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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
COMMUNICATIONS

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Sedgwick County Health Department Recognizes World AIDS Day on December 1

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – The Sedgwick County Health Department will recognize World AIDS Day by providing free blood tests for HIV/AIDS at 2716 W. Central on Monday, December 1, 2008. Additionally, the Health Department will be assisting with free, rapid results testing at the Rhatigan Student Center, room 215, on the Wichita State University campus. This testing will occur Monday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In addition, the Sedgwick County Health Department is one of several sponsors for a local candle light vigil and program that will be held at the Metropolitan Community Church, 156 S Kansas St, on Monday, December 1 at 6:30 p.m. The keynote speaker is Katherine Thessein. Katherine recently returned from Africa and will give an overview of her travels and a perspective on the global AIDS epidemic.

World AIDS Day is the day the world recognizes the health and safety concerns associated with HIV and AIDS. According to the World Health Organization, in 2006, there were 39.5 million people living with HIV worldwide and there were 2.9 million AIDS deaths. More than 4,000 Kansans have HIV or AIDS; there are more than 1 million HIV-positive individuals living in the U.S.

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In Sedgwick County, there are 658 people living with HIV/AIDS (according to 2007 data). The groups with the greatest increases in new cases are African Americans, Hispanics and women. Sedgwick County accounts for 27% of all Kansas HIV/AIDS cases (Source: HIV/AIDS Surveillance System 2008).

By simply getting tested and being aware of how to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, you have the power to reduce the spread and affects of this disease. Additionally, early detection can provide a person with better treatment options—prolonging their quality of life.

Testing, counseling and prevention tools are available at the Sedgwick County Health Department and information is available on the Sedgwick County Web site at www.sedgwickcounty.org.

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