

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Fundraising News	2
AIDS Walk 2001 Do the Route—the Red Ribbon Walk	3
Education Update	4
The Extra Mile— News from the Volunteer Dept.	5
News from the Support Services Department	6
Here and There	7
Parting Glance	8

ACT-B would like to extend sincere thanks to Joanne Books, Counselling Conference Coordinator, for her excellent work once again in planning and coordinating this annual conference.



2001 Opening More Doors NWO Regional HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference And Hepatitis C Community Forum

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay (ACT-B) is celebrating it's 10th Annual Opening More Doors, NWO Regional HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference on October 25th and 26th, 2001, at the Victoria Inn in Thunder Bay.

This year, ACT-B is partnering with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit who will present a Hepatitis C Community Forum on Thursday, October 25th from 9:30 to 12:30. Dr. Kaita, a hepatologist from Winnipeg, will be featured as the key note speaker.

At 1:00 p.m., that same day, the HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference begins. This two-day event will offer 8 workshops focussing on counselling issues related to HIV/AIDS. The AIDS Committee welcomes health care workers, counsellors, clergy, people living with HIV/AIDS, and their family and friends to attend.

Topics for this year's conference include:

- Case Studies: Stories From the Front Line
- HIV/AIDS in Aboriginal Communities
- Women, Pregnancy and HIV
- HIV/AIDS and STD's: the Basics
- PHA Panel: Stories from Within
- Service Providers: Perspectives from the Substance Using Population
- Harm Reduction Strategies
- Treatment Information Night

Conference Registration Fees:

\$20.00 for the Hepatitis C Forum

\$40.00 for HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference

\$60.00 for both the Hepatitis C Forum and the HIV/AIDS Counselling Conference

This conference is a vital professional development experience for those who work in the field of HIV/AIDS. Over the last 10 years it has developed an excellent reputation in our region. Early registration is recommended!

For more information, contact Joanne Books, Conference Coordinator, at 807-345-1516.

Fundraising News

From Crystal Porteous, Fundraising Coordinator

Coffee Days



While you are out enjoying a hot cup of coffee at Seattle Coffee House, you will be supporting ACT-B. On World AIDS Day, a portion of the coffee sales will be donated to our agency. This is a wonderful community partnership that we have developed with Seattle Coffee House. Visit at any one of their four locations—Red River Road, Cumberland St, Memorial Ave. at Dunlop St., and Arthur St.

Yard Sale Success!!

A very special thank you goes out to all the volunteers who laboured in setting up the yard sale and to those who gave up the morning or day to make this event a success. We raised over \$1000! The community response to our donation request was incredible. We had tons of books and more than enough clothing, but the yard salers got excellent bargains. Special thanks to St. John's Anglican Church for all their support and assistance. The church loaned us storage space and allowed us the use of the hall for the day of the event.

Stained Glass Red Ribbons Ideal Gifts!

Marge Cross is not only a dedicated volunteer operating our bingos and organizing the Secret Santa project, she is also a talented artist who works with stained glass. She has created an original stain glass design of a red ribbon. ACT-B will be selling these exquisite designs as a fundraiser for the agency. The ribbons sell for \$45.00, with \$20.00 of every sale going to ACT-B. These make excellent gifts for birthdays, holidays or special occasions! If you would like to purchase one please call Crystal at 345-1516, extension 15.

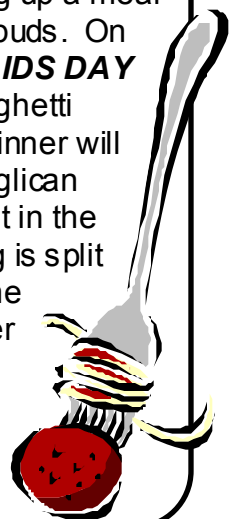


AIDS Ribbon
Design by Marge Cross
Copyright 2001

COOKIN' UP SOMETHING GOOD!

From coffee day to an evening of dinner, ACT-B is cooking up a meal that will melt your taste buds. On December 1, **WORLD AIDS DAY** we will be holding a spaghetti dinner fundraiser. The dinner will be held at St. John's Anglican Church, 226 Pearl Street in the parish hall. The evening is split into two time periods, one for take out and the other for a sit down dinner.

