

Re ACT-Believe

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay Newsletter
January/February 1989 Volume III, Issue I

Educators!

Posters

for

kids!

See inside.



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Condoms and Cars

Reprinted with permission from the AIDS Committee of Windsor.

It's become the leading cause of death in young people.

It can be avoided completely only by abstaining. Yet few are willing to make that sacrifice and choose rather to live with the risk. Most efforts to contain this epidemic focus on reducing the danger to an acceptable level.

Those words refer to traffic accidents. They are also familiar terms for describing the AIDS epidemic.

There are those who argue that the only way to stop AIDS is to promote abstinence. No level of risk is acceptable.

If they were consistent in their logic they would also be campaigning to ban the automobile. Even with all the emphasis on seat belts, air bags, speed limits and drunk driving laws, the highways are hardly a risk free environment.

The usual criticism of condoms is that their record as a birth control device is less than reassuring. An often quoted statistic is that over the course of a year about 10% of the heterosexual couples using condoms will experience a pregnancy. Over several years the risk is compounded. If the chances of getting AIDS are the same as having a baby abstaining starts to look very good indeed.

Condoms are neither failsafe nor foolproof. For the most part they don't work because people forget to use them or damage them through improper use. And sometimes condoms are poorly manufactured. Why then do public health officials, health care workers and community AIDS organizations rely so heavily on condom promotion?

The answer lies in the distinction between conception and infection.

One sperm cell, and only one, is needed to fertilize an ovum. The reproductive process is designed to facilitate fertilization, with millions of sperm cells contained in every ejaculation of semen.

On the other hand AIDS is a difficult disease to contract sexually. Viral infections must occur in sufficient number and frequency to overwhelm the immune response. That threshold varies with the source of the infection and the health of the people involved.

The levels of HIV in semen and vaginal fluids are low and often can not be detected in persons known to be infected. Studies have shown that the sexual partners of people with HIV often remain uninfected over long periods of time despite repeated exposures through unprotected

intercourse. In comparison the exchange of blood through sharing needles provides a far more efficient means of infection.

In order to break the epidemic of sexually transmitted AIDS, condoms don't need to be 100% effective. In fact even a leaking condom may sometimes be sufficient in keeping the amount of exposure below the threshold of infection. Realistically however, the goal is to make HIV infection an isolated event, not to eliminate all risk.

So far this strategy appears to be working in the one segment of society that is taking safer sex seriously - the gay community. Rates of sexually transmitted disease and the incidence of HIV transmission have been reduced far beyond what was believed possible. And this has happened despite the large numbers already infected.

Abstinence will always be an option. We can choose not to have sex or not to travel the highways. But most of us will continue to take chances with our lives, after making reasonable concessions to safety.

Jim Monk

Hi, my name is **Christine Mather**. (just call me **Chris**). I am the new **Support Services Coordinator** at ACT-B.

"What's a Support Services Coordinator?" That's a good question: one for which we don't yet have a full answer. Basically, I see my job as providing "psycho-social" support (O.K. I'll try and make that the last jargon I use) to P.W.A.s, their families, friends and other care givers. Figuring out just what services should be developed to deliver that support is the first task the **Support Services Committee** and I face. Of course, we'll be reviewing what has been done in other communities, but we'd like to begin by hosting an organizational/brainstorming meeting for anyone concerned about AIDS. We can anticipate that from this meeting will come ideas, direction and guidance - so start thinking. We'll be advertising and explaining this meeting more thoroughly closer to the event.

That's a description of my position now for some information about me. I am an immigrant from England and have been in Thunder Bay for 13 years. For the last eight years I have been a Social Worker and have worked in several local agencies. I very much enjoy living in Canada and especially like getting out into the bush.

If there's any kind of assistance I can offer you or those you care about, from counselling to negotiating with government agencies, feel free to give me a call or drop in at the office.

In our next newsletter will be a column from me about stress and stress management techniques.

Chris Mather H.B.S.W.

