

## ABSTRACT

**Objective** Approximately 25 percent of Americans with HIV are unaware of their infection but more significantly, this percentage increases to 48 percent for HIV infected youth. Current recommendations include routine HIV testing of youth ages 16-18 however awareness of the routine HIV testing in several medical settings and the community is lacking. Pediatricians can play a key role in preventing and identifying HIV infection by promoting risk-reduction counseling and offering routine testing to the youth. Resources, knowledge, and tools to implement routine HIV testing in primary care pediatric settings are limited.

**Methods** A broad team of experts including clinicians, peer educators, nurse educators, and a statistician reviewed current policies, guidelines and existing materials on HIV testing in youth. Emphasis was placed on current knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of providers and youth regarding HIV testing.

**Results** Educational materials were designed and produced to assist youth, parents and providers in implementing routine HIV testing in medical settings. Information on HIV infection, types of testing and local resources was included as well as legal terms related to HIV testing, counseling, and consent. Youth and adult surveys were created to be administered at community events, youth clinics, and primary care offices to assess efficacy, accuracy, and impact of educational materials on the willingness and interest in seeking, offering, and/or providing HIV testing.

**Conclusions** Despite great progress in treatment and continued efforts to increase HIV testing, only a portion of pediatricians are aware and implement current recommendations for routine HIV testing in youth. Educational materials targeted towards youth, adults and providers may facilitate increase in awareness of the recommendations for routine HIV testing in youth and can serve as a tool to facilitate HIV testing at the pediatric office setting.

## INTRODUCTION

Despite great progress in treatment and continued efforts to screen targeted populations, more than 1 million Americans were living with HIV in 2006, including 55,320 adolescents and young adults. Adolescents are among the most vulnerable group because of their risk-taking behaviors, impulsivity, and cognitive development. The approach to adolescents requires a direct and explicit style and providers may not feel comfortable to discuss HIV testing with the youth or their guardians. To facilitate awareness of current recommendations on routine HIV testing for youth 16-18 years and provide appropriate educational materials a group of experts reviewed current guidelines and designed new informative tools based on Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention and American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations.

## METHODS

- Review of current HIV testing guidelines
- Review of HIV testing materials
- Discuss current knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of providers and youth on the topic
- Design, produce, and pilot promotional and educational materials to assist youth, parents and providers in implementing routine HIV testing in medical settings.

## RESULTS

### Key elements in successful educational materials targeted to:

#### Youth

- Direct and explicit style
- Serve to clarify misconceptions and gaps in knowledge
- Use simple language
- Cultural sensitive
- Attractive, engaging style and language

#### Parents

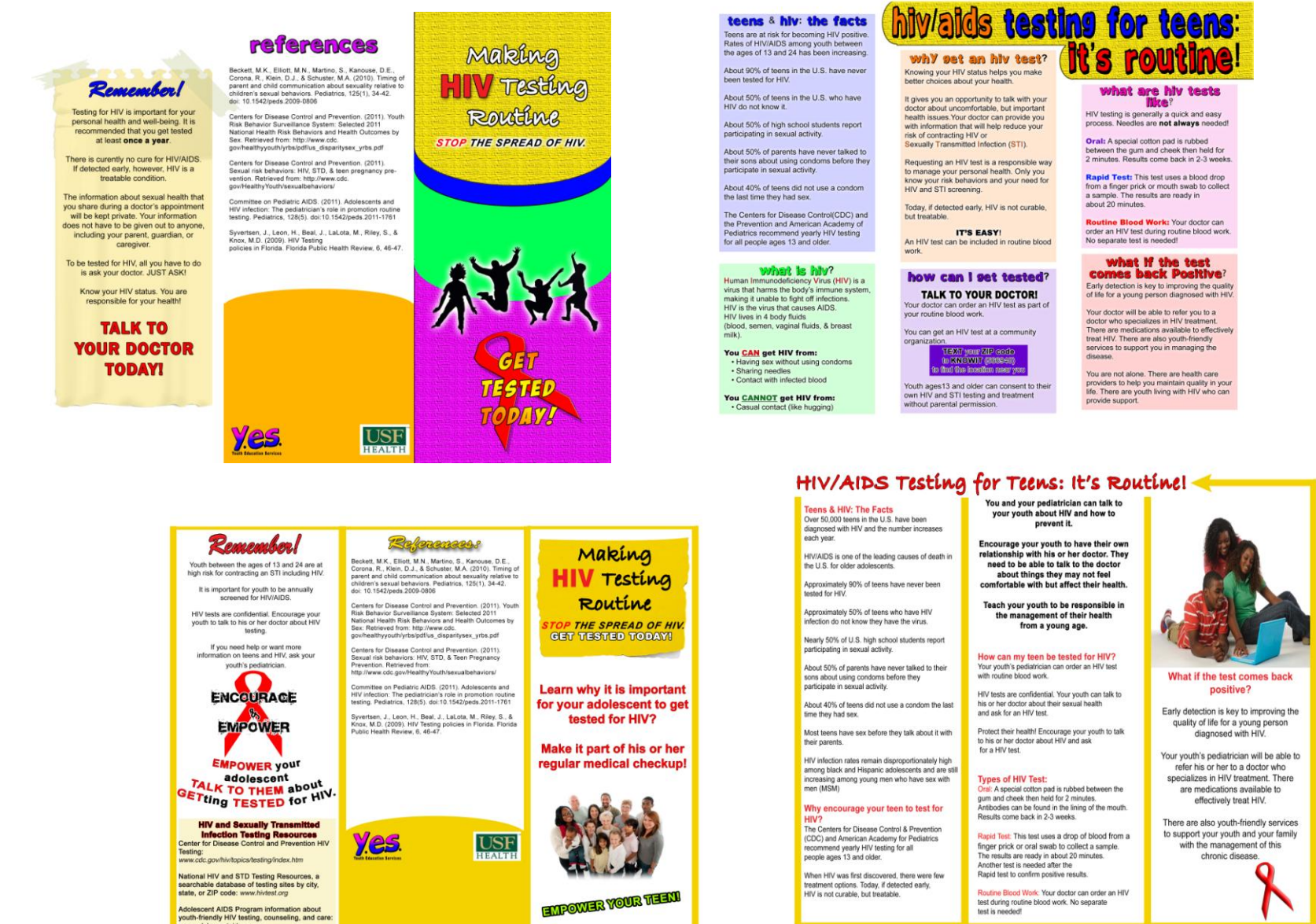
- Address the importance of routine HIV testing and facilitate dialogue with youth and provider
- Provide HIV/AIDS knowledge and rationale for testing and prevention
- Address family attitudes to youth sexual activity

