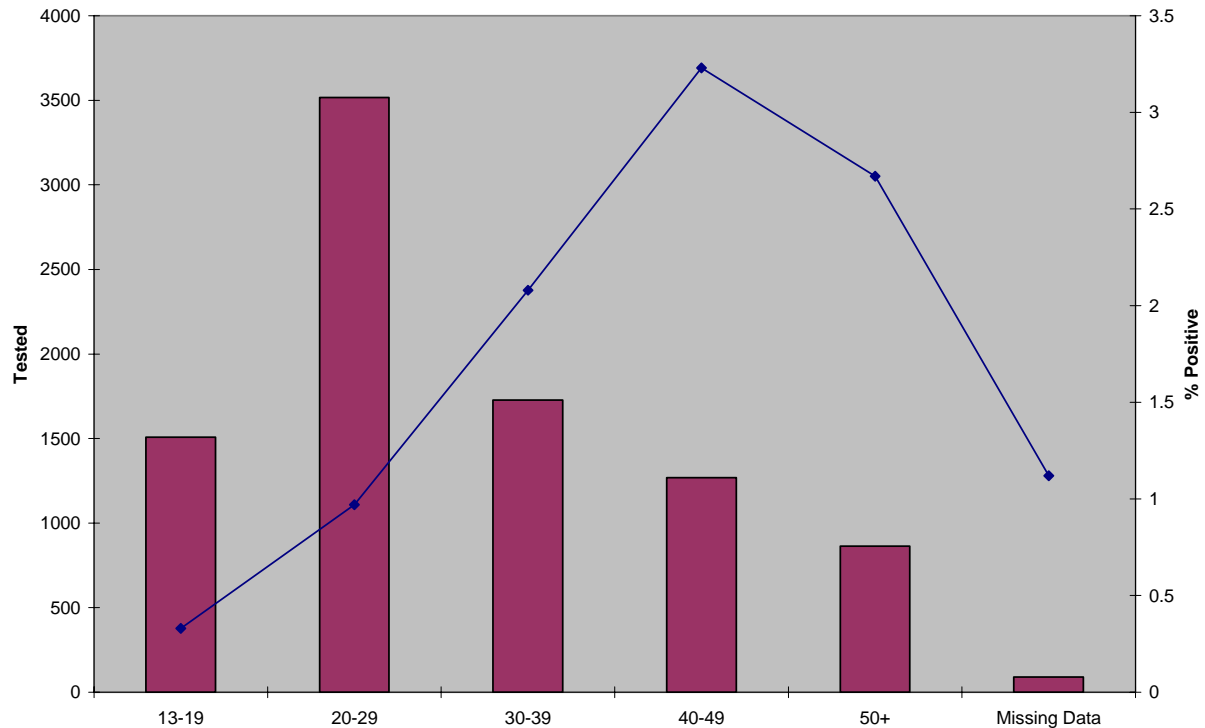
According to data collected in the statewide HIV Counseling and Testing System, approximately 1,972 tests were conducted on NHTD, 44 of which were positive (2.2%). This includes all tests conducted that day by registered testing sites, not only those conducted in conjunction with special events. A total of 8,985 HIV tests were performed in Florida during the week of NHTD (June 26-July 2), 140 of which were positive (1.6%). There was a 57.2% increase in testing during the week of NHTD, compared to 5,714 HIV tests conducted during the previous week (June 19-25). In the week following NHTD the number of tests performed decreased to 5,053. However, this week included July 4. The positivity rate that week was slightly lower (1.7%) than the week of NHTD.

Figure 1. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, by Race/Ethnicity, NHTD Week, 2006



Of the 8,985 tests administered during the week of NHTD, 40.3 % (3,624) identified themselves as non-Hispanic blacks and 33.2% (2,982) as non-Hispanic whites. Hispanics accounted for 22.3% (2,006) of the tests administered. The remaining 5.0% (449) of the tests were missing racial/ethnic data, or were recorded in the “other” category. The positivity rates were 1.9% for blacks, 1.2% for whites, and 1.3% for Hispanics (see Figure 1). Blacks accounted for the majority of the positive tests (51.0%), as compared to whites, (25.0%) and Hispanics (18.0%)

Figure 2. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, by Age Group, NHTD Week, 2006



Persons between the ages of 20-29 represented the largest portion of HIV tests among age groups, and accounted for 34 positive tests. The positivity rate for this age group was 1.0%. In contrast, persons aged 30-39 represented the second largest group of HIV tests but yielded a 2.1% positivity rate. The highest positivity rate among all age groups was 3.23%. This was found among those 40-49. The 50+ age group recorded 22 positive tests, yielding a positivity rate of 2.7%. There were 89 tests with missing age data (see Figure 2).

