



For immediate release  
April 13, 2005

**ACT NOW:**  
*HIV/AIDS on the rise in Canada, Ontario and Toronto*

HIV/AIDS: The Facts on Canada

- An estimated 4,000 Canadians are infected every year with HIV – the AIDS virus.
- Currently, an estimated 56,000 Canadians live with HIV/AIDS. Among this group, 30 per cent are unaware they are infected.
- Men account for 85 per cent per cent of all positive HIV test reports. Of those, men who have sex with men (MSM) account for 73 per cent.
- Women account for 15 per cent of all positive HIV test reports since 1985. Rates are on the rise, as women accounted for 26 per cent of infections in the first six months of 2004 – the highest ever to be reported.
- Youth aged 15-29 account for 28.5 per cent of positive HIV test reports in Canada, from 1985- June 2004.
- An estimated 13,054 Canadians have died from HIV/AIDS-related illnesses to June 2004.

HIV/AIDS: The Facts on Ontario

- Ontario holds the highest number of positive HIV test reports in Canada with 24,734 cases from 1985-2003. This number accounts for 44 per cent of the national total.
- In 2003, there were 1,217 positive HIV test reported in Ontario – an increase from the 938 cases reported in 2000.
- Men account for the majority of all positive HIV test reports, at 86 per cent. Women account for 14 per cent of all positive HIV test reports.
- An estimated 7,087 Ontarions have died of HIV/AIDS-related illnesses.

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HIV/AIDS: The Facts on Toronto

- 63 per cent of all positive HIV test reports in Ontario have been reported in Toronto.
- 15,696 Torontonians have tested positive for the virus from 1985-2003.
- 763 people in the city were newly infected with HIV in 2003.

AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT)

*2004 Facts*

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| • On-line visits to the Living Guide – a guide on HIV/AIDS services | 17,102 |
| • Visits to ACT's Access Centre                                     | 29,855 |
| • HIV/AIDS information packages distributed                         | 5,786  |
| • Counselling sessions provided                                     | 2,171  |
| • People attending HIV/AIDS workshops and training sessions         | 3,660  |
| • ACT Volunteers  | 1,420  |
| • Total number of volunteer hours (to March 31, 2005)               | 54,538 |

Fashion Cares and ACT

- A yearly fundraising event since 1986, Fashion Cares serves to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and raise much needed funds for ACT's programs and services.
- Over 60,000 people have attended Fashion Cares in its seventeen-year run, which has helped raise over \$8 million for ACT.
- All funds raised from Fashion Cares allow ACT to continue to offer free counselling, support services and education programs to people living with, and at risk for HIV/AIDS.

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Established in 1983, the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) is a community-based, charitable organization whose mission is to provide support, HIV prevention and education services for people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS. ACT offers free, confidential support and practical services to men, women and youth living with HIV/AIDS and also provides information to friends, partners, families and caregivers of those affected.

ACT works with gay and bisexual men, Portuguese-speaking communities, youth and women at increased risk for HIV infection, to develop and deliver HIV/AIDS prevention education and outreach programs. Until there is a world without HIV/AIDS, the AIDS Committee of Toronto will continue to deliver effective and highly valued services through the support of ACT staff and volunteers and the community.

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For more information or to speak with an ACT spokesperson, please contact:  
John Maxwell, Director of Communications and Community Education, AIDS  
Committee of Toronto  
(416) 340-8484 ext. 245 or [jmaxwell@actontario.org](mailto:jmaxwell@actontario.org)

To arrange an interview with a Fashion Cares spokesperson, please contact Paula Waring,  
Kim Roman (Cornofsky) or Lisa Bednarski at the Fashion Cares Media Line:  
Tel: 416-642-7975 Email: [fashioncares@rogers.com](mailto:fashioncares@rogers.com).