

You can live well with HIV

SAYFSM services will help you find direction and hope.

These programs and services are available for you at SAYFSM:

- Emotional and spiritual support group for Africans living with HIV
- HIV counseling and testing
- HIV/AIDS prevention education
- Prevention intervention and health education for HIV positives
- Culturally and linguistically sensitive educational materials
- Medical case management
- Care advocacy
- Mental Health Counseling
- Resources and referral for housing, employment, public assistance, food shelf, clothing, schooling, legal, household items, and other needs.

Get Tested!

All testing and related services are free and available at the SAYFSM office.

SAYFSM tests blood using standard rapid HIV test kit/Oraquick kit that is performed by well-trained and certified staff members.



Call SAYFSM and talk to a staff member to schedule an appointment.

Test results in about 15 minutes.

Our address:

SAYFSM
2395 University Avenue, #200,
St. Paul, MN 55114

Telephone No.: (651) 644-3983
E-mail: info@sayfsm.org
Website: www.sayfsm.org

DONATIONS GLADLY ACCEPTED!

Yes! I would like to contribute to SAYFSM:
___\$100 ___\$50 ___\$25 ___other

Please send your donation to:

SAYFSM
2395 University Avenue W, #200
St. Paul, MN 55114

Thank You!!

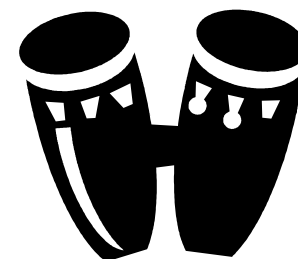
FREE HIV Testing Sites

- SAYFSM----- 651-644-3983
- Clinic 555 ----- 651-266-1255
- Red Door ----- 612-543-5555

Providing culturally appropriate services



Sub-Saharan African Youth & Family Services in Minnesota (SAYFSM) provides culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate HIV/AIDS education and social services to all Africans in Minnesota.



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Issue 21/September 2022

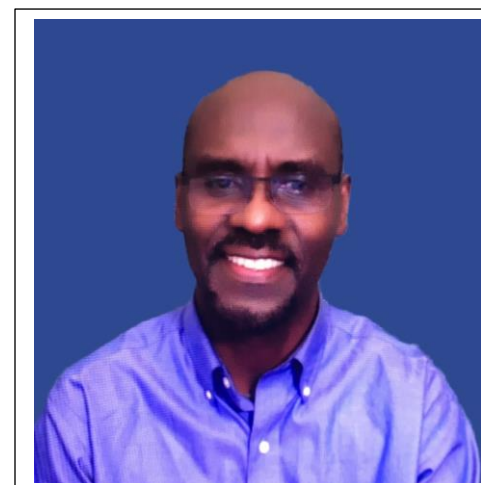
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It is everyone's Responsibility



By Pastor Fikru Eticha

Understanding basic facts of HIV/AIDS is not only important to prevent HIV infection and manage health problems arising from it, but also help to reduce stigma and misconception attached to it.

Despite HIV/AIDS has been around for over four decades many people remained unaware about the basic facts about HIV/AIDS. It is impossible to try to halt the devastation resulting from HIV/AIDS infection and its stigma without having sufficient understanding about HIV/AIDS and issues related to it. HIV/AIDS is neither a gift nor a curse from God, but HIV is a virus that infects human being to cause AIDS, and AIDS currently incurable but preventable disease caused by HIV infection.

This day HIV/AIDS information and resources are available in our State for all those who are committed to seek for them. More importantly, there are people in our community who want to share their life experience on how to lead productive life while living with HIV/AIDS.

However, these people put themselves out of sight because of fear of long-existing misconceptions, stigma, and discrimination posed to them by their own community members. HIV stigma is negative attitudes and beliefs about people living with HIV. It is the prejudice that comes with labeling an individual as part of a group that is believed to be socially unacceptable. While stigma refers to an attitude or belief, discrimination is the behaviors that result from those attitudes or beliefs.

HIV stigma is negative attitudes and beliefs about people living with HIV.

Having said this, I want to ask few basic questions: Are we as an individual or community ready to believe that HIV/AIDS really exists in developed countries like USA and others? Do we know that judging, stigmatizing, discriminating, and pushing away people who are living with HIV will not be a solution to stop the spread of HIV and the loss of thousands of lives to AIDS every year?

It is everyone's responsibility to understand our community's public health challenges and halt the devastation arising from them.

According to Minnesota Department of Health 2021 HIV/AIDS surveillance report, as of December 2020 there are 9679 people who are living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota. These are just people who made themselves available to medical care, but this figure is believed to be much higher since many are hiding themselves because of fear of stigma and discrimination existed in their community.

It is everyone's responsibility to understand our community's public health challenges and halt the devastation arising from them. I encourage all African immigrant community living in Minnesota to take own health responsibilities and health responsibilities their own community by joining the fight against HIV/AIDS, and reduction stigma and discrimination attached to it.

Let's Fight HIV - not those living with HIV

People don't want to know if they have HIV, because they are afraid their family and community will judge and reject them. Everyone needs to know they will always be loved and supported even if they have HIV/AIDS.

The virus that causes AIDS is not spread through touch, saliva, tears, sneezing, coughing, or any type of casual contact. HIV is spread mainly through exposure to semen, vaginal fluid, anal fluid, blood, or breast milk from a person who is HIV positive.



What do you need to know about HIV?

*"Knowledge is better than riches."
Cameroonian proverb*

WHAT IS HIV/AIDS?

- **HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. It damages the immune system, which is the body's natural defense mechanism that protects our bodies from diseases and infections.**
- **After being infected, you can live for several years without having symptoms or knowing you have HIV and can pass it on to others.**
- **After being infected with HIV for several years, your immune system is severely damaged, and your infection progresses to AIDS.**
- **AIDS is the last stage of HIV.**
- **Only a doctor can diagnose AIDS.**
- **There is no vaccine or cure for HIV/AIDS.**
- **Treatment is available to help most people with HIV infection to live healthy and longer lives, even though they can still pass HIV on to others if protection is not used or they share needles.**
- **In order to benefit from treatments, knowing your HIV status early is crucial. You can know the status of your HIV only by getting tested for HIV.**

**HIV does not discriminate!
Anyone can get HIV!**