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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 9, 2001**

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES NEW HIV/AIDS ADVERTISING  
CAMPAIGN TARGETING TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS**

With an increasing numbers of new AIDS cases in people who were infected when they were between fifteen and thirty years old, the Westchester County Department of Health has launched an advertising campaign directed at that age group.

The campaign, "Everyone Has A Reason To Get An HIV Test," uses eye-catching billboards, bus shelter posters and bus posters to get the word out to this age group that they are at risk of contracting the HIV infection and should consider being tested. The campaign features three different ad designs, one of which is in Spanish, targeted at those in their late teens and 20's.

"Since 1982, when we began keeping track of AIDS cases, there have been 3,570 AIDS cases reported in Westchester County residents," said Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner of Health for Westchester County. "Half of the people in Westchester County who are living with AIDS right now were infected during their late teens and 20's. It's unfortunate, but many people in this age group contract the virus because they believe that they are not at risk for HIV infection so they engage in risky behaviors. It is no surprise, therefore, that this age group is also the least likely to inquire about their HIV status and seek out testing."

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Produced by Better World Advertising, a social marketing company in San Francisco that has produced many national HIV-related campaigns, the design delivers the message “Everyone Has A Reason To Get An HIV Test.”

“We chose this design and message because people can read their personal situations into it and relate it to their own lives,” said Dr. Lipsman. “We hope this campaign will start people talking about their lives, their risks and HIV testing.” He added, “In regards to HIV/AIDS, a lot of the attention has been focused on new treatments for people who already have been infected. We should also be talking about HIV/AIDS in the context of personal risk reduction, including testing.”

All elements of the campaign encourage people to call the Westchester County Department of Health (914-813-5185) for more information about HIV/AIDS and testing. HIV/AIDS testing through the Department of Health is free and is offered at four locations in the County. People can be tested using their name (confidential testing) or without giving their name (anonymous testing).

In addition to the billboard and bus campaign, wall posters and postcards will be distributed to places where those in their teens and 20’s congregate. The postcards provide additional information about who should consider testing. Anyone who would like posters or postcards should call (914) 813-5185.

“The AIDS epidemic is real. It is here in Westchester and it does not discriminate,” said Dr. Lipsman. “We hope people will see our posters, pick up the phone and call us. We’re listening.”

Copies of the designs are attached. Media may request original copies of the designs for print or broadcast display by contacting Mary Landrigan at (914) 813-5001.