ACT-B Staff

Linda Gambie	Volunteer Coordinator
Darcia Kohuska	Education Coordinator
Lawrence Korhonen	Office Manager
Karen Maki	Fundraising Coordinator
Chris Mather	Support Services Coordinator
Eileen Parker	Communications Coordinator
Michael Sobota	Executive Director

Karen Maki and Eileen Parker are now with us as **Fundraising Coordinator** and **Communications/Outreach Coordinator** respectively.

Karen was a member of the ACT-B Board of Directors. She will coordinate and help plan and implement the private fundraising of ACT-B in conjunction with the Fundraising Committee. This will include organizing bingos, special events and making foundation and corporate approaches.

Eileen has been with us previously, since July, on a CEIC Section 25 job creation program. She will be continuing her work in communications, producing posters, pamphlets, our newsletter and working with the media and will also be coordinating our North Western Ontario **Outreach Program**.

We miss Donna and Vicki already!

Donna was our Project Coordinator and Vicki was our Administrative Assistant on a CEIC Section 25 job creation program.

Each with her own special brand of humour and unique insight, they brightened up the office and our lives. Donna has moved on to another job and Vicki is enjoying the Florida winter. We miss them!

ACT-B Board of Directors

David Belrose	President
Deb White	Vice-President
Norma Proctor	Treasurer
Terry Bryant	Secretary
George Arnold	Director
Rick Atkinson	Director
Michael Chan	Director
Carl Gray	Director
Betty Kruzick	Director
John McDonald	Director
Jeanette Munshaw	Director
Barbara Reid	Director

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Massage & the Acquired Immune Deficiency

by William V. Roberts

It was not easy to begin massage work with P.W.A.s. I found no resistance in myself, especially after checking with others who were already working in this area. However some friends were not happy with the idea. This led to some heated discussions (!) and a procedure that seemed to satisfy everyone involved. Everyone is involved. Let me put out some of my experience and I hope, some useful ideas.

I'll make two things clear at the beginning. Massage is a laying on of hands, a caring person 'taking care' of another. This, in itself, is a healing process at least as old as the Bible and certainly something that everyone can do.

The second point is that there is no need to adjust the approach of massage for a person with AIDS or other related dis-eases. There are special situations to be aware of, however you must be aware of any one's special circumstances before and as you work on them. And you must decide to work.

It also seems important for any massaging person to not take on the dis-ease of a person they are working on. To do so, I find, drains energy, gives headaches and ends further sessions. I prefer to look at the massage person as a

conduit or channel for any healing process that is at work, and an unplugged drain for tensions to pass off and thru. Leaving no residual. This means I must clear my head. I found that washing before a session, burning cedar with a window cracked to clear the working space, shaking the hands off when they feel heavy, taking breaks when needed (by both people!), a glass of good water and a light heart worked quite well for myself. At times I use music, however I'll mention that later.

Relax!

For the P.W.A. there are some other aspects I feel are important. Nervousness! Yours at least, and this may be the first time this person receives a massage. Check this out with any person you work on, and give some careful thought to the fear that may be in someone who is quite possibly facing their death. In the case of Kaposi's Sarcoma, there may be darkened areas of skin (like bruises) or open lesions. I exercise the same caution as I would around bruises and wounds. Very gently over the bruise and leave the wound alone. The hands can be passed over the areas, without touching, with probably the same effect. The care is more important than the actual contact.

Joints may be quite stiff. Gentle manipulation using the comfortable range of motion. I let the person tell me if something hurts. My aim is relaxation and normalization

of body functions.

Many, if not most relaxation tapes are just plain dumb and a waste of money! Listen before you buy. The most useful ones I've found are simply sounds - oceans/crickets/frogs/birds and music that is not climactic. Stuff that moves easily (and maybe exotically or eccentrically) as you would like the body to move.

There is a lot to talk about here and maybe I can go into another article. I don't want to leave without mentioning two possibly important items. Tickling. Not a lot! and not at the end! (Check out the situation with the person first) And just holding the head with both hands and allowing the complete relaxation.* Sometimes a deep sigh will indicate the release, and other times a snoring sound! That's all for now, please feel free to contact me.