Bring your appetites and enjoy an evening with ACT-B !



Do the Route

The Red Ribbon Walk



Sunday, September 23

At The Outpost, Lakehead University

Registration: 12:00 noon

Walk Starts: 2:00 p.m.

***Note:* Due to construction, please use the Balmoral and Beverly Streets Entrance to L.U.**

DO THE ROUTE!!

This year the route has changed with our return to the Outpost. Focusing on highly visible streets, the Walk starts at the Outpost, leading down Oliver Road to High Street, connecting onto Memorial Avenue and up Beverly Street back to the Outpost for a total of 5.6 km.

**It's not too late!
Sign up today
Register by phone
call 345-1516**

**REMEMBER, YOUR
DOG CAN WALK
TOO!**



A project of

Canadian AIDS
Society



*In partnership with community
AIDS organizations across Canada*

National Founding Sponsor

MOLSON

Special thanks to our generous local sponsors **Downtown Volkswagen, Westjet Airlines**
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Media Sponsors: The Chronicle Journal, CJSJ Incorp. (KIXX, ROCK 94, CKPR) Thunder Bay Post

EDUCATION UPDATE

David Belrose, Education Coordinator

ACT-B Online

www.tbaytel.net/actb

Check out our “new look” at our redesigned and revitalized web site at www.tbaytel.net/actb. Thanks to the Youth Services Canada "Youth Providing for Our Community" project, and the efforts of Ryan Halstead, we now have a new design and new features on our web site. Check us out and see the changes. Find our publications and an order form on the site. Get information about HIV testing in Thunder Bay. Link to a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at the Canadian HIV/AIDS Clearinghouse. Link to the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) which is an excellent source for treatment information. See the stained glass red ribbon advertised elsewhere in this newsletter. We will work to keep the site up to date in the future, so come back often.

reACT-Believe Newsletter

In order to cut production and mailing costs, as well as adding content to the web site, we are now posting our newsletter online. It is in Adobe PDF format, so it can be read on line or printed out in hard copy. You will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is free, to view and print the files. For anyone who does not have the program, we have included a link to the free download site. You will be able to receive the newsletter by e-mail, by accessing it on our web site (notification of new issues will be by e-mail), or by mail if you do not have Internet or e-mail access. Please complete the enclosed survey to let us know whether you want to continue to get the newsletter, and how you would like to get it delivered.

Did You Know?

Lubricants and HIV

Research has shown that some lubricants may kill HIV. Researchers at the University of Texas have shown that three lubricants - Astroglide, Silken Secret, and Vagisil Intimate Moisture have been able to kill HIV in the laboratory. This is a laboratory result only, and research still needs to be done to see the effects in real life use. Lubricant by itself is not an effective safer sex measure, and condoms must be used with a water-based lubricant for protection against HIV. Human tests will show the real value of the lubricants as an anti-HIV agent, and may well not bear out the laboratory results. This study was reported in the July 2001 issue of “AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses.”

Oral Transmission of HIV

A new study reported in the Globe and Mail August 15, 2001, suggests that the risk of contracting HIV through oral sex is very, very low. The Center for AIDS Prevention studies in San Francisco looked at a group of 198 gay men who practise oral sex exclusively. Some 20% had performed oral sex on a partner who was HIV positive. No one contracted HIV during the study period. According to Prof. Kimberley Page-Shafer “...the probability of acquiring HIV through that specific sexual activity [exclusive receptive oral intercourse with a male partner] is very, very low.” However she emphasized that oral sex is *safer* sex, not *safe* sex.



The Extra Mile

News from the Volunteer Department

Selly Pajamaki, Volunteer Coordinator

Here's what's happening in the coming months:

****AIDS Walk 2001
Sunday, Sept. 23***

****Coffee Day on World
AIDS Day, Dec. 1***

****Opening Doors
Counselling Conference
October 25 & 26***

****Winter Tag Days
Sat & Sun, Nov 17 & 18***

****AIDS Awareness Week
Nov 25-Dec 1***

****Spaghetti Dinner Sat,
Dec 1st, World AIDS Day***



Our first Yard Sale in several years was held on Saturday, July 14th, along with a bake sale and hot dog sale at the same location. It was a roaring success!!! Many volunteers were called into service and everyone did a fantastic job—thank you all very much. Thanks also to those volunteers who helped with the organizing of the zillions of items donated. We would have been buried under mounds of donations without you. Due to the success of this yard sale, we are looking to hold another one next year. Please keep it in mind and come back and help us again.

