

Press Release

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Number of new HIV diagnoses in Germany has continued to rise

by Andrea Schuster

Berlin. The *Robert Koch Institute* has announced an increase in the number of HIV infections in 2007. A cure for this deadly disease has still not yet been found. The only protection is education. Ministries, organizations and private firms offer information material on this topic. A good example in the AIDS prevention game “Think Negative!®”, developed with teenagers as the target group.

“The number of HIV-infected persons living in Germany reaches a new peak“ (press release from the *Robert Koch Institute*, 02.02.1999) “In Germany, the number of people with HIV increases further“ (press release *Robert Koch Institute*, 25.11.2003). “The number of people living with the HIV virus world-wide, and the number of AIDS-related deaths continues to increase“ (2006 Report on the global AIDS epidemic, UNAIDS). “Aids – the risks continue to be underestimated“ (press release of the German Federal Government, 28.11.2006). “The *Robert Koch Institute* registered a total of 1.334 newly diagnosed HIV infections in Germany“ (press release *Robert Koch Institute*, 08.10.2007).

The statements are the same year for year. Since 1981, around 25 million people have died following the consequences of AIDS. Of the around 40 million people infected with AIDS world-wide, 2.3 million of these are children under 15.

Over 25 years since the outbreak of the epidemic, there is still no vaccination or cure. The only effective protection against infection continues to be valuable prevention work. In the case of teenagers, this work is mostly carried out by parents, teachers, in the framework of school lessons or local advice centres. The art is to educate the children without pointing the finger and without provoking fears. This is exactly the aim of a Berlin-based firm to which end they conceived the board game Think Negative!®, designed to provide conversation material between adults and teenagers regarding the topic of AIDS, sexuality and contraception. The quiz provides easier access to this sensitive topic and also provides the opportunity to extend the game with players introducing their own rules.

The game informs the players about the essential facts about AIDS, sexually transmittable diseases, the methods of infection and the possibilities of protection. The teenagers will become aware of the world-wide extent of the problems of HIV/AIDS, engage with the possible methods of protection, and recognise that AIDS is not just a problem of “fringe groups,” but is something which can affect everyone. Furthermore, they will learn what should be considered when dealing with those who are HIV positive, which methods of

contraception exist and where they are available and discuss the themes “the first time,” “HIV positive in the friendship circle” or “contraception” in the context of a board game.

The game is available in both German and English and costs 39.80 € plus postage. It can be ordered directly under www.donnavita.de.

ETLog Health EnviroTech & Logistics GmbH is a specialist provider in the healthcare system. The Berlin-based firm acts worldwide as an advisor to clinics, institutions and ministries regarding the disposal of hospital waste, waste management technology, waste water and aids prevention.

Contact PR:

Andrea Schuster | [marketing\(at\)etlog-health.de](mailto:marketing(at)etlog-health.de) | www.etlog-health.de

Tel.: ++ 49 (0) 30 | 44 31 87 - 40 | Fax: - 49

ETLog Health EnviroTech & Logistics GmbH | Linienstr. 72 | 10119 Berlin

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