* Emotional Stress Release points on the head, check out a Touch for Health book or a Naturopath.

William Roberts is a long standing volunteer with ACT-B. He is a trained Touch For Health practitioner, a masseur, a teacher of T'ai-Chi and plants trees.

For more information on the healing properties of massage, stop by the ACT-B Resource Centre Library at 285 Bay St.

The Case For Early Intervention

PART 2: TYPES OF INTERVENTION & ATTITUDE

In the first part of this series, we reported the Federal Government's revised guidelines for the use of AZT.

As more has become known about this drug and how to appropriately administer it, AZT has shown itself to be an effective way to slow the replication of HIV in many infected individuals. For others, AZT may not be effective or appropriate. Should you use AZT if you are HIV +? That is a decision that should wholly rest in your own hands. The decision is best made by knowing and understanding what your current health status is, in consultation with a good, AIDS aware physician. It could also be beneficial to talk with a counselor at your local AIDS committee.

The first step in making any decision about treatment concerns, is knowing what your status is. This is the primary reason for individuals to consider taking the HIV antibody test. In a future article we will present the case for being tested.

TYPES OF INTERVENTION:

Five general categories of intervention are currently available: 1. general health maintenance, 2. holistic or complementary therapies, 3. antiviral medicine, 4. immuneododulating medicines and 5. preventive medicine against

opportunistic infections.

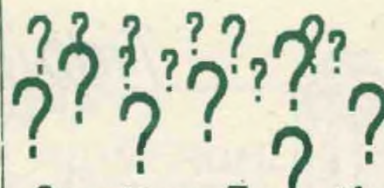
Martin Delaney, coauthor of *Strategies for Survival: The Gay Men's Health Manual for the Age of AIDS*, wrote in a February, 1989 article "The biggest mistake we can make in exploring these approaches is to assume that we must choose one, as if it were an election campaign. No singular method of intervention is sufficient on its own."

A traditional, simplistic approach to health usually went something like this: if I get sick, go to a doctor and s/he will fix it. It is a common attitudinal approach that gives power over to trained professionals, eases us of the burdens of responsibility, and - for the most part - is usually effective. Modern medicine has developed allot of "fixes".

AIDS knocks out the support for this attitude completely. There is no "fix", no magic bullet that provides a single treatment or cure.

At the same time, understanding that there are five useful ways to begin early intervention points toward a new attitudinal model, one of taking personal responsibility for decision making about our health, in partnership with skilled resources.

In future articles of this series, we will discuss the case for HIV antibody testing, new treatments, and cautions to bear in mind about interventions.



4.

Questions From the Phoneline

Q: If someone I work with has AIDS, can I catch it from them?

A: Unless you had unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse, or shared intravenous needles with them, there is no way you could be exposed to the *HIV virus. **You can not get AIDS or HIV infection from casual contact.**

You can't get it from sneezing, touching, kissing, brushing by, sharing a phone etc. In fact, you are of more risk to the person with AIDS. When one has AIDS, their immune system is suppressed, so they become more susceptible to illnesses such as colds and flus. This isn't good for the person with AIDS, as these simple illnesses become hard to fight off. If you work with someone who has AIDS, the best thing you can do is learn something about AIDS so that you can better support your colleague. Don't be afraid of that person - don't be afraid to touch. A hug can do wonders.

Q: Can I get AIDS from having Oral Sex?

A: There is a low risk of HIV transmission from oral sex as the HIV virus is found in

Continued on Page 10



Tidbits...

To all AIDS Committees _____

We have found bubble gum flavoured dental dams. To order write to:

Ash Temple
615 Erin Street
Winnipeg, MB, R3G 2W1
1-800-665-8985

We have multicoloured condoms in bright green, cherry red, canary yellow and electric blue. We ordered them from:

Safetex Corporation
1100 Valley Brook Avenue
Lyndhurst, New Jersey
07071

As I write this *Tidbit* I am feeding my little baby Sarah. Yes, I'm at work and so is my 2 month old baby!

This would have been unheard of 20 years ago, but the times are changing.

