

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Spring is not that far from the New York metropolitan area and Transdiaspora Network keeps moving forward with more assurance.

**Diversity and Privilege Day** – We were invited by Ms. Amy Ellenbogen, Director of Crown Heights Community Mediation, to participate in a professional development facilitation at a Brooklyn high school event: the School of Global Studies' Diversity and Privilege Day. The facilitators pulled off an incredibly ambitious event to address race, power and privilege in the school (January 2008).

**Community Outreach** – Transdiaspora Network will be immersed in a day-long volunteer partnership project with Columbia Community Outreach on **March 29, from 12pm to 3pm**. Six undergraduate students from Columbia University will work with us to conduct a survey on HIV Prevention in Crown Heights. To volunteer: <http://transdiasporanetwork.org/volunteer.html>

**Beyond The Headlines** – Pastor Gilford T. Monroe has extend a personal invitation to our Executive Director, Mr. Ariel Rojas, to appear on his radio show "Beyond the Headlines" on **April 2nd at 11am**. Mr. Rojas will discuss the need to go beyond the traditional approach to address HIV prevention in our communities. Beyond The Headlines airs M-F from 10am to 12noon - [www.thespiritstation.com](http://www.thespiritstation.com) - 106.3FM.

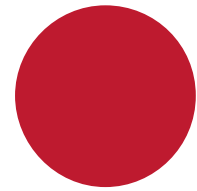
**Please Talk to Kids About AIDS** – A new 26-minute film documentary, "Please Talk to Kids About AIDS," has just been released. In it, two incredibly sweet and precocious sisters — Vineeta and Sevilla Hennessey, ages 6 and 4 — accompany their parents, the filmmakers, to the 2006 International AIDS Conference in Toronto. The film is available online: <http://www.eztakes.com/store/movie/Please-Talk-to-kids-About-AIDS-Movie-Download.jsp>

**Website updates** – After receiving several comments from friends and colleagues, we have made some updates to our website. Please visit us regularly at [www.transdiasporanetwork.org](http://www.transdiasporanetwork.org)

May 2008 Issue – Mr. Jonah Eller-Isaacs, an independent researcher who spent six months traveling alone through sub-Saharan Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya) will be writing an article about the link between music and HIV/AIDS advocacy. Stay tuned!

Protecting the health of our environment – EarthDay is approaching! Get informed about what you can do to protect the environment. Watch this short video, and see how you can make a difference with just one small action. [www.secret-life.org](http://www.secret-life.org)

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## OPINION

by Ariel Rojas, Executive Director

Parents have great influence over their children's point of view and social values. In a U.S. study that asked students who most influenced their decisions about sex, 37% cited their parents, while 30% cited their friends.\* In addition to parents, other adult family members and the community can also be a positive influence for adolescents' health behavior.

Young people who are engaged in less risk-taking behaviors come from a stable, positive, and supportive family environment that includes parental monitoring. Parental affection also helps deter such adolescent behavior problems as violence and delinquency. The study shows that sixth and seventh graders with supportive parents were less likely to use drugs or to get into fights and also were more likely to delay sex than classmates who were emotionally detached. A variety of other studies report similar findings.

Some youth programs have sought to involve parents in reproductive health education, training parents in workshops and discussion groups, providing print materials, hotlines, and other information sources, and depicting parental roles in mass media presentations. The best programs are often those that bring parents and young people together and stimulate an exchange of views.

\*This study is published by the Population Information Program, Center for Communication Programs and The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, Fall 2001.

## IN OTHER WORDS...

"We need tools that will allow women to protect themselves. This is true whether the woman is a faithful married mother of small children, or a sex worker trying to scrape out a living in a slum. No matter where she lives, who she is, or what she does - a woman should never need her partner's permission to save her own life." (Bill Gates, Global Campaign for Microbicides)



## THE FORECASTER'S HOPE

"On February 18th a glimmer of hope died. The Population Council, a big international charity, announced the results of one of the largest trials yet undertaken of a vaginal microbicide intended to protect the user from infection with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. It failed. Carraguard, whose principal ingredient is a gel derived from seaweed, proved no more effective than a placebo in an experiment involving 6,000 South African women. AIDS kills over 2m people a year. A way of stopping it spreading is urgently required. Yet according to Nathan Wolfe, a virologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, things need never have got this bad. If there had been, in the 1970s, a programme searching for unrecognized diseases in Africa then AIDS would have been noticed long before so many people had started dying from it. Microbicides and other interventions could have been tested when only hundreds of thousands were infected, rather than tens of millions. AIDS would still have been horrible, but not nearly as horrible as it has become. To try to stop this happening again, Dr. Wolfe is attempting to create what he calls the Global Viral Forecasting Initiative (GVFI). This is still a pilot project, with only half a dozen sites in Africa and Asia. But he hopes, if he can raise the \$50m he needs, to build it into a planet-wide network that can forecast epidemics before they happen, and thus let people prepare their defenses well in advance (...) [excerpted from The Economist, And Now Here is the Virus Forecast, Feb.23rd-29th 2008]

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**Talk Things Out!**