



# Black MSM and Stigma: Implications for Policy, Advocacy, and Practice

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# Agenda

- Anti-Gay Stigma
- HIV Stigma
- Implications for Policy/Advocacy, and Practice
- M2Mpower Program



# Stigma [stig-muh]

a mark of disgrace  
or infamy; a stain  
or reproach, as on  
one's reputation.

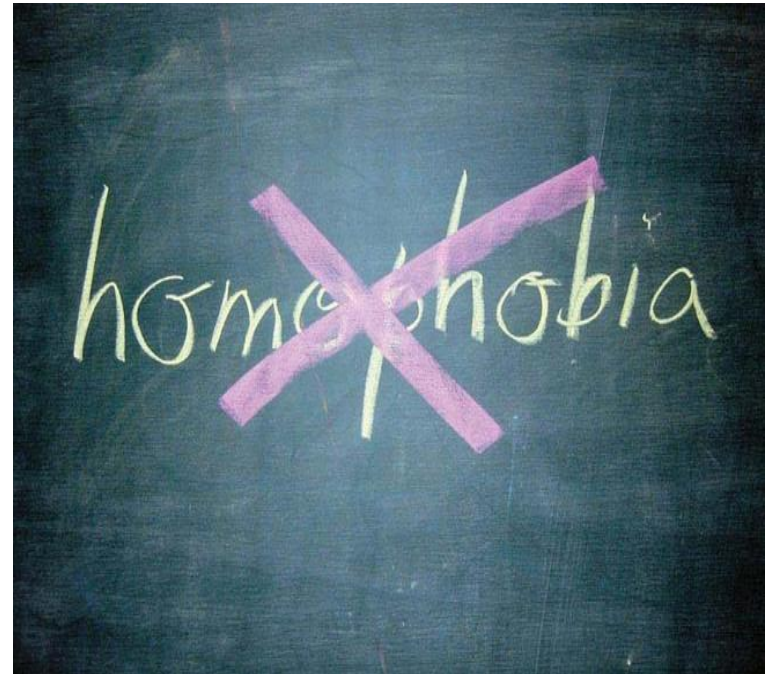
# Examples of Anti-Gay Stigma

- Rejection by family and/or loved ones
- Discrimination and harassment
- Anti-sodomy laws
- Physical and emotional violence



# Stigma, cont...

- According to the CDC, stigma against MSM can lead to:
  - Lack of high quality health care
  - Affect income and employment status



# Stigma, cont...

- Contribute to poor mental health and unhealthy behaviors: substance abuse, risky sexual behaviors, suicide attempts
- Create an inability to establish and maintain long-term same-sex relationships that reduce HIV & STD risk

**CHALLENGING  
HOMOPHOBIA  
TOGETHER**

# Family Rejection...



- Research published in *Pediatrics* found:
  - higher rates of mental and physical health problems among LGBT young adults who experienced high levels of rejection from parents while adolescents

# Family Rejection, cont...



Compared with LGBT young adults who experienced very little or no parental rejection, LGBT young adults who experienced high levels of rejection were:

- Nearly 6 times as likely to have high levels of depression;



# Family Rejection, cont...



- More than 8 times as likely to have attempted suicide
- More than 3 times as likely to engage in unprotected sexual behaviors that put them at increased risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

