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### **NASTAD Commemorates National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

**Washington, D.C.** — The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) joins federal, state and local partners on February 7 to commemorate the tenth annual [National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day \(NBHAAD\)](#). This year's observance day theme is ***HIV/AIDS Prevention – A Choice and a Lifestyle!*** NASTAD is one of several national organizations working in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure the successful observance of NBHAAD. In recognition of NBHAAD, NASTAD is launching two new media resources to continue to focus attention on the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on black gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and black women:

- ***Connecting the Dots (Part Four)*** – This final part of NASTAD's podcast series focusing on the prevention needs of black gay men explores the social and psychological complexities that shape our understanding of the HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and viral hepatitis epidemics among this disproportionately affected population. The series offers listeners an opportunity to develop new insights and ideas, renew their commitment to asking difficult questions and seek real solutions to the challenges impacting the lives of black gay men.
- ***Street Conversations*** – Features insights from black women on HIV/AIDS in the southern United States. In gathering these candid perspectives, NASTAD sought community-level input by distributing mini personal video recorders to individuals located in three southern jurisdictions. Street Conversations is available as a toolkit (video and topic questions) for on-going discussion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its affect on black women. Contact [Sophia Nur](#) to receive a copy of the toolkit.

\*(Please note: Download times will vary according to internet connection speed. Average podcast size is 35MB.)

NASTAD is working closely with health departments to scale-up their efforts to reduce new infections among black gay men/MSM and black women. “Given the unacceptable impact of HIV on black gay men/MSM and black women, we know that additional resources and programs are desperately needed across the country,” noted Julie Scofield, NASTAD's Executive Director. “We've seen increasing partnerships between health departments and their community allies; greater efforts to build the capacity of indigenous organizations serving black communities, particularly those serving black gay men/MSM; stronger efforts to expand HIV testing within

black communities and linking newly diagnosed individuals into care; and greater efforts to identify social and sexual networks and provide home-grown and tailored interventions within black communities. However, more must be done! NASTAD will continue to advocate for collective action among federal, state and local partners to reduce HIV incidence in black communities,” Scofield said.

As the health reform debate continues in Congress, the lack of access to quality healthcare remains a significant challenge affecting the lives of many in our nation. Black Americans remain disproportionately affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, accounting for a greater proportion of AIDS cases than their representation in the U.S. population. NASTAD continues to call on public health and community allies to examine the behavioral, social, political and structural influences that negatively impact black communities and impede access to prevention, testing, treatment and care services. To encourage discussion about these and other important issues, NASTAD has initiated a new [weblog](#). The blog features posts on important topics and invites listeners and readers to share their thoughts, ideas and questions with one another.

NASTAD’s activities reflect a steadfast commitment to addressing the disproportionate burden of HIV/AIDS and other diseases on black Americans. In November 2005, NASTAD issued a powerful Call to Action, [\*A Turning Point: Confronting HIV/AIDS in African American Communities\*](#), which encourages a broad, heightened response to the growing epidemic among black Americans. NASTAD’s 2001 monograph (updated in 2006), [\*Why We Can’t Wait: The Tipping Point for HIV/AIDS among African Americans\*](#), also calls for a redoubled effort to reduce new HIV infections. These documents provided a foundation for many other NASTAD publications, including issue briefs focusing on black gay men, black women and young black men who have sex with men (MSM). All issue briefs and other relevant documents can be found on [NASTAD’s website](#).

NASTAD is a nonprofit national association of state health department HIV/AIDS program directors who have programmatic responsibility for administering HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis health care, prevention, education, and supportive services programs funded by state and federal governments. Founded in 1992, NASTAD’s mission is to strengthen state and territory-based leadership, expertise, and advocacy and bring them to bear in reducing the incidence of HIV infection, and in providing care and support to all who live with HIV/AIDS. NASTAD’s vision is a world free of HIV/AIDS. For more information, visit [www.NASTAD.org](http://www.NASTAD.org).

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