

464 Massachusetts Ave.
Boston, MA 02118
(617) 361-7447



Education +
Prevention =
Empowerment

July 30, 1992

John Flynn
Cambridge City Council
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: PETITION TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR A PERMIT TO CONDUCT
AIDS PREVENTION/OUTREACH IN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

The Women of Color AIDS Coalition is petitioning the Cambridge City Council for a permit to conduct HIV/AIDS education and outreach in the City of Cambridge.

The Women of Color AIDS Coalition (WAC), operates under the auspices of the Church of the House of Ra. The mission of WAC is to provide HIV/AIDS education and resources to at-risk women of color so that they protect themselves against the transmission of HIV.

Our outreach workers, who are all HIV/AIDS certified educators distribute educational materials, answer questions and attempt to dispel the myths and misconceptions about AIDS and the transmission of HIV. We will also accept donations to achieve our program objectives which are outlined in the enclosed program description.

We are requesting a permit for our outreach workers to operate between the hours of 10:00 am. - 6:00 pm. Monday through Saturday in the following locations in Harvard and Central Squares:

- In front of the Harvard Coop on Mass. Ave.
- On Mass. Ave. adjacent to the MTA Station.
- On Mass. Ave. in front of Cambridge Commons.
- The corner of Mass. Ave. and Prospect Street.

Our outreach efforts will begin on August 15. The materials distributed by our workers will include AIDS prevention pamphlets, red ribbons signifying AIDS awareness, buttons and T-Shirts.

The permit is requested for a period of one year.

JOHN FLYNN
July 31, 1992

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We hope the City Council will support our effort to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Cambridge. If you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (617) 361-7447.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marcelyn Dallis".

Marcelyn Dallis
Project Director

/md
Enclosures

W O M E N O F C O L O R A I D S C O A L I T I O N

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Women of Color AIDS Coalition (WAC) was developed by a multi-ethnic collective of women to provide HIV/AIDS education and resources to at-risk women of color in the Greater Boston area, including Roxbury, Mattapan, North Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, the South End and Cambridge. The mission of the WAC is to educate at-risk women of color so that they protect themselves against the transmission of HIV.

NEED:

According to the most recent Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health figures, in 1992 AIDS is affecting women of color at an alarming rate due to a number of political, social and economic factors. These factors include; historical disenfranchisement, lack of education, lack of health insurance, little or no connection to established health care facilities and lack of culturally appropriate information about HIV/AIDS. The Women of Color AIDS Coalition bridges the educational gap between established health and AIDS education channels and at-risk women of color.

PHILOSOPHY:

WAC's Philosophy is one of community building and empowerment. We believe our project effectively reaches women who are at-risk in Boston's communities of color. By educating and training women and other members of the community to advocate and educate in their own neighborhoods, we are empowering them to take control of their own health care.

APPROACH:

To reach at-risk women in Boston, WAC designed a multi-faceted, culturally-specific program consisting of the following components designed to empower communities to take responsibility of its own health care. Building on these program components, WAC potentially reaches 2000 women of color per week.

HIV/AIDS Health Advocates

* WAC recruits and educates women from the African-American, Latina, Asian and Native American communities and train them to become AIDS prevention advocates in their own neighborhoods. These women are recruited from neighborhood churches and professional organizations such as teachers, social workers and other local community groups.

* WAC recruits neighborhood business proprietors such as small storeowners and encourage them to "give back" to the community by distributing HIV/AIDS information (pamphlets and brochures) to the customers that frequent their establishments.

* WAC recruits and educates local bartenders in communities of color to discuss HIV/AIDS prevention with their customers in an informal yet accurate manner. They also make condoms and brochures readily available to their customers.

Street Outreach

* WAC distributes HIV/AIDS educational materials and resources (pamphlets and condoms) to women in heavily populated areas in communities of color, such as shopping areas, WAC outreach workers are trained to discuss HIV/AIDS with women in a non-threatening, supportive, manner, to answer questions, make referrals and to dispel myths and misinformation about the transmission of the disease.

Safety Net Parties

* WAC recruits women from Boston's communities of color to host Safety Net Parties. WAC's Safety Net Parties are culturally specific and sensitive to women of color. They are designed to provide women of color with information about the sexual transmission of HIV infection in a safe, comfortable atmosphere. The Safety Net Parties are held in the homes of the women who act as hostesses. They invite other women (usually five to ten friends and relatives) over to participate in an informal discussion about HIV/AIDS and safe sexual practices. The Safety Net Parties are facilitated by WAC's staff of AIDS educators.

Young Women At-Risk

* WAC recruits teenage women of color and trains them to become HIV/AIDS teen advocates in their own communities. WAC uses a culturally-specific, simplified AIDS curriculum to educate HIV/AIDS teen advocates to educate other teenagers about HIV/AIDS.

* WAC sponsors a teen theatre group that produces skits and productions with a message about AIDS prevention and presents the plays to local public high schools and middle schools.

The Wall Project

The Wall Project will be a major piece of artwork created by local women artists of color working with WAC. Scheduled for completion in 1994, this magnificently designed mural of tiles will pay tribute to the courage and strength of women of color who are living with HIV/AIDS and who have died of AIDS in Boston's communities of color. This ethnic, feminist work will represent the communities' enormous contribution to the struggle for basic human rights for women of color everywhere.

Consent Comm. # 48

W 99

Petition from Marcelyn Dallis, Project Director, Women of Color AIDS Coalition, requesting permission for a table in the Central and Harvard Square areas to distribute educational materials regarding AIDS.

In City Council,

Aug. 3, 1992

*Referred to the City
Manager with power.
Copy sent to C. Mgr 8/15/92
(see)*