It's been a positive experience for everyone. I have been able to return to work when Sarah is still very young. I haven't had to face early separation from my baby or my other baby, my work.

She makes us giggle when she makes funny noises during staff meetings; and, when things get crazy around the office, Sarah gives us a big smile and makes everything all right!

Environment _____

This newsletter has been printed on recycled paper. We ordered the paper from:
The Paper Source
Fallbrook, Ontario
K0G 1A0 (613) 267-7191

They offer a wide variety of paper and envelopes. I find the paper is of good quality. Domtar in Winnipeg also has recycled paper available. Call (204) 949-0210. Also some printers in Thunder Bay will have recycled paper available in the near future.

They're Here!

Posters For Kids _____

HEY! YOU KNOW WHAT? YOU CAN'T GET AIDS FROM: is produced by the Minnesota AIDS Project and is widely distributed in the United States. Thunder Bay is the first city in Canada to receive this award-winning poster.

Whimsical cartoon characters come to life on a giant 17"x22" full colour poster that is sure to delight children of all ages.

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay is offering this poster for children, **free** to all local schools, along with an informative Teaching Guide.

Contact Darcia Kohuska, Education Coordinator for more information at 345-1516.

AIDS COMMITTEES: This poster is available at the discounted price of \$2.00 per poster.

Open House _____

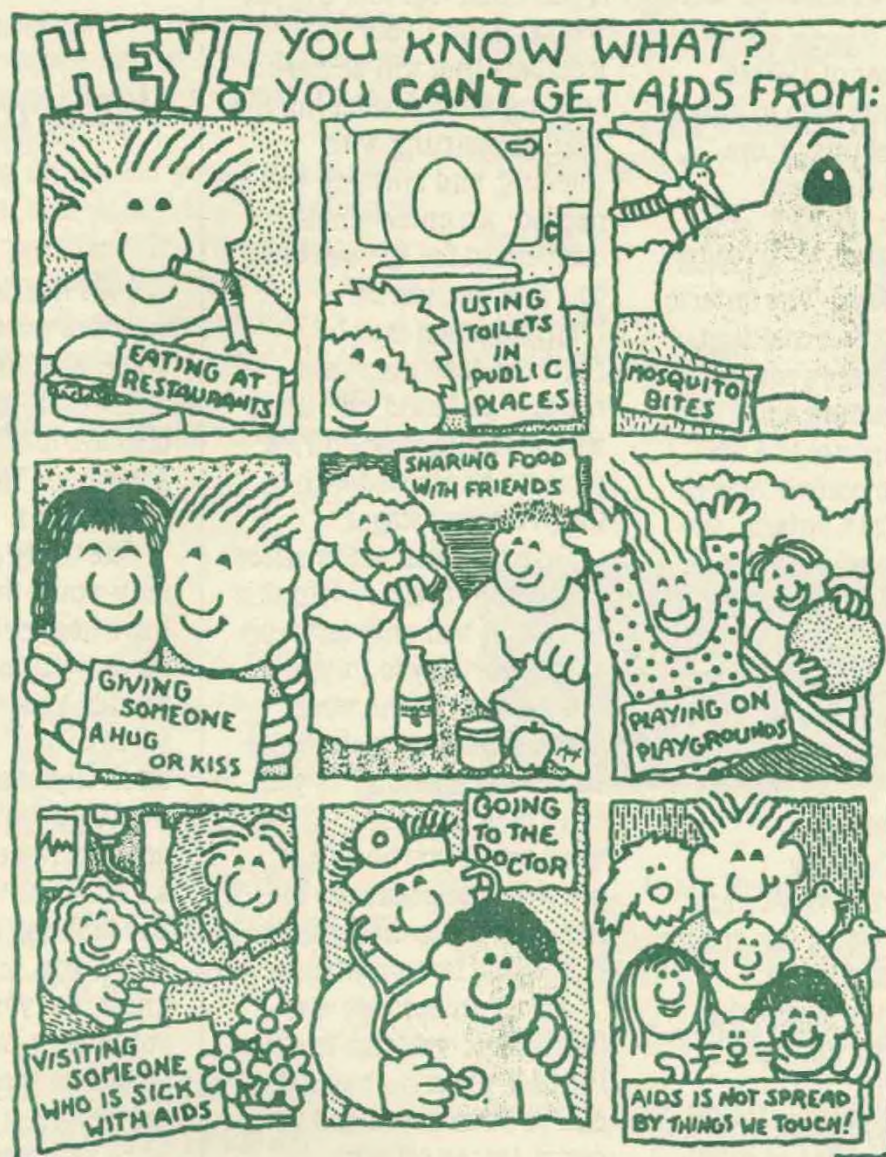
An Open House will be held at ACT-B all day, Friday, February 9. Come in and meet all the staff and have some great coffee and conversation. While you're here, see our display and our "goodies" table. Sneak out a bit early Friday afternoon and come on down. Everyone is welcome!

