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## DOH-OKALOOSA OBSERVES WORLD AIDS DAY



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**Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.** — The Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) is observing December 1 as World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day is an annual observance and provides an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day was the first global health day, held for the first time in 1988.

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that Florida had 5,377 new diagnoses of HIV infection in 2013, with Florida topping California (5,334), Texas (4,854), and New York (3,803) with number of new diagnosed cases<sup>1</sup>.

“The CDC data shows us that HIV has not disappeared and that it’s still a threat to Floridians,” stated Dr. Karen A. Chapman, Director of DOH-Okaloosa. “World AIDS Day is a great opportunity for the public to start thinking of ways they can protect themselves against this serious but manageable disease.”

DOH-Okaloosa offers free, confidential HIV testing weekdays during regular clinic hours. DOH-Okaloosa also offers counselling and educational services to help individuals understand their risks. The Ryan White Part B Clinic offers primary medical care for individuals that are HIV-positive. For more information about clinic hours or available services, visit [www.HealthyOkaloosa.com](http://www.HealthyOkaloosa.com).

New advances in medications have helped prevent at-risk individuals from getting HIV. To learn more, [www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/aids/prevention/PrEP.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/aids/prevention/PrEP.html) or [www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/index.html). Talk to your primary care provider to see if these medications are right for you.

For more information about World AIDS Day, visit [www.WorldAIDSDay.org](http://www.WorldAIDSDay.org).

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> CDC. (2015). Statistics Overview. Retrieved from HIV/AIDS: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/overview/index.html>