

State of Tennessee Coordinated School Health Train-the-Trainers Cadre Introduction

Charge: Prevention of HIV acquisition among Tennessee's school children and adolescents

Statistic: Tennessee is ranked #11 in acquisition of HIV

History

A ten-year HIV Prevention Strategic Plan developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) helped direct US policy and programs through 2010. Reviewing the past decade of HIV prevention programs, the CDC stated concern over complacency that has developed since medical treatment allows persons who are seropositive to live many years with the virus. Given that more people are living with HIV and that many of those individuals are unaware of their HIV status, the risk of transmission and acquisition of HIV is greater than in the previous decade.

In 2010, the White House tasked the Office of National AIDS Policy with developing a *National HIV/AIDS Strategy* with the first of three primary goals being reducing the number of people who become infected with HIV. The vision for the *National HIV/AIDS Strategy* is:

The United States will become a place where new HIV infections are rare...

The *National HIV/AIDS Strategy* white paper notes that more than 56,000 persons in the United States acquire HIV every year and more than 1.1 million of its citizens are living with HIV. The United States represents a multi-cultural population of all ages and levels of education. Thus, to be most effective, prevention programs should be informed educational interventions that incorporate combinations of approaches and prevention strategies appropriate for the populations we are addressing. Among those most at risk by virtue of their lack of basic information and understanding of HIV and its transmission are our school-age children and youth.

The CDC posited as major goals of an effective strategic plan: 1. to prevent new HIV infections and, 2. to protect the health of those already infected. At the state level, Tennessee's Coordinated School Health Program has created a Train-the-Trainers Cadre to continue HIV prevention strategies through bringing awareness and knowledge of HIV transmission and risky behaviors to students across the state. In order to reach students in rural, suburban, and urban areas of the state, the program trains and supports Local Education Agency (LEA) personnel as they work directly with staff and students.

Cadre Goal:

The goal of the Train-the-Trainers Cadre is Prevention of Acquisition of HIV through training Local Education Agency staff and faculty in providing Tennessee students with current information about HIV, HIV transmission, at-risk behaviors and how to avoid risk of acquisition of HIV.

Gloria Hamilton, Ph.D.

Director, Train-the-Trainers Cadre