ATTENTION ALL TEACHERS _____

The ACT-B Resource Centre Library has three videos available geared specifically to teens.

A Letter From Brian _____

This video tells the story of a teenage girl who



had an intimate experience with a teenage boy named Brian. He writes her a letter and tells her he has AIDS. She is scared. "A Letter From Brian" tells how she deals with her situation.

The Subject is AIDS ———
This film features frank discussions with and among teenagers about the causes, concerns and preventive practices related to AIDS.

STD Street Smarts ———
This video is produced by, for and with "street youth". With frank language and explicit imagery, this video addresses difficult issues such as sex and injection drug use in the age of AIDS. It is non-judgemental in its portrayal of young people acquiring, using, and sharing knowledge about safe sex and needle use. This video is not intended for the average

high school audience. "STD Street Smarts" is accompanied by a comprehensive facilitators' manual.

For more information on these and other videos and resource material available in our library, contact Darcia Kohuska, Education Coordinator at 345-1516.

More Tidbits...

7. OAN in Thunder Bay !

The summer of 1990 is going to be our turn to host a quarterly meeting of the Ontario AIDS Network!

So, what is the OAN, you might ask? Well, its MISSION STATEMENT says, "The Ontario AIDS Network is a coalition of Community Based groups mutually creating a just and effective response to AIDS." Meeting four times a year in various cities in Ontario, the local AIDS Committee plays host to the member delegates. I have attended many of the OAN meetings. They can be large meetings with up to fifteen AIDS organizations taking part. Issues such as anonymous testing, treatments, funding programs and advocacy are discussed. It helps our groups to make a coordinated response to the media, the Ontario Ministry of Health and the public.

Also, workshops are held to share new knowledge and upgrade skills. Massage, treatments, media relations, fundraising are just a few that have been covered in the past.

This is not the first OAN meeting to be held here. The group was here about two years ago. October of 1987 to be exact. That was during the city's first AIDS Awareness Week!

The OAN is a long way away, but there is a lot of planning and work to be done now. Is any one interested in getting involved? By

creating an ad hoc committee we can pull together a great weekend for all our OAN members that will be here. Looking after developing the agenda, assisting with catering, and billeting will be needed. An entertainment component for the weekend could be considered! Transportation may be required, meeting space needs to be found, and there will be mailings and office duties to be assisted with in the pre-event stages.

Give me a call at the office if you want to assist with this project. It will only last from about February to July, with the majority of the work being done four to six weeks before the meeting. If you can't help with the work, would you be able to provide accommodations for someone while they're here? This would be a great help.

All volunteers are also invited and welcome to attend the OAN when it's here. This can be a fun event and we can show the off our organization to the rest of the province!

Lawrence Korhonen



Volunteer! Volunteer!

1989 has proven to be a very busy year for our volunteers, from bingos, client care, mall and school displays to office work, AIDS Awareness Week and office renovations.

One thing is for sure, not only would these events not have happened if it weren't for our volunteers, but it wouldn't have been as successful or as professional and without as much care. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay to thank each and every one of you, and also to let you know that you, the volunteers, are the best. And whatever the obstacles and the problems, volunteers who work with persons with AIDS or any work with AIDS Committees are the best of the best.

