



Staffordshire
Buddies

World AIDS Day
Let's get real



December 1st is World AIDS Day

33 million people are living with HIV worldwide

over 80,000 live in the UK

at least 500 are in Stoke and Staffordshire

get the facts, inform others, challenge prejudice, make a difference

Staffordshire Buddies is a local HIV Charity. The number of local people with HIV or AIDS we help has almost doubled in three years and we want everyone to be aware that this isn't an issue that has gone away. Our World AIDS Day campaign is titled "let's get real" and is all about the realities of HIV locally, nationally and globally.

We will be supporting a programme of World AIDS Day events throughout Stoke and Staffordshire to raise awareness of the issues surrounding HIV. Anyone interested can get information about HIV and AIDS including educational materials, posters, event details and other campaign resources from www.staffordshirebuddies.co.uk or contact Staffordshire Buddies directly on 01782 201251

There is still no cure for HIV, but there are treatments available which mean that people with HIV can often live much longer and healthier lives. However, HIV positive people using Staffordshire Buddies counsel those who are HIV negative not to be complacent about the consequences of HIV infection and to protect themselves from becoming infected with the virus:

"When I was told that I was HIV positive, my whole world changed. It had a massive knock-on effect, my mental health suffered. I felt isolated. Who do I tell? How do I tell my partner, family, friends, new people I meet?"

"With other illnesses you can tell people and get support, but with HIV everyone is scared in case they get it."

"I'm HIV positive, my partner's HIV negative, we're careful, but I live in fear of infecting him, he goes for regular check-ups, I worry he'll leave me if I get bad."

"I have to take medication every 12 hours for the rest of my life. I've had to deal with fatigue, nausea, diarrhoea, facial wasting, a prognosis of 6 months to live and the death of so many friends. If I were you, I'd make sure I used a condom and save yourself the hassle."

"Know your limits, too much alcohol may lower your inhibitions and make you more likely to have unprotected sex. Don't put yourself at risk."

The increase in demand for Staffordshire Buddies services means that we need more volunteers to help us to ...

- Provide support to people living with HIV or AIDS
- Facilitate groups and activities
- Educate the public
- Run our offices and telephone lines
- Undertake HIV prevention and sexual health promotion work

We need volunteers from all parts of Stoke and Staffordshire. All volunteers are carefully selected and trained. The first day of the next Staffordshire Buddies training programme will be on Saturday 30th January 2009. Anyone interested needs to contact us for a volunteering pack and apply by the first week of January. For further information, please contact us on 01782 201251 or visit the Staffordshire Buddies website www.staffordshirebuddies.co.uk

End of Press Release

Note to Editor

If you require further information regarding WAD events or to arrange an interview please contact Sarah Beech on 01782 201257.

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www.staffordshirebuddies.co.uk