

reACT-Believe

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay Fall, 1995 Volume 8, Issue 3



AIDS Awareness Week October 2 - 8, 1995



Homophobia and HIV

"It takes more than condoms to fight AIDS. It takes your acceptance and understanding."

This slogan for AIDS Awareness Week in Canada this year reflects the understanding that HIV/AIDS is much more than just a health issue.

"During a telephone survey about a social marketing campaign, a significant number of people indicate that support for people living with HIV/AIDS depends on how they got infected (if infected as babies or from blood products they deserve support, but if infected as a result of sex or drug use they deserve to be sick."

"A young man leaves his hometown in northwestern Ontario, because he gets no support as a gay person. Moving to Winnipeg, he falls prey to the temptations of the big city. Sometime later, his family, who have by now come to terms with his being gay, get a phone call letting them know that he is HIV-positive."

"Two HIV-positive men move to a very small community in Northwestern Ontario (the hometown of one of the men). Very quickly, the whole town knows their status, and they are shunned. In addition, they have to travel several hours each way to get to a community for medical treatment. After several months, they feel forced

to return to the large city they had tried to escape."

These are real stories of the damage caused by the effects of homophobia. (Homophobia is defined as negative personal attitudes or behaviour towards gays, lesbians and bisexuals.) Over years of dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, we have come to see that social attitudes play a very important part in the way we deal with this disease. This is not a new thing. When I was a young boy, the big disease that people only talked about in whispers was cancer. Now the disease that most stigmatizes people is HIV/AIDS.

What does homophobia have to do with HIV/AIDS? Almost everything. Homophobia and HIV/AIDS are so firmly linked in the minds of many Canadians that their response to a person with HIV/AIDS often can't be separated from their response to homosexuality. These negative perceptions and attitudes about the gay community have been identified by some, as the biggest obstacles to an effective, compassionate response to HIV/AIDS in Canada.

Viruses do not target specific groups or discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. While in North America it's the gay community that has been most seriously affected by HIV/AIDS, this is an issue for society as a whole. Heterosexual women, men, and children have suffered and died of AIDS. The

isolation and fear that results from society's homophobic attitudes towards people with HIV/AIDS hurts them, too, just as hatred and any form of discrimination hurts us all. People living with HIV/AIDS sometimes find it difficult to get support and treatment, especially in smaller communities. Young people are not offered the training to help them make informed choices about their sexual behaviour, particularly if they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. Young gays, lesbians, and bisexuals are often forced to leave their homes in Northwestern Ontario to look for acceptance and community. Many people (including women, youth, aboriginals) still think AIDS is a gay disease so they don't consider that they could be at risk.

As a society we need to work to end all forms of oppression, including homophobia, if we want to try to find effective ways of dealing with HIV/AIDS. We need to examine our own attitudes and beliefs. We need to look at the assumptions and generalizations we make about other people. We need to try and put ourselves in the other person's shoes, to better understand them.

While homophobia is an insidious and pervasive form of oppression, there are simple steps that each of us can take to make a difference. We can all be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

**It takes more
than condoms
to fight AIDS.
It takes your
acceptance and
understanding.**

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO COMBAT HOMOPHOBIA

Educate Yourself

- ▼ attend workshops on homophobia
- ▼ read books and other materials (make sure they are current and up to date)
- ▼ see films featuring lesbian, gay and bisexual persons and experiences
- ▼ bring up homosexuality in discussions with friends, co-workers

Recognize Your Own Homophobia

- ▼ stop using homophobic slurs (fag, queer, dyke etc.)
- ▼ when hearing jokes targeted at gays, don't laugh or remain silent
- ▼ identify how homophobia effects the way you live (your dress, your mannerisms, your behaviours etc.)
- ▼ confront the expectations and beliefs you have about gay men, lesbians and bisexuals
- ▼ don't assume all of your friends, family and colleagues are heterosexual!

