

THE NETWORKS



Deutsche
AIDS-Hilfe e.V.





For further

information contact:

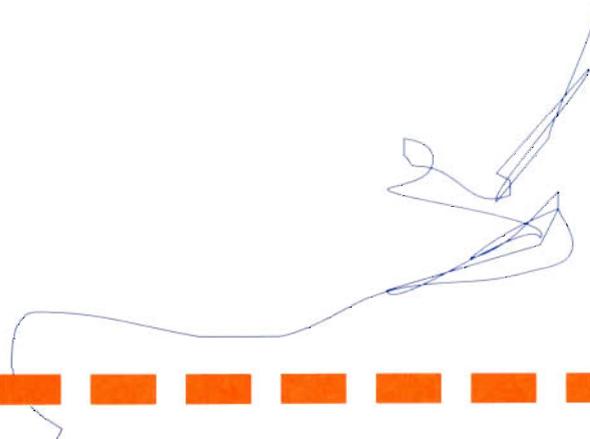
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Gay Men

Within Germany there is no formally established national network of gay men. There are, however, various national organizations which represent a variety of perspectives and interests within the gay movement; for example, leather men, gays in the church, gay teachers, gay doctors, gay therapists, etc. The Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe works together with these organizations, promoting regional coordination and information-sharing.

In addition, the AIDS service organizations themselves work together with gay organizations at the regional and local levels. The role of the Department for Gay, Bisexual Men, and Hustlers of the Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe regarding gay organizations in Germany is twofold: to promote HIV/AIDS-related work within these groups and to advocate for the support of gay organizations in society as a necessary part of prevention work.

The role of gay organizations is indispensable in the strategy of health promotion ("structural prevention") which forms the basis for the Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe prevention philosophy.





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The HIV+ Network

This is a network by and for people with HIV/AIDS in Germany, representing their needs within the AIDS service movement and in society as a whole. It was founded in May 1996. This network is self-sustaining and functions independently of all other organizations and bodies working within the field of AIDS.





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Junkies

Drug users--like all other men and women--are entitled to a life of human dignity. This right is unconditional, regardless of whether or not the person is abstinent from drugs or whether or not he or she complies with expected norms of behavior.

Not until the beginning of the AIDS epidemic were the prevailing moralistic drug policies in Germany called into question. In 1989 the self-help group JES was founded (Junkies, Ex-Junkies, Substituierte). Now with forty member groups nationwide, JES is involved in various activities to organize junkies nationally. Workshops are held on HIV prevention, health education, and organizational issues. Although people using drugs are still often considered to be out of control, criminally involved, and antisocial, JES has been able to gain recognition because of the competence of the staff and volunteers working for the organization. The Speakers Council, which functions as a board of directors, manages the organizational structures and political activities of JES, participating actively in public debate at both the national and local levels.

JES is, however, not yet generally recognized as an important partner in developing HIV prevention strategies and drug policy. Instead, it is more often seen by the authorities as a disruptive group which needs to be kept under control. For example, the Federal Central for Health Education, dependent on the Ministry of Health for funding, took action in 1992 against the "Safer Use" information being distributed.

Major activities of JES take place in connection with HIV prevention and living with AIDS. Sixty thousand copies of the brochure "Safer Use", produced by JES, have been distributed to IDUs by JES groups and other organizations. Except for the workshops which are run in collaboration with the Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe, there is no funding by the Ministry of Health or any other central organization. Regional and local authorities are more likely than the federal government to contract with JES member groups to run drop-in centers, needle exchanges, and information services, and to consult JES regarding drug substitution programs. JES has recently taken on more creative tasks such as all-night needle exchanges, needle and syringe recycling, and a successful program for codeine substitution in Berlin and several other cities.

The JES Network in Germany is a unique achievement!





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Women

The network Women and AIDS (Frauen und AIDS) is a national collaborative effort of women who are working in the interest of women with HIV/AIDS. The network sees itself as a political interest group by and for women with HIV/AIDS and those women working in the AIDS field. We seek to build a political lobby for HIV positive women and those women living with AIDS as well as a network of contacts throughout the country.

This network is open to all who are interested. It serves to collect and disseminate information, to develop models and programs, and to enable the exchange of ideas and experiences regarding the subject women and AIDS.

In 1992 the first women came together to found the Network. Now there are over one hundred women throughout Germany who are in contact with each other. These include: women with and without HIV/AIDS, staff of self-help organizations, social service agencies (public and private), academic staff, and volunteers. The network offers personal, practical, and political support in all matters which have to do with women and AIDS.

Goals

To build an information pool

To promote women-specific approaches in prevention, counseling, and self-help programs

To promote women-specific approaches in the areas of research and medical/psychosocial care

To create a political forum

Services

DHIVA—the network newsletter; trainings; committees working on various topics (public relations, drugs, lesbian issues, legal issues, medical issues, prevention, etc.); political work; workshops; conferences; printed materials; information exchange; etc.