Our first Summer Tag Day will have taken place by the time you read this newsletter. I would like to extend sincere thanks to all those people who gave up a summer Saturday to work at this event. Your generous gift of time is really appreciated. We will be having our annual Winter Tag Days on November 17 & 18, so I will be calling you about those as soon as the AIDS Walk is over.

AIDS Walk 2001 will be taking place very soon. It is on Sunday, September 23 at the OutPost at Lakehead University. We need several volunteers for the day—if you haven't already heard from me, I will be calling you soon. Take part in the Walk as a volunteer or as a walker, or as both.

Coffee Day will take place on December 1, World AIDS Day. Support the AIDS Committee by enjoying a cup of coffee at any of the Seattle Coffee House locations—Red River Road, Cumberland St., Memorial Ave. at Dunlop St., and Arthur St. A portion of their coffee sales that day will be donated to ACT-B.. No volunteers are needed for these days, but we would appreciate you going out and buying a coffee or two.

On World AIDS Day, Saturday, December 1, we will be having a spaghetti supper at St. John's Anglican Church. Volunteers will be required to cook and serve for both take-out and a sit-down dinner. Please consider giving us some of your time that day.

News from Support Services

HIV: Women and Pregnancy

As we prepare for the transition of late summer into slightly cooler temperatures that lead to the colourful tapestry of fall, the AIDS Committee and community partners have been meeting since May to organize the upcoming 11th annual Regional HIV Counselling Conference. Where has the summer gone? How could it have been here and gone so quickly? And so with the theme of transition, we are aware that HIV and AIDS have presented many challenges to people living with HIV and/or AIDS, their families and health care supporters.

As helpers, we have seen the changing face of HIV and AIDS over the past almost 20 years. In 1994 we noticed a rapidly growing number of heterosexual men seroconverting (becoming HIV positive). Slowly since that time, the number of women testing positive for the HIV virus has risen substantially. Quoting from an article in the National Post, “women account for almost one out of four new infections”, at 23.9%. These statistics are born out in both the Ontario Ministry of Health and Health Canada reports. Our local picture in Northwestern Ontario in the past two years reveals the seroconversion rate for women to be approximately 40% of new infections.

Many women who are becoming infected, are of childbearing age, therefore we are seeing more pregnancies. Some women may only discover their HIV status through more stringent screening by their physicians. As a health issue, doctors are obligated to do risk assessment and offer HIV testing to pregnant women. The primary reasons for this are twofold; one, to be able to offer optimum treatment to the woman during her pregnancy, and to reduce the risk of HIV transmission from mother to fetus (vertical transmission).

Research indicates that without treatment for HIV, the risk of HIV transmission to the fetus is about 25-30%. That is, a 70 to 75% chance of the baby remaining negative. With anti-viral treatment, starting in the second trimester (after the first three months of pregnancy), the risk of HIV transmission to the fetus can be reduced to 5-8% or a 92 – 95% chance of remaining HIV negative. Transmission from mother to child, according to current information, occurs this way: slightly less than one third while the baby is in the womb (in utero), two thirds during the delivery or birthing process, and a small percentage may be transmitted through breast milk. At this point in time, there is limited knowledge of the long term affects of anti-retrovirals on the newborn. We do know that if the baby is HIV positive, early treatment can prolong life and prevent some of the opportunistic infections such as recurring thrush and yeast infections in the rectum, anus and vagina that are very common, as well as lung infections.

As health-care practitioners, there is always so much more that we are required to know and learn about new treatment options, information sharing, legal rights of our clients, and legal rights of the children. As fellow human beings we can be compassionate, caring and non-judgmental in our support for our clients. The most that we can do sometimes is make sure that we remain up-to date on our information or at least where to access the information. We need to be careful about assuming decisions for our clients, as we do not have to face the consequences of those decisions – they do!