Address Homophobic Behaviour Around You

- ▼ establish guidelines at your workplace for harassment and teasing that treat homophobic interactions as seriously as racial or sexual offenses
- ▼ make it known that homophobic innuendoes, jokes and teasing are offensive and unacceptable to you

Take Simple But Effective Steps

- ▼ add books and magazines about homosexuality to your workplace's library or resource bank and put them in a visible place
- ▼ monitor your resources to ensure books are up to date and suggest materials (for your resource person to order)
- ▼ request staff development training on homophobia in organizations such as yours
- ▼ show your support for gay, lesbian and bisexual colleagues
- ▼ contact the AIDS Committee for resource materials, or for workshops on homophobia at 345-1516

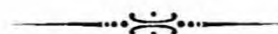
What is homophobia?

It is the fear of lesbians, gay males, and bisexuals, and the hatred, intolerance, disgust, and prejudice that this fear brings.

Homophobia refers to individual negative personal prejudice and discriminatory behaviour.

What is heterosexism?

It is the promotion by institutions of the inherent superiority of heterosexuality and the assumption that everyone is and must be heterosexual. Like racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination, heterosexism awards privilege to members of the group with more power (heterosexuals).



ACT-B Activities



AIDS Awareness Week 1995

Activities "Homophobia and HIV"

Saturday, September 30

Community Dance for Gays, Lesbians,
Bisexuals and Friends
St. John's Ambulance
518 Fort William Road
9:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

Sunday, October 1

AIDS Walk - "Walk For Life"
registration at Ortona Legion 12:00 noon.
Walk begins at 1:00 p.m.
Entertainment and refreshments will be provided
between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Monday, October 2

Tree Planting - Marina Park 11:30 a.m.
"Closets Are For Clothes, Not People"
Homophobia workshop - Waverley Library
Auditorium
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 3

Men's Healthy Sex Night
L.U. Residence Conference Centre - 7:00 p.m.
Guest speaker - David Belrose
ART AIDS Mural - Keskus Mall 9:30 - 5:30
ART AIDS Mural - Victoriaville Mall 9:30-5:30

Wednesday, October 4

Women's Healthy Sex Night
L.U. Residence Conference Center - 7:00 p.m.
Guest speaker - Sandi Covino
Condom Blitz at Sharkey's Pub (College).
ART AIDS Mural - Keskus Mall 9:30 - 5:30
ART AIDS Mural - Victoriaville Mall 9:30-5:30

Thursday, October 5

Candlelight Vigil 7:30 p.m.
silent walk from ACT-B to Unitarian Fellowship
Condom Blitz at the Outpost (University).

Friday, October 6

"Darling Divas" (a benefit drag show)
8:30 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.
admission \$5.00
Lakehead University Outpost

"Opening More Doors"

Northwestern Ontario Regional HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay is proud to be hosting its fourth annual counselling conference on October 19 and 20th at the Prince Arthur Hotel. This will be a one and a half day event covering such topics as:

- A review of current medical options
- Issues relating to dying, death and the grieving process
- Counselling Native Populations
- Women's Issues: creating risk awareness for women leading to the early diagnosis of the HIV/AIDS virus and its symptoms
- Issues relating to youth, peer pressure, sexuality and STD's
- Legal, ethical issues regarding HIV/AIDS
- Understanding the fundamentals of counselling
- Counselling issues relating to drugs, alcohol, and/or other chemical dependencies

Last year our counselling conference proved to be informative and educational. With each new year the demands seem to be ever increasing in the area of counselling and HIV/AIDS.

Registrations are currently from communities throughout Northwestern Ontario. We have some local spaces available. We have started a waiting list for out of town registrants who want to attend. High out of town registrations have restricted our travel budget.

If you would like more information about registering or if you are from out of town and would like to get on our waiting list, please call Karen Ferland at (807)768-0699 or (807)345-1516 between 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.