# HIV Stigma

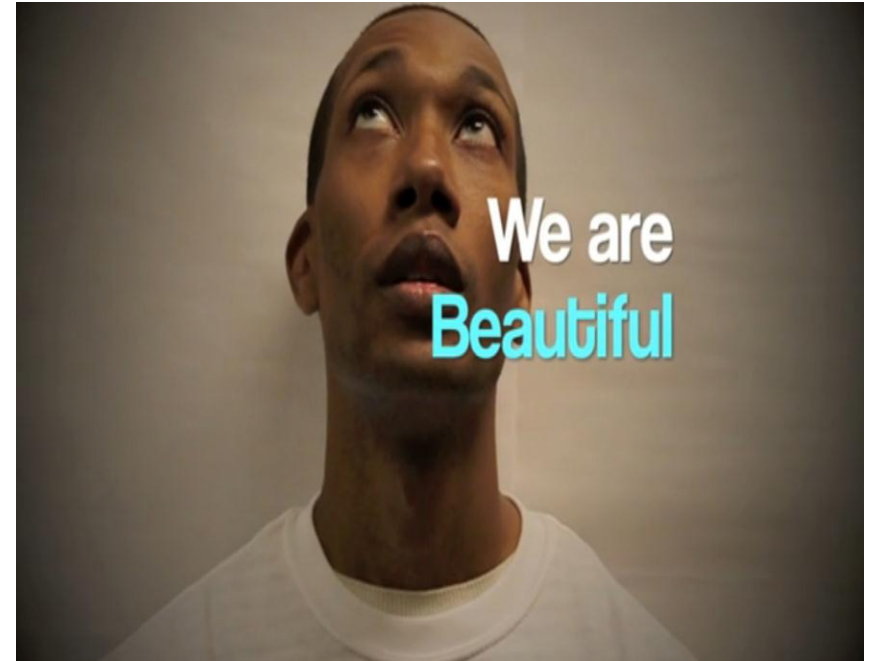
Prejudice,  
negative beliefs  
and abuse  
targeting people  
living with  
HIV/AIDS



# HIV Stigma, cont...

Consequences of stigma:

- 1) To be shunned by family, friends, and community.
- 2) Poor treatment in healthcare settings.
- 3) Denied rights
- 4) Emotional damage



# HIV Stigma-Criminalization



According to the CDC, 33 states have one or more HIV-specific criminal exposure laws that focus explicitly on persons living with HIV.

# HIV Stigma-Barriers to Prevention



- Accessing HIV testing
- Accessing interventions
- Difficulty communicating with partners around sexual health

# HIV Stigma-Barriers to Treatment



- Accessing case management and care
- Disclosure
- Isolation/barrier to creating support system

# Intersection of Anti-Gay and HIV Stigma

“we cannot end the black AIDS epidemic without confronting HIV among black gay men, and the stigma and homophobia that allows HIV to flourish in our communities.”



-Kevin Fenton, Director, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Fenton, cont...

The stigma of homosexuality runs deep in many of our communities. For young men who are just coming to terms with their sexuality, the weight of this stigma can be crushing. Tragically, it keeps many too fearful to seek the life-saving HIV prevention, testing and treatment and services they need.



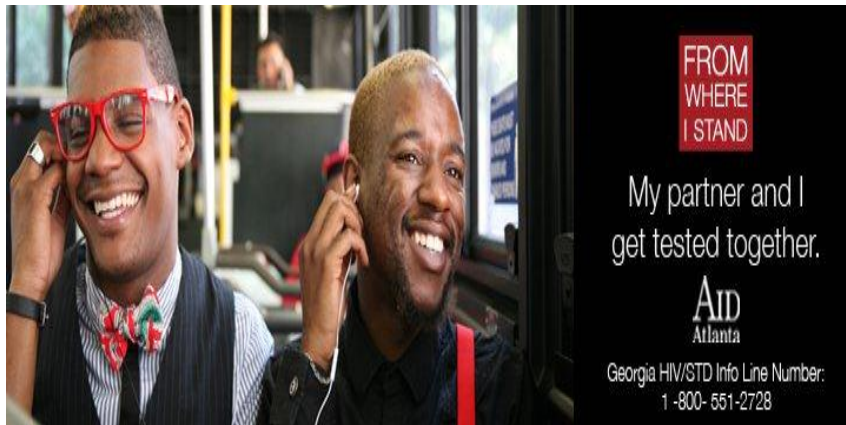


# FDA Blood Ban



- Food and Drug Administration policy that bans sexually active gay men from ever donating blood.
- FDA defends the ban, saying men who have sex with men are at a much higher-than-average risk of HIV and other infections that can be transmitted through transfusions.