Three testing methods were used during NHTD week: 5,604 blood tests (62.4%), 2,347 oral tests (26.1%), and 1,034 rapid tests (11.5%) were done that week. The majority of the tests (60%) were administered to females; however, males accounted for the majority (64.0%) of the positive tests (data not shown). The male population had an overall positivity rate of 2.9%, as compared to 0.8% for females. There were 154 HIV tests with missing gender data. The majority of HIV tests administered during the week of NHTD were to persons who identified heterosexual sex as their highest risk behavior. The positivity rate of that risk group was 0.6%. Persons who had sex with an HIV-infected person had the highest positivity rate, 10.0% or 14/140. There were 421 tests with no identifiable/missing risk exposure data.

Figure 3. Number Tested and Positivity Rate, NHTD Week, 2001-2006

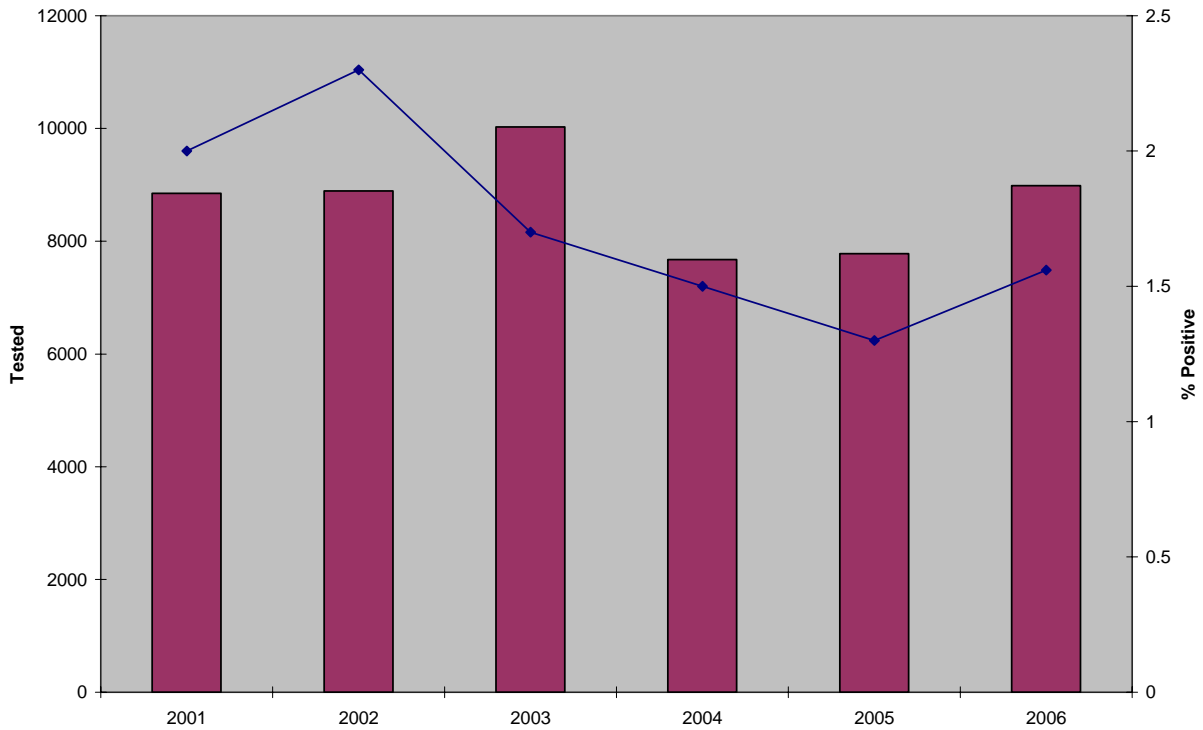


Figure 3 shows the number of tests done and positivity rates from 2001 to 2006 for the week of NHTD. There was a 6.8% increase in the number of tests administered between 2005 and 2006. Also, there was an 8.5% increase in the number of positive tests.

