

Maroon Communications
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BLACK OUTREACH PROJECT EVALUATION
BRIEF UPDATE

Background

This update will provide an initial summary of the findings of the evaluation of the Black Outreach Project undertaken by Maroon Communications. After a series of initial meetings in May 1995 with Deena Noseworthy, Community Aids Educator, Black Outreach Project, a contract for the evaluation was prepared. The evaluation began in June 1995. The completion date was September 1995, however due to urgent, and unforeseen circumstances, the completion date had to be shifted. It is now scheduled to be finished by the end of January 1996.

There were three key questions to be answered by the evaluation as identified by the client:

- 1) Is the black Outreach Project effective in the Black Nova Scotian community?
- 2) Are Black Nova Scotians receiving specific HIV/AIDS resources, presentations and support services?
- 3) What form, if any, should future HIV/AIDS work in the Black Nova Scotian community take?

The evaluation is framed by the goals outlined for the Black Outreach Project in the document titled, "Black Outreach Project Phase II, Nova Scotia Persons With AIDS Coalition, ACAP Special Project".

The evaluation is qualitative using a combination of techniques including a review and analysis of files and documentation and interviews and questionnaires. All interviews and questionnaires are strictly confidential. Individuals who responded will not be directly quoted or otherwise identified in the report. The resulting evaluation report will be presented in a manner accessible to a broad base of individuals within the project's client base.

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Summary Cont'd

2) The majority of respondents felt the project was providing excellent resources and presentations and support services to the community, within the limits of the project. Again, on this question, there were many comments regarding the large task faced by the project and the vary limited resources. A review of evaluations from various presentations indicated a high level of satisfaction with the quality, content and style of presentations given by the project.

Some respondents, however, noted that some presentations needed to be tailored to specific age groups, and there was a need for more audio/visual resources and print material which reflected people of African descent. A suggestion was offered that more creative ways be used to get the message out. The example of the theatre group presentation on HIV/AIDS was offered as a model. (A few respondents commented on the location saying it was not conducive to greater participation by African Nova Scotians.) A need was expressed for more rural outreach and for more local involvement by the Church within the various communities.

3. All respondents felt there needed to be continued work on this issue within the African Nova Scotian community. Respondents called for more resources and support for the project and felt it should be continued. Many offered very specific suggestions some of which follow:

- More of same, but expand to include/introduce home care, death and dying
- More anti-racism workshops and (greater visibility in community, eg. office)
- More adult volunteers and more church involvement
- Adult education programs, displays at community activities and teen education packages and additional support services
- conference or training would assist in raising awareness and building support
- (-1-800 Phone line for information)
- More stats on African Nova Scotians with AIDS
- (-Review Needs Assessment and do follow-up)

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Summary

The evaluation is now in its final stages with the following having been completed:
-file and documentation review
-questionnaires and follow-up interviews

Approximately thirty-five (35) contacts were made regarding the evaluation which includes interviews and questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed beyond Halifax to individuals and organizations which had had contact with the project. A total of twenty-five (25) questionnaires/interviews were successfully completed. This return is very positive and indicates that respondents took the request for feedback quite seriously.

In response to the three key questions, the preliminary findings may be summarised as follows:

1) Virtually all respondents spoke highly of the project and of the work being carried out by the Community AIDS Educator. The vast majority of respondents felt the project was effective in the Black Nova Scotian community. However, concerns were expressed regarding the level of support the project, and especially the AIDS Educator receives.

"Deena is amazing, but overworked. At times, perhaps the rest of the community isn't always as supportive as possible (Black community and AIDS community). I have found their research methodology, their outreach programs and their work in general to be excellent. " (R-13)

"The BOP has helped to dispel many of the myths surrounding AIDS". (R-4)

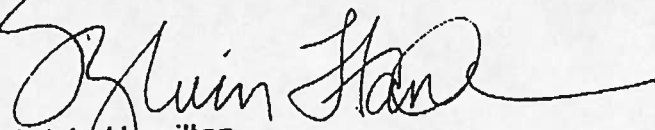
Some respondents noted that while the project was making inroads, there was still a lot of fear and denial within the community about HIV/AIDS. Other commented that it would take time for behaviours to change.

There were also particularly positive comments related to the major efforts made by the project to reach beyond the Halifax-Dartmouth metro area.

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The evaluation will also deal with issues raised during the interview process and during the analysis of the questionnaires. For example, the difficulties which the project encountered as a project of the Nova Scotia PWA Coalition will be addressed as part of the overall discussion of the context and background of the project. It has been noted that in spite of problems of racism and limited funding, the project has been able to accomplish a great deal.

The Report will also present recommendations for follow-up arising from the research and analysis.



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