# Challenging Stigma-Social Marketing

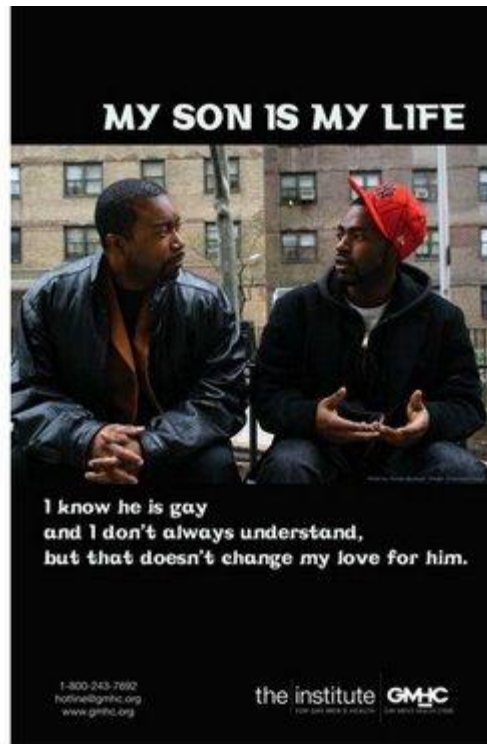


- Raise awareness
- Create dialogue
- Enhance representation


# Social Marketing- I Love My Boo



# Social Marketing, cont...



# Social Marketing-Testing Makes Us Stronger



testing makes us  
**STRONGER**

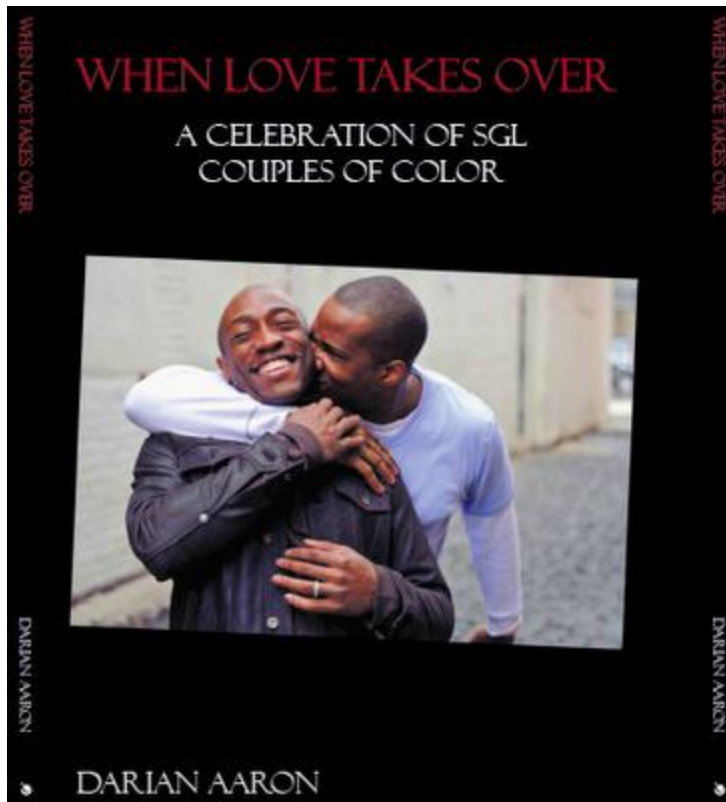
We're responsible for our bodies  
and the choices we make.  
We fight HIV by speaking up  
and knowing our status.  
We get tested.

Find free, fast and confidential testing near you:  
[www.HIVTest.org](http://www.HIVTest.org)

 **ACT  
against  
AIDS**

**AIDS**  
**United**  
EVERY PERSON EVERY COMMUNITY

# Challenging Stigma, cont...



- Community Mobilization around National HIV awareness days
- Resilience based-programming
- Culturally affirming programming

# Challenging Stigma, cont...



- Challenging HIV criminalization laws
- Developing messaging and engaging media around stigma
- Challenging the FDA Blood Ban

# AIDS United-M2Mpower Program

**AIDS United**

- Launched in 2012 on National Gay HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- Partnering with organizations in Atlanta and Baltimore
- Providing training and resources in integrating HIV/AIDS advocacy in LGBT advocacy work



**Thank-You!!!!!!**