#### Providers

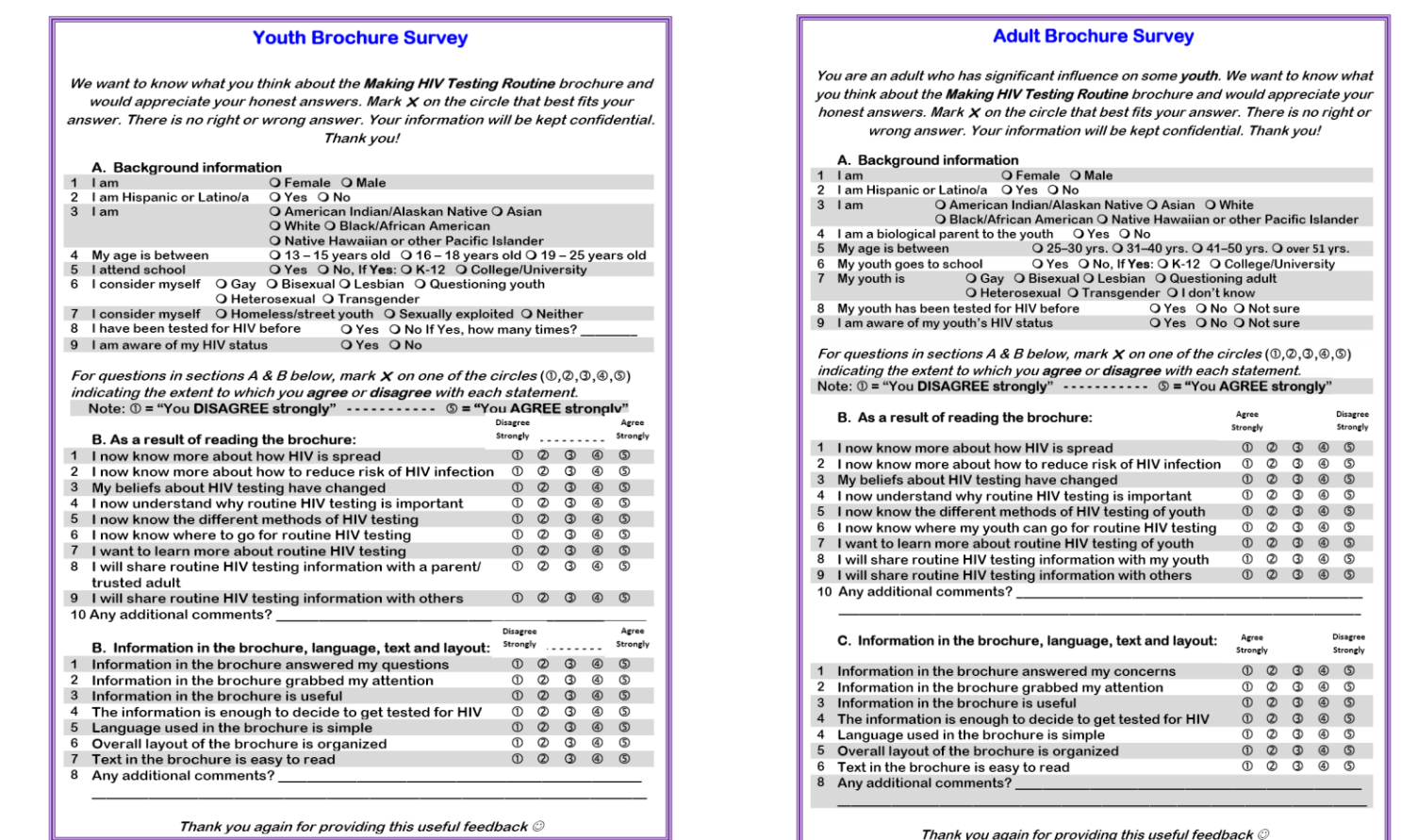
- Provide a comprehensive guide to risk assessment, rationale for HIV testing, and approaches to youth
- Review barriers to HIV screening
- Review legislation related to routine testing, significance of opt out/opt in approach, consent and disclosure process, reporting
- Address privacy and confidentiality, counseling
- Review HIV screening methods
- Provide resources at the local level for linkage to care of HIV positive youth

## RESULTS

### Educational materials for youth and parents



### Surveys addressing impact of educational materials



## CONCLUSIONS

Educational materials targeted towards youth, adults and providers may facilitate increase in awareness of the recommendations for routine HIV testing in youth and can serve as a tool to facilitate HIV testing at the pediatric office setting.

## REFERENCES

Committee on Pediatric AIDS Adolescents and HIV Infection: The Pediatrician's Role in Promoting Routine Testing. *Pediatrics* 2011;128;1023; online October 31, 2011; DOI: 10.1542/peds.2011-1761