

HIV Testing Trends Among Women in Florida

HIV/AIDS has reached crisis proportions among minority women in Florida. The recent bureau report "Organizing to Survive" was released to raise awareness about the magnitude of the epidemic among women and to provide tools to mobilize women to take action. The *SOS: Sistas Organizing to Survive* initiative was launched specifically to mobilize black women to fight HIV in their communities. One of the goals of SOS is to test 100,000 black women each year by 2010.

Figure 1. Number of Females Tested by Race/Ethnicity, Florida, 1997 - 2007

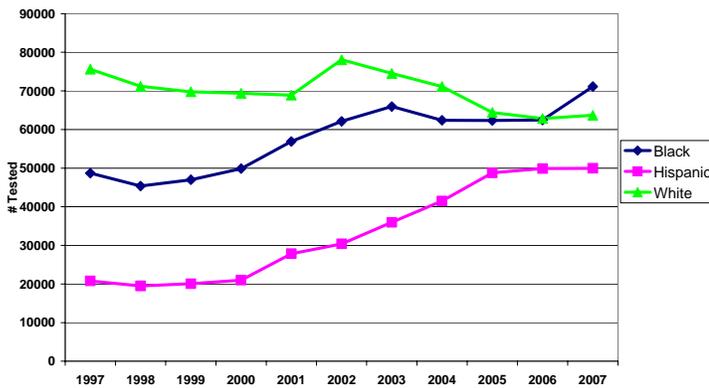
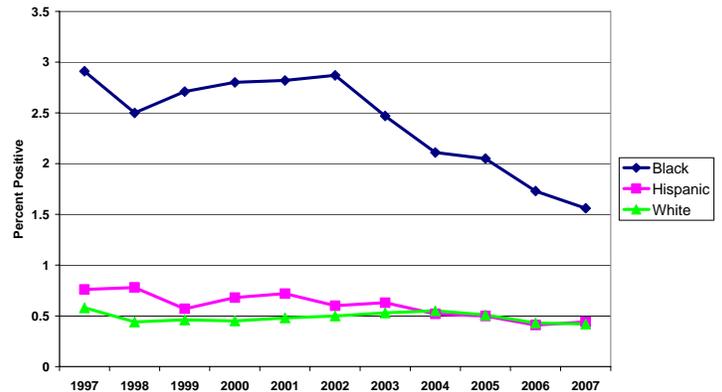


Figure 2. Positivity Rate of Females by Race/Ethnicity, Florida, 1997 - 2007



Between 1997 and 2007, the number of HIV tests among white women decreased, while increasing for black and Hispanic women (see Figure 1). In the past two years, testing among Hispanic and white women has been relatively stable. In comparison, black women increased their testing numbers by almost 10,000 between 2006 and 2007. Figure 2 shows that as the number of women tested has increased the positivity rate has decreased. While the positivity rate has decreased dramatically for black women, it is still over three times the rate of white and Hispanic women.

Figures 3 and 4 further illustrate the racial/ethnicity disparity of HIV among black women. In 2007, black women accounted for only 38% of tests yet they had 69% of the positive tests. In comparison, whites had 35% of the tests but accounted for only 17% of the positive tests.

Figure 3. Females Tested by Race/Ethnicity, Florida, 2007

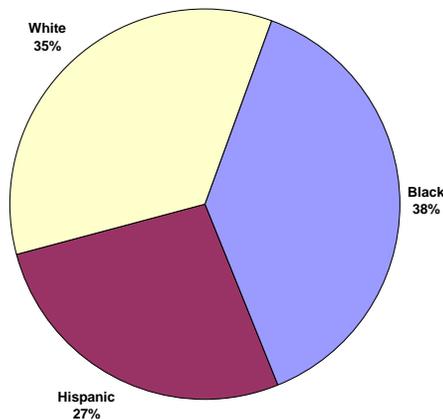
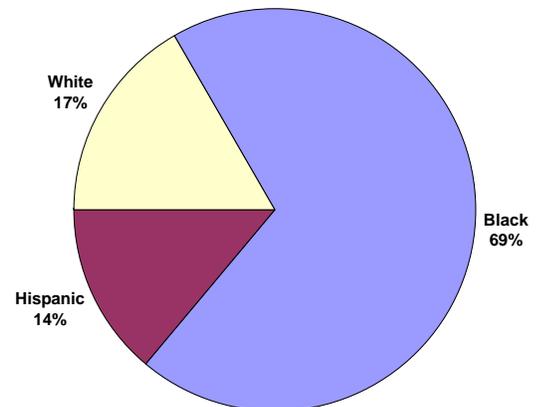


Figure 4. Female Positives by Race/Ethnicity, Florida, 2007



As the analysis of routinely collected data from the statewide HIV Counseling, Testing, and Linkage Program shows, we are well on our way to meeting the testing goals of SOS. Preliminary data for the first seven months of 2008 show 49,829 tests among black women, a 19.6% increase over January – July 2007. There were 32,821 tests among Hispanic women, a 12.1% increase, and 38,399 tests among white women, a 1.2% increase (data not shown).