



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**RUSSIA**

# CASE STUDY

## HIV Campaign Reaches Out to Youth

**Online awareness campaign attracts interest from youth**



A poster designed for USAID's HIV awareness campaign tells youth to "Be Faithful to Your Love."

***Eighty percent of HIV-positive Russians are between the ages of 15 and 29.***

### **Challenge**

Over the past decade, Russia has experienced one of the fastest growing HIV/AIDS epidemics in the world. UNAIDS estimates that another Russian is infected with HIV/AIDS every 12 minutes. By April 2005, around 313,000 cases were officially registered, though estimates put the number of actual cases between 1 and 1.5 million — 1 percent of the total population. The epidemic especially targets Russia's youth. Eighty percent of HIV-positive Russians are between the ages of 15 and 29.

### **Initiative**

In May 2004, USAID, in coordination with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, supported the launch of a new HIV education and prevention campaign targeted at Russian youth. The "Be Faithful to Your Love" Internet campaign was created to raise awareness about the risks of HIV infection and to promote healthy sexual habits, including abstinence, condom use and monogamy among youth over 15 years of age. Special features on the Web site include an interactive game that determines the user's risk of contracting HIV and a series of questions and answers about how the disease is transmitted. During a special "Be Faithful to Your Love" promotion, visitors with the best answers to the question, "Why do you think you should be faithful to your loved one?" were awarded prizes such as mountain bikes and rollerblades.

### **Results**

During its two-week promotional period, "Be Faithful to Your Love" attracted more than 116,727 visitors. The game was played 12,138 times, and 7,500 young people answered questions. Users also asked more than 400 questions of Dr. Pertsev — a virtual doctor who gives advice and answers questions about HIV/AIDS and provides referrals for professional help and testing facilities. Administrators continue to monitor the Web site's chat rooms and review e-mail comments, using this information to adapt USAID's other HIV education programs so they effectively appeal to Russian youth.

### **Telling Our Story**

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523-1000  
<http://stories.usaid.gov>