Web sites, 1-800 phone lines, and networking give us lots of avenues to gather information and support for our clients and ourselves. To explore this topic and many other leading edge subjects related to health and HIV and/or AIDS, check out the upcoming conference. Visit our web site, or simply call us.

Walk softly in the forest, see the colours, hear the sounds of fall and the crunch of the leaves under your feet.

Sheila Berry/Coordinator of Support Services for people living with HIV and/or AIDS.

Here and There...

Natural and Holistic Approaches to the Treatment of HIV/AIDS

**November 17-18, 2001
Toronto, Ontario**

The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) and Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE) are proud to present **Natural and Holistic Approaches to the Treatment of HIV/AIDS**, a two-day national conference providing the most practical, cutting edge information about HIV/AIDS and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

People living with HIV/AIDS from diverse communities, CAM practitioners, health-care practitioners, and service providers within community-based AIDS organizations and other community health organizations will benefit from more than 30 workshop sessions and hands-on demonstrations.

The conference will be preceded by CATIE's Annual General Meeting on Friday, November 16, 2001.

Visit www.catie.ca/events.html or call 1 800-263-1638, ext. 291 (english) or ext. 390 (french) for program, registration and scholarship information.

Are you or is someone you know interested in sitting on a very dynamic committee?

If you are, please consider joining ACT-B's Fundraising Committee. We are currently looking for energetic, enthusiastic people to join our team. Meetings are held once a month. The Committee works with the Fund raising Coordinator and the Executive Director in developing the annual fundraising plan and goals. For more information, please call Crystal at 345-1516.

For Information -

About AIDS or HIV Infection:

Call the AIDS Hotline at 1-800-668-2437

About Superior Points:

Call 624-2005, 625-8830 or 625-8831

About Anonymous HIV Testing in Thunder Bay

Call 625-5981

About Regular HIV Testing

Call the STD Clinics 625-5944 or 622-7585

About Counselling or Referrals

Call the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay 345-7233

About HIV/AIDS Treatment Information

Call Catie (Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange)
1-800-263-1638

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Monday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Eastern Time)

Tuesday to Thursday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (Eastern Time)

Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Eastern Time)

The Network

1-800-263-1638

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information

catie

Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange

email: info@catie.ca

internet: www.catie.ca

Once there was darkness all around
I couldn't feel my feet on the ground
Never wanted to drink or eat
Just wishing that I could sleep
No matter what I tried
I was afraid to go outside
Wouldn't even answer the phone
All I wanted was to be left alone
When I remembered why
I felt like I wanted to die
HIV/AIDS were words that I couldn't say
I just wanted it to go away
My friends that seen me when I had to go out
They would say you're getting so skinny what's this all about
I wanted to commit suicide as I saw it as my only solution
So, I went to the L.P.H. without any resolution
Terror and anger was all I knew
So how do you tell anyone what's wrong with you
Through all this I gave my word
Didn't quit counseling because there I could be heard
Now I stand before you cheery and bright
Out of the darkness into the light
By Sandy, a mother who has a son who has HIV/AIDS



Parting Glance



IMPORTANT LIST FOR 2001

This personal. Present. Random: not in priority. What I am thinking about this fall, that emerges as important to pay attention to.

- Contribute to the AIDS Walk. Collect pledges. Or walk. At least make a real, direct contribution. Why? Every dollar collected stays here. The event is critical—the most important fundraising event in our calendar. Help make it a success.
- Fall is so busy! ACT-B has four major events within 3 months: the Walk, our Counseling Conference, our Annual General Meeting, AIDS Awareness Week. What is important about this short list? To thank anyone who helps make them happen. To give thanks and appreciation.
- Pay attention to what's happening in front of you. Slow down...and pay better attention.
- Find some room for the larger view. Both at work [we are connected to so many vital partnerships and supports in the HIV/AIDS field] and within my own life. Don't be a yo-yo about this, bouncing internally/externally, banging what's in front of me with what's outside of me. Do this with balance, and practice better balance.
- HIV and AIDS are still expanding. No let down, no respite, no plateau. What does this mean about needs? What does this mean about me?
- Remember why I am here. Pause occasionally and remember.

