

About the Gay Health Advocacy Project

People at risk for AIDS face not only the threat of illness, but also anxiety, harassment, and discrimination. The Columbia Gay Health Advocacy Project (CGHAP) was formed to address these problems by educating the Columbia University community about AIDS, especially about how to avoid transmission of the infection that causes AIDS. The Project concentrates on identifying strategies effective with a university-age population. Since September 1985 twenty student, staff, and faculty volunteers have provided services ranging from one-to-one counseling to broad outreach, educational, and anti-discrimination programs. CGHAP's successful counseling of over three hundred clients has prompted the Columbia University Health Service to refer patients seeking information or HIV antibody testing to the Project as a matter of policy.

October 1986 marked the publication of a forty-page AIDS information pamphlet written by the Project at the request of the University administration. Thirty thousand copies of the pamphlet are being distributed to students, faculty, and staff under the auspices of the University Health Service. A revised and expanded version of the pamphlet was commercially published in July 1987 by Pocket Books as "The Essential AIDS Fact Book."

In addition, the Project has organized regular AIDS information forums, panel discussions, and safer-sex workshops, and Project representatives have lectured at dozens of other speaking engagements. The Project conducted an intensive series of workshops at the National Gay and Lesbian Student Union Conference held at Columbia March 27-29, 1987. These workshops trained students from other schools to set up AIDS projects at their own campuses. The Project is currently working with Gay Men's Health Crisis and the New York City Department of Health to extend this training to post-secondary schools throughout the metropolitan area.

While the Project focuses on Columbia's gay male community, our services are available to and used by both men and women whether gay or straight. For more information about the Project, please call (212) 280-2878 and ask to speak to a CGHAP representative.