Canada Has
AIDS

Focus on Fund Raising



Thunder Bay AIDS Walk A Walk for Life

Hop, skip, amble or stroll; whatever suits your style. Join us on Sunday, October 1st for the AIDS Walk. As you walk, people in over 40 communities across Canada will also be walking to raise money for their local AIDS service organizations. We want this to be the biggest and most successful charity event ever for the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay.

There is no registration fee. We will provide food, entertainment, prizes and fun. What we ask of you is to collect pledges. Ask your friends, neighbours, family, co-workers or fellow students. Then bring your pledges to the Walk (or avoid the rush and drop them off at the AIDS Committee office the week before). Whether it be \$50 or \$500 your contribution will be appreciated. Last year the average amount collected was \$134.00. Remember, many small steps make a difference. So every pledge, no matter the amount, brings us closer to our goal.

The walk will start at the Ortona Legion and wind its way through trails around the Friendship Gardens, over to Confederation College and back to the Legion - a lovely 5km autumn stroll. Afterward, let us entertain you with music and feast on a late afternoon lunch.

Everyone knows about AIDS. This is your chance to do something about it. We need your help. Your participation will ensure that the AIDS Committee can continue to offer quality services. All funds will stay in Thunder Bay to provide HIV/AIDS education, prevention, care and support.

The Walk is a "We" event. Walk with those you care about. Your steps will help fight AIDS. Ultimately, you will feel great about yourself and what you have accomplished - the combination of

exercise and uncommonly nice people will leave you feeling like you couldn't have spent your valuable time in a better way.

Pledge sheets can be picked up from the office or call us and we will mail one to you. Before you begin collecting pledges call our office and we will assign you a registration number.

This year's Walk is being sponsored nationally by: The Canadian Life & Health Insurance Association, Molson, CBC/SRC, Maclean's/L'actualite & Canadian Corporate News. Local sponsors & contributors are: 94 FM & 580 CKPR radio, Lehto Printers, Medicom, Provincial Papers, Investors Group - Mary Ann Gabriele, Mari - 1, Thunder Bay Telephone, Wanson Lumber, Westfort Credit Union, Lakehead Travel Agency, Canadian Airlines, Robin's Foods, Northern Crystal, Pepsi Cola Canada, Beatrice, European Meats & Deli, The White Fox Inn, Magnus Theatre, The Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Colony Hotel and MacEachern Marketing.



Cut-A-Thon

Hair stylists from Michael's Hair Design will be sponsoring a fund raising Cut-A-Thon on Sunday, October 8 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Discounts will be given on all regular hair cuts (no chemical processing will be offered - only hair cuts) with proceeds benefitting ACT-B. 10% discount will apply to all haircuts. 20% off to those who bring a donation of canned goods for ACT-B's "Mothers' Cupboard". No appointments will be taken so get there early! Plan to get your new fall look at Michael's Hair Design, 1715 East Victoria Avenue on October 8.

Health Promotion

by Ian Ritchie



All About Protease Inhibitors

Protease inhibitors are a new type of anti-HIV drug. Protease inhibitors are meant to inhibit, or block, a piece of HIV's machinery called protease. When this protease is blocked, HIV makes defective copies of itself. Protease inhibitors are different from nucleoside analogues (AZT, ddC, ddI, d4T, and 3TC) in a number of ways. They are more specific in what they do. Protease inhibitors block infected cells from producing new virus, while drugs like AZT cannot prevent the production of new virus. Because of their specific activity, protease inhibitors most likely do less damage to cells than nucleoside analogues. Studies have shown that protease inhibitors reduce the amount of HIV virus that is measurable in the blood. In some cases, protease inhibitors have increased T4 cell counts even when they were low. These results have encouraged two drug companies that make protease inhibitors to start long-anticipated treatment programs for people with low T4 cell counts.

Most researchers believe that any protease inhibitor will need to be taken with one or more other drugs such as 3TC (an AZT-like drug expected to be approved by the FDA very shortly) to get the most benefit. It is also believed that protease inhibitor monotherapy - taking one protease inhibitor at a time - won't produce the best results, but no clinical studies are presently testing any protease inhibitor combinations. Testing one protease inhibitor at a time may, however, get at least one or more of them approved more quickly.

