

Governor Pat Quinn Approves Bill to Create Illinois State Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS Prevention Messages Targeting Youth



The Children's Place Association



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(Springfield , IL) – September 2, 2009. Governor Pat Quinn last week approved legislation that creates a new state advisory council to help state government develop effective [HIV/AIDS prevention](#) messages targeting youth.

The legislation, House Bill 3974 sponsored by State Representative Cynthia Soto (D-Chicago) and State Senator William Delgado (D-Chicago) would create the Advisory Council on Youth HIV/AIDS Prevention Messages to advise the Illinois Department of Public Health on effective prevention messages to deter youth from engaging in risky behaviors that lead to HIV/AIDS infections.

“The percentage of Illinois HIV/AIDS infections that is represented by youth has been growing enormously over the last eight years, and that growth, in part, represents a failure of [HIV/AIDS prevention messages](#) to effectively reach youth” said Cathy Krieger, President & CEO of The Children’s Place Association based in Chicago’s Humboldt Park neighborhood.

“We are grateful to Governor Quinn that he recognizes the problem of youth HIV/AIDS infections and is acting to address the problem.”

On February 27, 2009, at the 2nd annual Illinois Youth & HIV/AIDS Forum sponsored by The Children’s Place Association, the Illinois Department of Public Health presented data that revealed that the youth proportion of reported HIV/AIDS infections in Illinois has grown from 10% in 2000 to 20% in 2008—a 100% increase.

"This is a staggering increase," said Krieger.

In addition to the IDPH data, new research was presented by Dr. Dexter Voisin, an Associate Professor, University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration that examined the attitudes of Chicago-area college students in seven focus groups, including blacks, Latinos, whites, males, females, and gay men—regarding HIV/AIDS prevention messages.

The research findings revealed all groups reported a significant reduction in the intensity, range, and the length of media messages on HIV prevention and testing over the last 5 years.

More specifically, the research showed that young blacks and Latinos in Chicago tend to distrust most sources of government information on HIV/AIDS prevention. And young Latina women in Chicago fear getting an HIV/AIDS test out of concern that they may be labeled negatively as "fast" women.

Additionally, all respondents said they would be likely to take their parents seriously if they spoke to them about sex and HIV/AIDS transmission.

Of the 50 students who participated in the focus group research—only one had been tested for HIV/AIDS.

"The bottom line is that [AIDS awareness](#) initiatives and media prevention messages targeted at young people in Chicago – and African-Americans and Latinos in particular – are not working," said Krieger. "We think the advisory council approved by Governor Quinn is a good step to address the problem."

The Children's Place Association is Illinois' only [child welfare agency](#) exclusively dedicated to the care of HIV/AIDS infected children and families in Illinois.

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