Michael Sobota

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

Please address any comments or concerns to:

reACT-Believe

P.O. Box 24025

RPO Downtown North

Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A9

Or, e-mail us at: actb@tbaytel.net

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ACT-B staff & volunteers

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

- Ontario Ministry of Health - AIDS Bureau
- Health Promotion and Programs Branch, Ontario Region, Health Canada (ACAP)
- All of the people involved in general fundraising and the support of many local businesses and individuals.

Yes! I want to become a **member** of ACT-B! I know that my contribution will really count! Here is my donation

\$10.00___, \$20.00___, \$50.00___, other___

Name_____

Address_____

City, Province & P.C. _____

Telephone_____

Bring in or mail to: ACT-B Box 24025 RPO Downtown North, Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A9

A word or two from the Health Promoter

(Charlene Burford)

I have been in this position for a few months now. The medical and natural healing communities continue to provide information related to medicines, alternative therapies, lifestyle and future directions of health care.

Most of us know that a balanced diet and regular exercise is considered "healthy". Many people have eliminated the use of drugs -- be it caffeine, nicotine, heroine or speed -- and there are some that avoid pesticides and food additives as much as possible in our convenient-focused world. Health conscious individuals have turned to supplements, herbs and homeopathic remedies to help improve the quality of their health. Caution must be exercised. Become an informed consumer -- research the product, educate yourself to recognize natural vs advertising hype, consult your physician and ask questions. How will it interact with existing medication or supplements? When is the best time to take the remedy, on a full or empty stomach? What are the side effects? What is the ideal dosage? Is it stored in the body that can lead to toxic levels? What foods, drinks or supplements interfere with it's purpose?

The following two articles may be of interest.

12 June 2001

A warning about milk thistle and drug interactions

The seeds of the milk thistle plant are commonly used to protect the liver from damage caused by hepatitis viruses as well as alcohol and other substances. Compounds found in milk thistle - silybin, sylimarin - act as antioxidants and also stimulate the repair of the liver. But now it appears that these and possibly other compounds in milk thistle can have other effects.

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh have suspected that milk thistle can slow down or reduce the activity of enzymes in the liver. What does this have to do with HIV? you might ask. Well, enzymes in the liver break down many of the substances that we eat and drink, including medications. If the activity of these enzymes are reduced, then drugs remain in the blood longer than they otherwise might. This could lead to having higher-than-expected levels of drugs in the body, causing side effects or intensifying already-existing side effects. Indeed, in recent experiments using milk thistle and human liver cells, the researchers found that relatively small concentrations of milk thistle did significantly slow down the activity of the liver enzyme CYP3A4 by 50% to 100%.

Many medications taken by people with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) - such as protease inhibitors and non-nukes - are processed by this liver enzyme. If milk thistle is taken by someone using protease inhibitors or non-nukes, it has the potential to raise levels of these drugs, causing unpleasant or even dangerous side effects. Below is a short list of some other medications that are processed through the CYP3A4 enzyme. Levels of these medications may increase if taken by people who are also using milk thistle. This list is not exhaustive:

- methadone
- heart drugs - Tambocor (flecainide), Rythmol (propafenone)
- antibiotics - erythromycin, rifampin
- anti-seizure drugs - carbamazepine (Tegretol)
- antidepressants - St. John's wort, Zyban/Wellbutrin (bupropion), Paxil (paroxetine), Prozac (fluoxetine), Luvox (fluvoxetine) Serzone (nefazodone), Zoloft (sertraline), Effexor (venlafaxine)
- antihistamines - Hismanal (astemizole), Seldane (terfenadine)
- antifungals - itraconazole (Sporanox), Ketoconazole (Nizoral)
- gastrointestinal motility agents - Prepulsid (Cisapride)
- ergot drugs - Ergonovine, Ergomar (ergotamine)
- anti_psychotics - Clozaril (clozapine), Orap (pimozide)

