



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH PRESS RELEASE

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

Office of Communications

*Dori Henry
Karen Black
410-767-6490*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Maryland Commemorates National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2012 “Every Moment is a Deciding Moment”

Baltimore, MD (March 9, 2012) - The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Infectious Disease and Environmental Health Administration (IDEHA) will observe the 6th annual National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD) on March 10. DHMH joins the Office on Women's Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local public health agencies, and the many organizations across the country encouraging people to take action in the fight against HIV/AIDS and raise awareness of its impact on women and girls.

"People should talk openly about HIV and encourage their friends and loved ones to get tested for HIV," said Frances Phillips, DHMH Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services. "If you or someone you know is living with HIV, get treatment. It can save your life and theirs."

According to the CDC, 1 in 139 women will be diagnosed with HIV infection at some point in her lifetime. African American and Hispanic women are disproportionately affected at all stages of HIV infection compared with women of other races/ethnicities. In Maryland, as of the end of 2010, 1-in-98 African-American women were living with HIV. In partnership with the CDC, IDEHA has recently launched the "Take Charge. Take the Test." campaign in Maryland, to increase HIV testing among African American women aged 18-34.

"Approximately 36% of Maryland's 30,000 HIV cases are among women," said Heather Hauck, Director of IDEHA. "We encourage all women in Maryland to take charge of their lives and get tested today."

For information about HIV prevention, testing, treatment and support services, please call 410-767-5227 or go to <http://ideha.dhmh.maryland.gov> . For details about NWGHAAD and to locate an event near you please go to: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/nwghaad/> .

###

Stay connected by following MarylandDHMH on Twitter or 'liking' Maryland DHMH on Facebook.