Studies have shown that, in some cases, the beneficial effects of protease inhibitors used alone quickly wears off, most likely due to the development of resistance. Resistance occurs because HIV makes billions of copies of itself every day. Each new HIV virus that gets made is slightly different, which means that the protease part of the virus might be slightly different, too. This new kind of protease may not be affected by a drug meant to stop the old kind of protease. Signs of resistance have already been seen in people taking all three of the protease inhibitors that are currently in the final stretch of development. Test tube studies have also shown that newer protease inhibitors like Agouron's AG1343 may not be effective in people who have developed resistance to other protease inhibitors. No one yet agrees on the extent or significance of resistance, but there are different opinions.

Many questions about protease inhibitors are still unanswered. Despite concerns about resistance, this class of drugs could be a promising treatment for HIV infection. Combining two or more protease inhibitors, or combining them with other anti-HIV drugs may slow down the development of resistance. Protease inhibitors are still experimental drugs. The more data that is collected from people who are actually taking them alone or in combinations, the more answers we'll be able to provide.

Used with permission from Treatment Review #19 AIDS Treatment Data Network. Provides treatment information, counselling, educational services and case management support. call (212)260-8868 for more information.

3TC Expanded Access Program Changes Again

The experimental anti-HIV drug 3TC has been available through an expanded access program for some time now. 3TC is a nucleoside analog like the other approved anti-HIV drugs AZT, ddI, ddC and d4T. Studies seem to indicate that it has less side effects than the approved drugs, and works particularly well in combination with other anti-HIV drugs. Doctors have been able to obtain the drug for their patients directly from the company that makes it, Glaxo Wellcome. Due to problems with drug supply, the entry criteria for this program were recently restricted so that only people with under 100 T cells could be enrolled, and a maximum of 350 people could enter the program each week. Glaxo Wellcome has now announced that as of August 15th 1995, people with less than 300 T cells can ask their doctor to enroll them in the program by calling 1.800.248.9757. The number of people that can be enrolled each week has also been increased to 650.

"Researchers Find AIDS Drug Combination"

Washington Times (08/04/95) P. A6

Researchers at the Wellcome Research Laboratories in England report that, when used together, the drugs AZT and 3TC appear to be the most effective combination found thus far to fight HIV. In the journal "Science", the scientists note that when AZT is taken with 3TC, the "cocktail" overcomes the

Health Promotion



viral resistance that decreases the effectiveness of either drug when taken individually. The 24-week-long tests of HIV-infected individuals indicate that the combination reduced the level of viral infection and increased the number of CD4 cells.

"Wasting Syndrome-- Affordable Treatments"

AIDS Treatment News (07/07/95) No. 226, P. 6;
James, John S.

There are inexpensive treatments for AIDS wasting syndrome, which is defined as the extreme loss of lean body mass not due to obvious causes such as nutritional deficiency or intestinal infection. Early data indicates that most patients can be successfully treated using these approaches. One affordable treatment for non-severe, AIDS-related weight loss is **testosterone enanthate**, when used in combination with an exercise program. The drug has not been proven in clinical trials, but according to Dr. Marcus Conant in San Francisco, it has offered good results. Conant's team has found that people with true wasting respond very well to human growth hormone. Fourteen of 16 severely wasting patients gained weight with the hormone, after finding no success with the approved treatments **Megace** and **Marinol**. **Ketotifen** is another possibility for treatment, though not much research has been done yet on using it for AIDS-related wasting. It is believed to be very safe, and is used widely in Europe for asthma and allergies. A third possibility is **thalidomide**, which is now available through an "underground compassionate access" program through the PWA Health Group in New York or Healing Alternatives in San Francisco. The two FDA-approved drugs for AIDS-related wasting are expensive, and their effectiveness for increasing lean body mass is controversial.

