

## **Palm Springs Life submission to provide balance to “Facing the Challenge”**

In “Facing the Challenge” from your January issue, Desert AIDS Project (DAP) executive director, David Brinkman, states “HIV and AIDS are more than gay issues, with more women and children being diagnosed.”

The facts do not support the erroneous inference that the heterosexual population and children are at risk from this disease. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) states that in the thirty-three states that report to the government, 85 percent of male HIV/AIDS cases are as a result of male-to-male sexual contact and/or injection drug use. Fifteen percent are from heterosexuals having sex with individuals known to have, or be at high risk, for HIV infection. In women, 99 percent of the cases are from injection drug use and/or having sex with individuals known to have, or be at high risk, for HIV infection. <sup>i</sup> The California AIDS surveillance report states that in our state, 92 percent of HIV/AIDS cases are as a result of male-to-male sexual contact and/or injection drug use with two percent from heterosexual relations with high-risk partners. <sup>ii</sup>

The CDC reports that in the most recent reporting year, 2005, seven children under the age of thirteen died of AIDS and fifty-six died in the age group of fourteen to nineteen. <sup>iii</sup> The number of deaths from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome alone is over 2,000 annually. <sup>iv</sup> The CDC estimates the number of AIDS cases of children under age thirteen at sixty-eight <sup>v</sup> and the number of HIV cases at one-hundred. <sup>vi</sup>

For 2005 the CDC reports 9,708 women have HIV/AIDS in the USA <sup>vii</sup> while 42 million have cardiovascular disease (2004). <sup>viii</sup> In 2005, AIDS killed 4,128 women, heart attack killed 267,000, lung cancer killed 68,122, breast cancer killed 46,120 and colorectal cancer killed 27,951. <sup>ix</sup>

DAP director Brinkman refers to HIV/AIDS twice as a “devastating” disease. If it is “devastating” while killing 16,316 then what word shall we use to describe cardiovascular disease or cancer, which kill 930,000 or 560,000 respectively? <sup>x</sup> It should be noted that America’s top AIDS researcher, Anthony Fauci, MD, has stated that as a result of “breathtaking advances in HIV research,” AIDS patients “look and feel well, are leading very productive, very gratifying lives.” <sup>xi</sup>

It is laudable that Brinkman works hard to raise funds for HIV patients, but the facts should prevail over emotional references to HIV, women and children.

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS: President & CEO, FAIR Foundation

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<sup>i</sup> [http://fairfoundation.org/PPT/CDC\\_HIV-AIDS\\_transmission\\_catagories.htm](http://fairfoundation.org/PPT/CDC_HIV-AIDS_transmission_catagories.htm)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/aids/Statistics/pdf/Stats2007/Jun07AIDSMerged.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> [http://fairfoundation.org/CDC\\_AIDS\\_death\\_estimates\\_2001-2005.pdf](http://fairfoundation.org/CDC_AIDS_death_estimates_2001-2005.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> <http://fairfoundation.org/SIDS-2162.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm#aidsage>

<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm#hivaid sage>

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheets/women.htm>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1168614043234WOMEN07.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> [http://www.fairfoundation.org/news\\_letter/2005/january/womenandaids.htm](http://www.fairfoundation.org/news_letter/2005/january/womenandaids.htm)

<sup>x</sup> <http://www.fairfoundation.org/factslinks.htm>

<sup>xi</sup> [http://fairfoundation.org/news\\_letter/2006/05dec/newsletter.htm](http://fairfoundation.org/news_letter/2006/05dec/newsletter.htm)