Table 1 shows testing data from 1995 to 2006 for the week before and the week of NHTD. In general, higher numbers of tests have been recorded the week of NHTD as compared to the preceding week. In 2006, this increase (57.2%) was greater than observed in past years. Higher positivity rates were reported in 1996, 2002, and 2006 during the week of NHTD, whereas in other years the positivity rates were equal or lower.

Table 1. HIV testing the week before, and during the week of NHTD, 1995-2006.

Time of Tests	Year											
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
June 27, Day of Week	Tues	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sun	Mon	Tues
June 17-23												
Number of Tests	4,813	4,962	4,695	4,825	4,694	4,828	5,490	5,544	5,812	5,943	6,218	5,714
Number of Positives	110	105	105	120	108	111	143	106	133	126	109	86
Percent Positive	2.30%	2.10%	2.20%	2.50%	2.30%	2.30%	2.60%	2.00%	2.30%	2.10%	1.80%	1.5%
June 24-30												
Number of Tests	5,004	5,169	5,300	5,409	6,136	6,972	8,763	9,318	10,302	7,826	8,412	8,985
Number of Positives	114	130	111	94	138	122	174	211	174	116	129	140
Percent Positive	2.30%	2.50%	2.10%	1.70%	2.20%	1.70%	2.00%	2.30%	1.60%	1.50%	1.50%	1.6%
<i>Comparison between the week of NHTD and the previous week</i>												
Number of Tests	191	207	605	584	1,442	2,144	3,273	3,774	4,490	1,883	2,194	3,271
Number of HIV+ Tests	4	25	6	-26	30	11	31	105	41	-10	20	54

A comparison of testing levels for the week of NHTD in 2005 and 2006 by area is shown in Table 2. There was a 6.8% increase in the number of tests from 2005, from 8,412 to 8,985. The area with the greatest decrease is 11B with a 58.2% drop in the number tested from 2005.

Table 2. Comparison of Testing by Area, NHTD Week, 2005 and 2006

Area	Tested 2006	Tested 2005	% Change in # Tested from 2005	Positivity Rate 2006	Positivity Rate 2005
1	296	311	-4.8%	0.70%	0.30%
2A	303	189	7.4%	1.55%	0.50%
2B	419	416	0.7%	0.97%	0.50%
3	420	375	12.0%	1.10%	1.10%
4	717	597	20.1%	2.13%	1.20%
5	502	406	23.6%	1.04%	1.20%
6	720	695	3.6%	1.90%	1.90%
7	905	734	23.3%	1.77%	1.40%
8	446	502	-11.2%	1.13%	0.60%
9	722	656	10.1%	1.39%	2.30%
10	782	1,407	-44.4%	3.72%	2.00%
11A	801	978	-18.1%	4.02%	3.10%
11B	338	91	-58.2%	2.70%	1.10%
12	199	265	-24.9%	0.51%	0.80%
13	386	286	35.0%	0.29%	0.30%
14	335	241	39.0%	1.03%	2.50%
15	437	263	66.2%	0.69%	0.00%
Total	8,985	8,412	6.8%	1.6%	1.5%

Area 1-Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton
Area 2A-Holmes, Washington, Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, Gulf
Area 2B-Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor
Area 3-Hamilton, Suwannee, Lafayette, Dixie, Columbia, Gilchrist, Levy, Union, Bradford, Alachua
Area 4-Baker, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns
Area 5-Pasco, Pinellas
Area 6- Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee
Area 7-Seminole, Orange, Osceola, Brevard
Area 8-Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Desoto, Glades, Hendry
Area 9-Palm Beach
Area 10-Broward
Area 11A-Miami-Dade
Area 11B-Monroe
Area 12-Flagler, Volusia
Area 13-Citrus, Marion, Sumter, Lake
Area 14-Polk, Hardee, Highlands
Area 15-Okeechobee, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin

Florida conducted a successful National HIV Testing Day campaign in 2006. A significant number of people were tested as a result of local community and health department efforts, meeting one of the major goals of the campaign and the Bureau of HIV/AIDS, which is to increase the number of persons in Florida who know their HIV status. Participants in this year's campaign should be commended for their contributions to this success. Lessons learned from this year will be used to strengthen Florida's future NHTD efforts.