Thank You!

I personally want to say

Tidbits...

Our 1990 Healthy Sex Calendar For Gay & Bisexual Men is now available at the New Year's price of only \$4.95! We have a limited number of calendars left. Call 345-1516 to have one mailed to you or pick one up at 285 Bay Street.

A series of Wellness Seminars will be held at ACT-B in February and March. Guest facilitators will cover topics such as nutrition, stress reduction, massage and meditation. All are welcome. Phone 345-1516 for details.

thanks for making me feel right at home and comfortable since my joining the ACT-B team. My greatest pleasure has been getting to meet and know each and every one of you. You are simply the greatest.

I am looking forward to working with all of you in the New Year as well as at our informal volunteer get togethers. The first of which is on January 11th at 7:30 p.m. here in our newly renovated office. Hope to see you there.

As we go into a new year I would like to leave some special words with you. I do not know who wrote them but they are wonderful words to live by:

On This Day:

Mend a quarrel. Search out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in a word or deed.

Keep a promise. Find the time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong. Try to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Appreciate, be kind, be gentle. Laugh a little more.

Deserve confidence. Decry complacency. Take up arms against malice. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love.

Speak it again. Speak it still again. Speak it still once again.

I wish all of you a wonderful and Happy New Year and along with it peace and tranquility.

Sincerely

Linda Gambiae
Volunteer Coordinator



ACT-B Calendar

January 17 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

January 23 BINGO! 6:30 Diamond Bingo Hall

February 7 Executive Committee Meeting

February Volunteer Orientation at the ACT-B office at 285 Bay St. All interested persons are welcome. Contact Linda Gambiae at 345-1516.

February 9 Open House! All Day at the ACT-B office, 285 Bay Street

February 14 Valentine's Day
Deadline for submissions for the March/April issue of ReACT-Believe

February 21 Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

March 7 Executive Committee Meeting

Shared Life

When I decided to write this article I didn't know if I could. I didn't know if I'd be able to relate to the problems that a person with AIDS faces. I spoke to a P.W.A. and we shared our experiences. I found we could relate - with a difference...

For the last ten months I have felt tired, alone and scared. Constant fatigue really dragged me down. I had to watch, every day, that I didn't do too much. If I went like crazy one day, I'd be exhausted for the next two. I was too tired to read or even sleep. I just - sat. It got to the point that I had to leave my job. My friends didn't understand how I could be so tired.

The fatigue didn't help my mood any either. I became very cranky and my patience wore thin. With the lack of sleep and the negative feelings and memories I had to deal with I became very sensitive - I cried a lot.

I needed my friends more than ever but my mood swings were driving them away. I couldn't talk to them about how I felt because they couldn't understand. I had so many things to deal with, so many things to learn and understand. I needed help - I needed and I felt alone.

I had to deal with my self image. I used to be such an

independent, hardworking, active person. All of a sudden I needed help, and lots of it! I couldn't work. I had to go for Social Assistance. I couldn't afford to live in my nice apartment. I had to move to more meagre surroundings. I needed help to pack my things. I had to borrow money. I come from a family where you work and are responsible for yourself. Needing so much help was a big kick in the ego.

It's been a difficult and stressful year for myself and my friend with AIDS. The year turned out well, though. We both dealt with our situations.

There is a positive side to this story. It's not all sadness. My friend has really improved the quality of his life over the past year.

He has learned to accentuate the positive. He has reached out to people that can give him positive answers; some old friends and some new. When he's feeling low he'll call a positive someone and talk it out. Another person's positive outlook can really help.

**The Color of Light*
Daily Meditations For All Of
Us Living With AIDS.
by Perry Tilleraas
He has learned to work with,

not against his illness. He reads **The Color of Light* every day and reads about his illness and nutrition. He walks every day and sets priorities for each day. He doesn't chastise himself when he doesn't accomplish all he set out to do. He pats himself on the back for what he has done. He knows that he can put it off, because there is no sense stressing himself.

