

Who we are : an introduction to our work / Terrence Higgins Trust.

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Who we are

An introduction to our work



Some **FACTS** about **HIV** and **AIDS**

- **HIV** (*the Human Immunodeficiency Virus*) infects and gradually destroys the body's immune system.
- The term **AIDS** (*Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*) describes the point when a person's immune system can no longer fight off certain infections and cancers.
- HIV can be transmitted through blood, seminal fluids, vaginal fluids and breast milk.
- Condoms are the most effective way of preventing many sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, being passed on during sex.

...and some **FICTIONS**

- *"You can get HIV from kissing."*

Wrong.

- *"You can get HIV by sharing cutlery or using the same toilet seat."*

No, you can't.

- *"HIV only affects gay men and African people."*

Not true. The virus doesn't discriminate — it can affect anyone.

- *"There's a cure for HIV."*

Unfortunately that's not true either, though many people are living longer with HIV, thanks to drug treatments.

It's **not** the type of person you are, the lifestyle you follow, or where you come from in the world that puts you at risk of getting infected with HIV.

It's what you do.

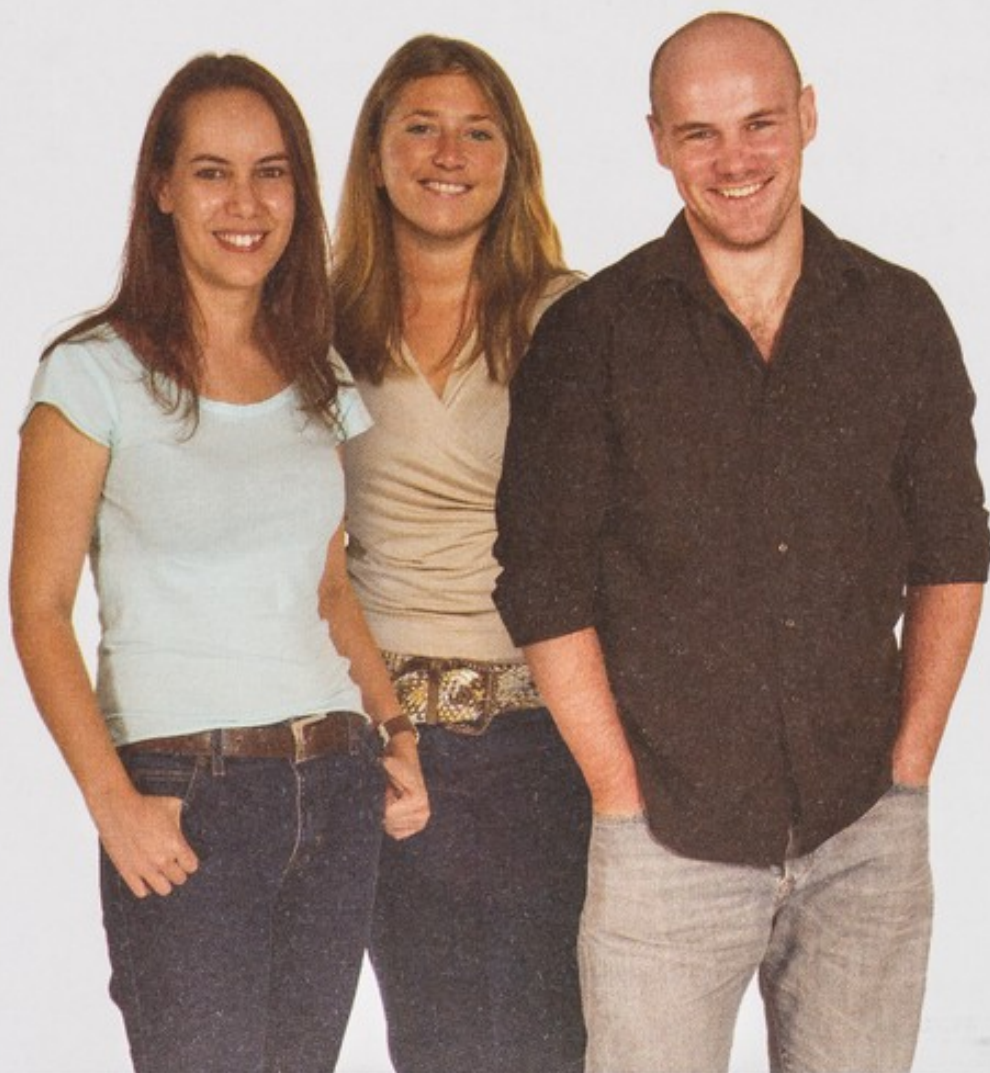
By changing what you do you can minimise the risk of getting infected.

Who we are

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) was the first charity in the UK to be set up in response to the HIV epidemic and is now the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity.

Terry Higgins was one of the first people in the UK to die with AIDS, on 4 July 1982 in St Thomas' Hospital, London. By naming the Trust after Terry, the founders of the charity, who were his friends, hoped to personalise and humanise AIDS in a very public way.

Our mission is to reduce the spread of HIV, promote good sexual health and provide services which improve the health and quality of life of anyone affected. We also campaign for greater public and political understanding of the personal, social and medical impact of HIV and sexual ill health.



What we do

Challenging ignorance

HIV thrives on ignorance. We offer people the information they need to protect themselves and others – honestly, confidentially and without judgment. With our pioneering service, THT Direct, information and advice on all aspects of sexual health are just a phone call or an email away

Working for change

For people with HIV, discrimination and prejudice can have serious consequences for health and wellbeing. Through lobbying and our campaigners' network, we do all we can to influence public policy, while our mass media campaigns and outreach programmes seek to reduce the rate of new infections and raise awareness of issues such as condom use and HIV testing.

Taking the test

Knowing whether or not you have an STI is one of the keys to keeping healthy and reducing new infections. Through our Fastest service, we offer free and confidential testing, outside of office hours and away from hospital settings, with results available in most cases in just one hour.

Someone to talk to

THT's counsellors help people deal with the stresses caused by HIV, whether it's difficulties associated with treatments, loss of health or bereavement. Our community support volunteers provide emotional and practical support to help combat the isolation experienced by many people living with HIV.

What you can do

THT was founded by volunteers, and the charity could not have achieved so much without the passionate support of thousands of individuals and organisations. We have to raise over **£5million** each year from voluntary donations just to keep our services going.

Here are just a few of the ways you can help us continue our vital work:

- Make a donation
- Organise a fundraising event at work, at school or at college
- Get sponsored to run a marathon or jump out of a plane
- Become a THT volunteer
- Come to a gala event
- Leave us a gift in your will
- Join our campaigners' network

Or simply wear a red ribbon on **World AIDS Day, 1st December,** to show you care.

We support people in **Scotland, Wales** and throughout **England**. For details of your nearest service centre, more information about sexual health or to get involved, visit our website **www.tht.org.uk**





The HIV and sexual health charity for life

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