



## Miami-Dade County HIV/AIDS Early Intervention Leadership Program (H.E.L.P.) Network

The **mission** of the Miami-Dade County HELP Network is to provide up-to-date support, technical assistance, and training to **HIV** Counselors in our community.

The **vision** of the Miami-Dade County HELP Network is to provide a venue where **HIV** Counselors are unified in sharing best practices in order to reduce the incidence of **HIV/AIDS** in our community.



**Miami Dade County  
H.E.L.P.  
Network**

### Advisory Workgroup Members

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### Background

In February 2009, more than 30 invited participants attended a Think Tank entitled “Toward a Vision of Thoughtful Change”; it provided a forum for stakeholders to discuss freely and openly new strategies for addressing early intervention services concerning the HIV/AIDS crisis in Miami-Dade. This gave birth to our “Test Miami” Initiative. One of the action steps under this initiative is “Working with the community” with one of the underlined goals being to

- ✓ Develop an HIV Counselor Network to share/exchange best practices and strategies, provide peer support and continuing education classes.

### Objective

The **Miami-Dade County H.E.L.P. Network** developed out of an ongoing expressed need for additional assistance and training for HIV Counselors within Miami-Dade County.

While all HIV Counselors share the experience of attending the HIV 104 and 500/501 trainings prior to receiving certification to conduct HIV counseling and testing, the Annual Update provides the only other coordinated opportunity for all HIV Counselors to get together and exchange additional educational information and ideas. While both statewide and national conferences provide other opportunities for the exchange of educational material and sharing of information, limited funding and budgetary restrictions often result in limited staff having access to such gatherings.

Through the Miami-Dade County HELP Network, all HIV Counselors will be offered a local venue to access ongoing training, skills building and technical assistance. HIV Counselors will have opportunities to continue expanding their knowledge base and strategize around shared approaches and challenges to reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Miami-Dade.



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**Next Steps**

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**This is just the beginning!!** The MDCHN looks forward to identifying opportunities to provide extended training and skills development for HIV Counselors throughout Miami-Dade County. We are committed to working with local HIV/AIDS service agencies to identify additional staff development needs and providing access to the required updated information and training. By working together, we can strengthen Miami-Dade County's attack on HIV.

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**What We Need**

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**We need you (Executive Directors, Directors, and Coordinators)...** your ongoing support and commitment to developing and reinforcing a strong direct staff base with a skill set that serves as a benchmark of quality.

**We need you (HIV Counselors)...** your expanded mindset and ongoing commitment to the demonstration of excellence through quality service.