My friend has learned to ask for help emotionally and financially. He realizes now that the help is there for him. He has worked hard. He earned what he is getting.

He strives to alleviate his anger and drive away his negativity which his illness thrives upon. Speaking to people who are not ill helps, and writing down his feelings also helps him to see things in a different light.

He has learned to live a positive and active life within the everchanging limitations of AIDS.

Oh yes, the difference I mentioned at the beginning. I feel better now, I'm working again and I have a brand new baby girl. My friend has AIDS.

Eileen Parker

blood, semen and vaginal secretions in enough concentration to infect. There is a possibility that one could be exposed to HIV while performing oral sex on an HIV infected person. In order for the virus to transmit from the infected person to the other, the uninfected person would have to have a point of entry into their blood stream. In other words, the infected semen or vaginal secretion would have to enter a cut or open sore in the mouth of the uninfected person, and that person would then have become exposed to the HIV virus. The Safer Sex Guidelines developed by the Canadian AIDS Society, recommends that men wear condoms and women use a latex barrier when receiving oral sex- every time!

Q: Me and some of the guys from school take steroids and we use the same needle. Can I catch AIDS or is that just from sharing needles when you do drugs?

A: Sharing needles is sharing needles. It doesn't matter what you're shooting. Yes, you can be exposed to the HIV virus by sharing a needle with someone who is infected. You should not share needles but if you do they should be cleaned using bleach and water. After EACH person uses the needle you should flush it out 2 or 3 times with bleach and then 2 or 3 times with water. Make sure you do that in between EACH person.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 1990's. As we enter a new decade it may be useful to take stock and try to see where we are heading.

The early years of the AIDS era were marked by a variety of responses with some of the most useful work arising out of the concern of individuals, and coalescing in the community-based AIDS groups. Now that the initial panic and confusion has subsided, and government (at least in Ontario) has provided basic support, we are ready to move into a new period of action.

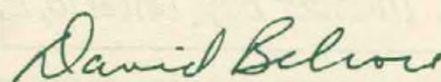
As we move into the '90's, we need no longer look at AIDS with the pessimism of the '80's. Although no "magic bullet" cure or vaccine is likely to appear, we are learning to manage AIDS and we can begin to look at it as a chronic manageable condition.

Drugs such as AZT and DDI often help on the medical front, while studies in complementary therapies offer a great deal of promise.

I believe the time has come for all of us to examine ourselves, both as individual whole systems and as part of a global ecology. If we begin to take ownership of ourselves, and the planet we live on, we can begin to effect significant change both in our personal health and in the health of our planetary home.

One of our projects in the near future is a series of Wellness seminars, and this should be an exciting way to begin the new decade in a positive and healthy manner.

Let us all begin to move along the path to personal and planetary health and wholeness.



David Belrose is a founding member of ACT-B and is serving his second full term as President. He was

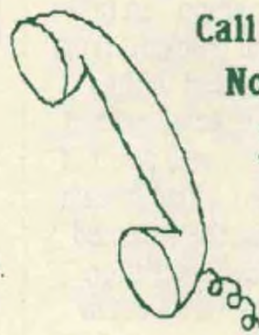
born and raised in Thunder Bay and works for Canada Post as a letter carrier.

AIDS

ARE YOU AT RISK ?

Call the confidential **AIDS Information Phoneline** at
345-SAFE.

- From 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. our staff and volunteers will answer your questions.
- After 5 p.m. listen to an informative taped message.



Call
Now.
345-
7233

Would you like to be on our mailing list? Call 345-1516 or mail to:
AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay
P.O. Box 3586
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6E2

ACT-B Services

Speakers for educational presentations and in-service sessions for professional groups.
The ACT-B Resource Centre Library.
Confidential one-on-one counselling.
Support groups for persons with AIDS, friends, family, and others.
An Outreach Program to smaller communities in Northern Ontario.
Producing and providing educational materials to groups and individuals.

All submissions and opinions for ReACT-Believe should be forwarded to the Editor by calling 345-1516 or writing to P.O. Box 3586, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7B 6E2.

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