- sedatives/sleeping pills - Ambien (zolpidem), Halcion (triazolam), Versed (midazolam)
- lipid-lowering drugs (statins) - Lescol (fluvastatin), Mevacor (lovastatin), Pravachol (pravastatin) and Zocor (simvastatin), Baycol (cerivastatin)
- transplant drugs - cyclosporine (Neoral, Sandimmune), ProGraf (tacrolimus)

Milk thistle also has the potential to lower levels of the following drugs:

- anti-parasite drugs - Mepron (atovaquone)
- sedatives/sleeping pills - Ativan (lorazepam)
- hormones - estrogen

The research by the scientists in Pittsburgh should emphasize to readers that simply because a product is "natural" it does not mean it is safe when taken with other substances. This research also shows the need to conduct further research on herb-drug interactions on liver cells as well as in people. Such studies may find combinations of herbs and drugs that can be safely used together.

The Pittsburgh researchers noted that "patients and health care professionals must be encouraged to discuss the use of herbs and be educated about the potential interactions between herbs and drugs." This cannot be stressed enough.

REFERENCE

Venkataramanan R, Ramachandran V, Komoroski BJ, et al. Milk thistle, a herbal supplement, decreases the activity of CYP3A4 and uridine diphosphoglucuronosyl transferase in human hepatocyte cultures. *Drug Metabolism and Disposition* 2000;28(11):1270-1273.

This information was provided by the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE). For more information, contact CATIE at 1-800-263-1638.

23 July 2001

Pesticides found in many ginseng supplements in the U.S.

The organization ConsumerLab in the U.S. conducts independent testing of supplements sold in that country. The purpose of the testing is to find out if the ingredients listed on the label match those found in the capsules, tablets or liquids that accompany the label. The company produces reports which are available on its website at www.consumerlab.com.

In a recent study, ConsumerLab tested 22 brands of ginseng supplements sold in the U.S. and found that only nine passed its review. Unfortunately, the company only lists the brands that pass its testing. They found that eight of 12 products that were labelled to contain "Korean ginseng" were contaminated with pesticides (hexachlorobenzene and/or quintozone). These compounds may damage the liver and kidneys and have the potential to cause cancer in people. In some cases the level of contamination by pesticides was 20 times higher than allowed under U.S. and European guidelines. For further details about the review of ginseng supplements readers can visit www.consumerlab.com/results/ginseng.asp. General safety information about ginseng is also available from the site. These results on contamination point to the need for similar research on products available in Canada.

REFERENCE

Anonymous. Pesticide contamination found in many ginseng supplements tested by consumerlab.com: only 9 of 22 products pass product review published online today. Press release 11 July, 2001.

From Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE). For more information visit CATIE's Information Network at <http://www.catie.ca>

AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay (ACT-B) - Newsletter Survey

Thank you for your help! If you do not respond to this survey, we will take that to mean that you do not wish to receive our newsletter in the future.

The AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay produces the *reACT-Believe Newsletter* three times a year. Current HIV/AIDS issues, and activities of ACT-B are highlighted. We have limited funds for printing and distribution, and are looking for alternative means of making the newsletter available to a broader audience, such as sending it by e-mail, and posting it on our web site.

We appreciate you taking the time to complete this short survey and return it either by fax to **(807) 345-2505**, or by mail to:

**AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay,
PO Box 24025, Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A9**

If you prefer to reply by e-mail, please e-mail **actb@tbaytel.net** and include "NEWSLETTER SURVEY" in the subject line. The survey can be sent to you by e-mail for completion and return.

Your name _____
Organization (if any) _____
Address _____
City, Province, Postal code _____
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Phone number _____
Fax number (if any) _____

1. Do you want to continue receiving the *reACT-Believe Newsletter*? **Yes** **No**
If no, why not? _____

2. For those who have Internet access, we intend to place the newsletters on our web site in Adobe PDF format, and notify people of new issues by e-mail. We can also send the newsletter by e-mail in Adobe PDF format. The Adobe Acrobat Reader needed to view and/or print the newsletter is available free, and can be accessed through a link on our web site. If you have Internet and e-mail access, please provide your e-mail address (and web site address if you have one). [Please note that this will be used only to send you information from ACT-B, and will not be provided to any other agency or individual.]

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Yes **No**