"Biaxin OKed for MAC"

POZ (08/95-09/95) No. 9, P. 22

Abbott Laboratories will soon begin selling its pneumonia drug **Biaxin (clarithromycin)** as a preventive treatment for *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC), pending U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval. Clinical trials indicate

that **Biaxin** successfully fights off MAC, a common AIDS infection in individuals with CD4 counts less than 100. The drug, however, has not been compared to the current MAC prophylaxis, **Mycobutin (rifabutin)** from Pharmacia. One potential problem is that more than 50 percent of the patients who developed MAC while taking **Biaxin** became resistant to the drug, which only makes treatment of the illness more difficult.

"Cancer and AIDS Pain Management Services on WWW"

Information Today (07/95-08/95) Vol. 12, No. 7,
P. 56

A new World Wide Web site offers educational materials on cancer and AIDS pain management from Roxane Laboratories and the Roxane Pain Institute. Users can easily obtain newsletters, clinical articles, and a schedule of future pain management seminars. "We consolidated information available to health care providers and designed a user-friendly program that provides up-to-date clinical information on managing pain in cancer and AIDS," explains Dr. Kirk V. Shepard of the Roxane Pain Institute and Roxane Laboratories. According to Roxane, it is the first pharmaceutical company to develop an Internet program with the primary focus on pain management. Other services the Roxane Pain Institute offers include an 800 number for health care professionals to access its information program, and a scholars' programs to educate doctors, nurses, and pharmacists on the treatment of pain and the administration of analgesia.

"New Strategies Against Virus"

USA Today (08/17/95) P. 1D

A new understanding of how HIV functions is stimulating the search for a treatment. Although scientists used to think that HIV slowly worked its way through the immune system, a recent study indicates that HIV attacks aggressively and does not let up. Dr. David Ho of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in New York City says that administering potent antiviral drugs before HIV has an opportunity to reproduce many times over and develop drug-resistant strains may increase the immune system's ability to survive.





TELL YOUR STORY!!! HELP US HONOUR THE PAST DECADE OF WORKING WITH AND AGAINST AIDS

This fall/winter marks the tenth anniversary of the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay. We have decided to mark this important anniversary by telling "our stories". We invite you to write us a letter, jot down your experience, tell us your story about what HIV/AIDS has been for you during the past ten years. If you have been associated with us - a volunteer, a client, a board member, a staff person, a friend - tell us what the AIDS Committee has meant to you.

We will collect all the stories and experiences submitted by October 15, and put them in a binder, to be read and shared through out the coming anniversary year. We hope to publish a selection of the stories, in an economical format, for wider distribution.

So please: help us honour ten years of work in the field of AIDS. Share your experience of ACT-B. Help us tell "our stories".

THE EXCHANGE

Thunder Bay's long awaited needle exchange program "The Exchange" is in its final planning stages. Two staff, Janet Adams, Program Co-ordinator/Outreach Worker, and Don Young, Outreach Worker, have been hired and are currently working to get the program running by the end of September.

Two fixed exchange sites are confirmed and program staff plan to get two more sites "on line" in the near future. Staff will also provide street outreach services including discussions around HIV/AIDS,

Hepatitis B & C, safer sex and safer injection behaviours, and harm reduction methods. The needle exchanges will be done on a straight one-for-one basis.

The goals of "The Exchange" are to prevent the spread of blood borne diseases, especially HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C; to promote safe disposal of needles; to educate on injection drug use and risk reduction; and to advocate on risk reduction issues. For more information about "The Exchange" please contact Janet or Don at (807) 625-9767.

Support Groups

ACT-B will be running three support groups this fall. They are:

HIV Positive Group (for people living with HIV/AIDS)

8 sessions - 2.5 hours each (first hour - topic presentation and discussion, second hour - personal experience sharing)

Moms of Positive Children

For mothers whose children are living with HIV/AIDS or who have experienced a death of a son or daughter.

