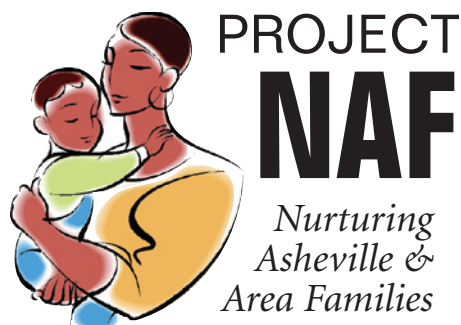




Message from Shari L. Smith



Shari L. Smith

Heart Disease in Women

You may ask, what symptoms should women look out for? Women tend to have more atypical symptoms* than men. These include:

- Pain in the shoulders or between the shoulder blades
- GI symptoms, nausea, abdominal discomfort, vomiting, or an upset stomach
- Back pain
- Shortness of breath
- Burning in the chest area
- Fatigue

Ladies and women: do not hesitate to seek medical help if you experience any of the symptoms listed above.

*Healthy Central, www.healthcentral.com

PROJECT NAF

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Buncombe County DSS

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Matters of the Heart



Many of our minds are set on matters of the heart during the month of February: Valentine's Day, chocolate candy, roses, and an outing on the town. Another matter of the heart is Black History Month.

Although February is the month designated as Black History Month, black history should be celebrated daily, within our lives, our families, as well as the nation as a whole. Additionally, we also place emphasis on National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in February. So let's discuss matters of the heart!

Black History

February is recognized as Black History Month and has been celebrated since 1926. It first began as Negro History Week during the second week of February when Dr. Carter G. Woodson wanted to bring to light the omission of accomplishments by blacks in history books.

This year, Black History Month converges with the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement, and the nation's notable gains in equality give us much to celebrate. But, equality in health and access to care continue to be areas of serious concern (Newswise).

Heart Disease – the #1 Killer in Women

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. The month of February is dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease and increasing knowledge about prevention. Educate yourself on the dangers of heart disease and get on track to better heart health!

In the United States one woman dies every minute from a cardiovascular event. Yet coronary heart disease is still considered by many as a "man's" disease.

Many women are actually unaware that coronary heart disease is the main killer among women over the age of 65, with their biggest fear usually being breast cancer. Women do appear to develop heart disease 7-8 years later than men, but by the age of 65 a woman's risk is almost the same as a man's.

Reality Check

- 1 in 4 women in the United States die from heart disease, while 1 in 30 die from breast cancer.
- 23% of women will die within one year of having a heart attack.
- Within six years of having a heart attack, about 46% of women become disabled with heart failure.
- 2/3 of women who have a heart attack fail to make a full recovery.

The good news is that all women can take steps to lower their risk of developing heart disease. If you're a woman between 40 and 60 years of age, it is very important that you begin taking steps to lower your risk immediately!

HIV & AIDS Among African American Youth

African American youth continue to be one of the groups most severely affected by HIV infection in the United States. In fact, black youth represent half of all new HIV infections among young people aged 13 to 29. These numbers underscore the need to reach a new generation with effective HIV prevention programs and messages.

We simply cannot afford to lose the next generation to this potentially deadly, but preventable disease. The HIV/AIDS epidemic remains a highly significant public health problem as HIV/AIDS continues to spread with ferocious speed.

Each day, approximately 14,000 new infections occur, more than half of them among young people below age 25—a group likely to have contracted HIV as adolescents.

The need is urgent for advocating prevention to teens so they are equipped with the information/resources needed to protect themselves and each other from HIV. The Project EMPOWER



Program coordinates this need through the 'Making Proud Choices' curriculum.

African American teens are a particularly vulnerable population. Although African American teens age 13-

19 represent only 15% of the U.S. population, they account for 66% of the AIDS cases in this age category.

Are young women at risk for HIV? Yes. One in five people living with HIV in the U.S. is under the age of 25. Forty percent of these young people are female, with a total of 10,111 young women in the U.S. living with HIV.

Young African American women are significantly over-represented among HIV+ youth, comprising almost three-fourths (69%) of young women living with HIV.

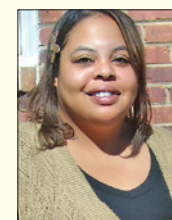
You may ask, "What can I do?" Be proactive and learn how to protect yourself from HIV/AIDS. Remember: HIV is 100% preventable. Also, get tested so you can know your HIV status; knowing this can save your life; knowing this can save lives.



Belinda K. Grant, Executive Director of Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

Photo: Urban News

Message from Caryn Bria Monroe



Caryn Bria Monroe

Thank you community partners for advocacy and support as we render services to program participants. We are aware and have witnessed firsthand community partners providing more and more resources to

ensure that teens receive supportive resources; these services will assist youth and teens to meet their personal and academic needs.

Continuous outreach and collaboration is a necessity in enhancing community awareness of issues that impact youth and teens. We will continue to provide community education which will allow for project expansion and sustainability.

Health inequity may be viewed as a problem "too big" for us to handle, but having an impact on Teen Pregnancy can be as simple as picking up your phone and making a referral to the Project EMPOWER Program.

Project EMPOWER is now accepting referrals for the Spring Semester 2014. Please refer your son, daughter, relative, or child in your care, to the Project EMPOWER Program. Serving Asheville Middle and Asheville High Schools.

To make a referral the Project EMPOWER Program call Caryn Monroe at (828) 776-1427 or (828) 225-8157.

Project EMPOWER Education Means Power



Project EMPOWER is a program of Mt. Zion Community Development, Inc., a 501(c3) non-profit organization. Project EMPOWER has been in existence since 2003 and serves 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students at Asheville Middle School, and 9th grade students at Asheville High School. Project EMPOWER is funded by the NC Dept. of Health & Human Services and Buncombe County.