



Overview

About

The Southern AIDS Living Quilt, www.livingquilt.org, is a website that illustrates the growing impact of HIV/AIDS on women in the southern United States, particularly women of color. The goals of the Living Quilt are to empower, encourage and educate policymakers, healthcare providers, the media and the communities most directly impacted by HIV/AIDS to recognize that, in order to turn the tide on the 56,000 new infections annually, the status quo must change.

Using video testimonials, the Living Quilt shares the personal stories of women living with HIV/AIDS, their families and healthcare providers throughout the region. The stories underscore the critical importance of making HIV screening a routine part of medical care in order to ensure earlier diagnosis and prevent the spread of the disease. The Living Quilt provides links to valuable resources and fact sheets about the epidemic to empower those directly impacted to make informed healthcare decisions and to help others understand the power of knowing their HIV status.

The Living Quilt is designed to grow organically, with women throughout the South continuing to add their stories to a collective community that is sure to become more powerful with each new voice.

The Southern AIDS Living Quilt is a project of the Southern AIDS Coalition and supported by Gilead Sciences.

Participants

The Living Quilt currently features more than 80 video “patches” of individuals from southern states including: Alabama, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Goals

- **Empower** women on the frontlines of the epidemic to share their personal stories so that others will join them
- **Encourage** everyone to know their status and the power routine screening can have in reaching the nearly quarter of a million people who have HIV/AIDS and do not know it
- **Educate** policy makers at all levels of government on the severity of HIV/AIDS today in the South and the need for action

Background Information

- The number of persons living with AIDS has increased from 1993 to 2005 at a greater rate in the South than any other region of the United States.¹ The South also has the highest number of people dying from AIDS nationwide.² Approximately four out of ten (40 percent) Americans living with AIDS reside in the South.³ The CDC estimates that, nationwide, one in five doesn’t even know they are infected.⁴
- Among the 33 states which report both HIV and AIDS, more women, particularly African American women and Latinas, are becoming infected with HIV. African American women and Latinas together represent 80 percent of new HIV and AIDS cases among women and nationwide.⁵
- HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death for African American women between the ages of 25 and 34.⁶

¹ Southern States Manifesto: Update 2008. Southern AIDS Coalition. <http://southernaidscoalition.org/Manifesto%20Update%20Final%20pdf%20071408.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report. Cases of HIV Infection and AIDS in the United States, 2006. CDC, 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/pdf/2006SurveillanceReport.pdf>

⁴ New Estimates of U.S. HIV Prevalence, 2006. CDC, October 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/factsheets/pdf/prevalence.pdf>

⁵ HIV/AIDS Among Women, 2005. CDC, August 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheets/pdf/women.pdf>

⁶ Ibid.