5 sessions - 2.5 hours (first hour - topic presentation and discussion - second hour - sharing personal stories)

Buddy's Support Group (For Buddies of ACT-B)

4 sessions (first hour - topic presentation, second hour personal experience sharing)

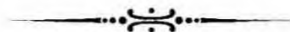
Please call Sheila at 345-1516 for specific details relating to any of the groups.

HAIR CUTS BY KRISTIEN!

Hair stylist Kristien will provide FREE hair cuts for ACT-B clients. To arrange a new do, call your support worker.

OPEN CALL TO ALL ACT-B MEMBERS CONCERNING THE 1995 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1995 ACT-B Annual General Meeting will be held in November. An exact date and location have not yet been confirmed. To be eligible to vote at the AGM, you must have a valid current membership, or take out a new membership, at least thirty days in advance of the AGM. Please check your membership card. If it does not say "valid for the calendar year 1995", you've expired! Good grief! Hurry up and renew your membership. Call ACT-B to renew today!



Parting Glance



Thanks to all who helped with the AIDS Committee's participation in the Harbourfest '95 events (especially to those who braved the chilling dunk tank). Your efforts resulted in \$4,700 being raised. Thanks also to those who donated to and worked at the yard sale. Our recycling effort raised \$950!

If you have anything which can be used in the Annual General Meeting silent auction, please bring it into the office in October.

Volunteers are needed to serve on the committee organizing the late winter Art Auction. If you are interested call John at the office.



I want to be a member of the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay!

_____ Enclosed is my \$10.00 membership fee.
_____ I want to be a Supporting Member. I have enclosed \$25.00.
_____ I would like to help more! Here is a donation of \$ _____

Name:

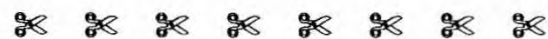
Address:

City:

Province:

Postal Code:

Telephone:



The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay acknowledges and thanks our various funders:

- Ontario Ministry of Health
- Health Promotion and Social Development Office, Ontario Region, Health Canada
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- All of the people involved in general fundraising and the support of many local businesses and individuals.

Jo-Ann Jacomb, Editor
Gerald Taylor, Assistant Editor
Ian Ritchie, Health Promotion Pages
Noel Ward, Writer

ACT-B Advisory Council

Fred Ball	Director, Public Health Laboratory
Beth Huston	Director of Administration
	Kinna-weya Legal Clinic
	Family Physician
Dr. Gordon Milne	Co-chair, Businessman
Bob Richardson	Supervisor of Infection Control, Port Arthur General Hospital
Nicky Tittley	Current River United Church, Council of Clergy
Rev. Don Uhryniw	

ACT-B Board of Directors

Rick Atkinson	Treasurer
Rick DeVuono	Director
A. Downey-Baxter	Director
Adele Evans	Vice President
Mahlon Inksetter	Secretary
Gail Linklater	Director
Rob MacKay	Director
Bob Richardson	President
Diane Roberts	Director
Pius White	Director
Darryl Williams	Director

ACT-B Staff

Christa Alsch	Secretary
David Belrose	Education Coordinator
Sheila Berry	Support Services Coordinator
John Books	Fundraising/Communications
Ryan Bureyko	Futures Program Placement Student
Karen Ferland	Counselling Conference Coordinator
Jo-Ann Jacomb	Volunteer Coordinator
Lawrence Korhonen	Office Manager
Stacie LaChance	Aids Awareness Week Coordinator
Ian Ritchie	Support Worker/Health Promoter
Michael Sobota	Executive Director

The opinions and medical information offered by "**reACT-Believe**" are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the staff or Board of Directors of the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay. Medical information offered by "**reACT-Believe**" should be used at your own discretion. Please consult your doctor.

Please address any comments about "**reACT-Believe**" to:
P.O. Box 24025
Downtown North Postal Outlet
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7A 4T0
(807) 345-1516

