

For Immediate Release

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**PLANNED PARENTHOOD MARKS WORLD AIDS DAY,
STRESSES NEED FOR PREVENTION AND REAL SEX EDUCATION**
Urges Congress to Stop Funding Failed Abstinence-Only Programs

As the international community marks World AIDS Day on December 1st, Planned Parenthood of Northeast Ohio calls for renewed attention to the importance of testing and prevention to stop the spread of sexually transmitted infections like HIV/AIDS, and for an end to federal funding for abstinence-only programs that deny teenagers the lifesaving information they need to stay healthy and safe.

“Today, we reflect on the wide-reaching impact of HIV/AIDS and call upon elected officials to face these challenges with commonsense solutions to protect women, men and teens around the world,” said Tara Broderick, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Northeast Ohio. “Through a real investment in education and testing, we can begin to effectively prevent the spread of this disease.”

Free HIV testing will be available on a walk-in basis at several PPNEO health centers on World AIDS Day, Monday, December 1st. For a complete list of health center locations offering HIV testing services, visit www.PPNEO.org.

PPNEO continues to expand our HIV testing, education and outreach programs to all Northeast Ohio communities. As one of the nation’s leading reproductive health care providers, Planned Parenthood knows firsthand the power of education and testing in preventing the spread of sexually transmitted infections. Every year Planned Parenthood provides five million women, men and teens worldwide with health information and services they need to prevent unintended pregnancy and protect their health. During the past year, 831 local individuals received HIV testing at PPNEO health centers in addition to the 55,269 tests for other sexually transmitted infections. Education and outreach regarding HIV prevention and the importance of testing continues through partnerships with community agencies and institutions that serve youth and at-risk populations.

In addition to PPNEO’s work in communities across Northeast Ohio, our international program helps expand access to comprehensive reproductive health services, HIV prevention programs, maternal and child health services and regional education and public awareness programs in Jamshedpur, India. Investments in the Bonnie Bolitho Global Partners Fund help support these and similar efforts.

More than \$1.5 billion in federal and state funding has been wasted in the past decade on dangerous abstinence-only programs that deny teenagers lifesaving information. A recent study by the Guttmacher Institute found that most federally funded abstinence-only programs do not help delay teens’ sexually activity. Rather, the study found that comprehensive sex education programs had a positive impact on teen sexuality and should be more widely used.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1.1 million people were estimated to be living with HIV disease in the United States. Among communities of color, the CDC reports HIV/AIDS takes a disproportionate toll. AIDS diagnoses for African-American women are nearly 23 times the rate for white women. In addition, while Hispanics comprise nearly 15 percent of the population they represent 17 percent of people living with HIV.

For more information on the HIV/AIDS testing and treatment programs at the Planned Parenthood health center nearest you, visit our website: www.PPNEO.org.

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Planned Parenthood of Northeast Ohio (PPNEO) provides essential reproductive health care, family planning services and sexuality education to women and men at 17 health centers in 21 counties throughout Northeast Ohio. PPNEO strengthens individuals, families and communities by promoting healthy and responsible decision-making about parenthood, relationships and sexual health.