

Reproductive Health Education (RH Ed) is an educational newsletter from the Health Advocates at Finger Lakes Community Health. This newsletter covers all reproductive health topics, in addition to related services offered at our health centers.

## Hooking Up During COVID-19

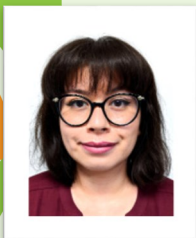
Let's get this straight: during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no "safe way" to have sex with someone you don't live and quarantine with. But humans are humans, so it's important to think about risk reduction strategies when hooking up. Sex is all about weighing your risk factors, assessing them against the risk factors of the person (or people) you'd like to have sex with, and doing everything you can to further reduce the potential harm. On top of worrying about pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, COVID adds one more layer of concern. There is still a lot we don't know about the COVID-19 Virus. What we do know is that it can be spread by particles in saliva mucus and breath. The virus has also been detected in semen and feces. Activities such as kissing, oral sex, and anal sex should be avoided unless barrier methods are used.

### Here are a few more strategies to reduce your risks while hooking up:

- Wear a mask.
- If having sex with someone you aren't quarantining with, wearing a mask can reduce transmission risk of COVID.
- Use sex positions that minimize face to face contact.
- Maintain cleanliness by washing up before and after activity (soap, water, sanitizer).
- Use condoms and dental dams.
- Keep it Quick.
- Reducing the time of activity reduces the time you are potentially exposed to particles.
- Consider activities that don't transfer fluids, such as masturbation.



## Introducing our newest Health Educator, Lilian Urrutia



Our newest Health Educator has joined our team. Lilian is a graduate from Idaho State University (ISU) where she earned her Bachelors of Arts (B.A) in Anthropology. She is eager to be joining our team given her prior independent anthropology work in sex and cultural studies. During her time at ISU, Lilian was put in charge of creating and teaching a digital cultural course, and was a voice for gender and racial equality in her department. Lilian has prior collaborative work within her department,

striving for a more sex positive and inclusive sex education within the community.

With her strive for equity and positive educational experiences, Lilian hopes to assist the FLCH's Reproductive Health Team's continuing efforts to provide holistic, affordable, and confidential reproductive health care to our local communities. She will be working closely with Wayne and Cayuga counties. As a new resident of the Finger Lakes region, she is eager to explore everything the area has to offer.

## Locations:

### Bath

#### Community Health

117 E. Steuben St  
Bath, NY 14810  
(607) 776-3063

### Geneva

#### Community Health

601B Washington St  
Geneva, NY 14456  
(315) 781-8448

### Newark

#### Community Health

513 W. Union St  
Newark, NY 14513  
(315) 573-7577

### Ovid

#### Community Health

7150 N. Main Street  
Ovid, NY 14521  
(607) 403-0065

### Penn Yan

#### Community Health

112 Kimball Ave  
Penn Yan, NY 14527  
(315) 536-2752

### Port Byron

#### Community Health

60 Main St  
Port Byron, NY 13140  
(315) 776-9700

### Sodus

#### Community Health

634I Ridge Rodd  
Sodus, NY 14551  
(315) 483-1199

Call the FLCH office nearest you for all your medical, dental, reproductive and behavioral health needs.

For more details visit:

[www.LocalCommunityHealth.com](http://www.LocalCommunityHealth.com)

## February 7th is **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

Every year in February, we observe National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The goal of this day is to increase HIV education, testing, community involvement, and treatment among black communities. The first time this event took place was in 1999. Detection and treatment of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) have come a long way since then. According to [HIV.gov](http://HIV.gov), 43% of all new HIV diagnoses are among African Americans. Among women, 59% of new HIV diagnoses are African American women. HIV, or the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, weakens a person's immune system by destroying cells that help fight disease and infection. While there is no cure for HIV, a person can prevent it by reducing risky behaviors. Using condoms or other barriers like such as dental dams during sexual activity reduces fluid transmission between partners, decreasing

one's risk of sexually transmitted diseases. Sharing needles or razors should also be avoided, as it is another way disease carrying fluids can be transmitted. HIV testing can be done through a rapid test with a finger prick, or even a mouth swab. These results typically can be determined in 10 minutes. HIV testing can also be done with a blood draw. A person who receives a positive result on either type of HIV test can take medication to manage their infection and live healthy lifestyles. According to the CDC, there is no data to show that people with HIV are at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19. Black Americans account for a higher proportion of new HIV diagnoses and people with HIV when compared to other race/ethnicities. However, between 2010-2017, HIV diagnoses decreased 15% among this population in the United States.

### Prevention Challenges



1 in 7 blacks/African Americans with HIV are unaware they have it. People who do not know they have HIV cannot take advantage of HIV care and treatment and may unknowingly pass HIV to others.



African American men and women have higher rates of some sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) than other racial/ethnic communities. Having another STD can increase a person's chance of getting or transmitting HIV.



The poverty rate among African Americans is high. The socioeconomic issues associated with poverty—including limited access to high-quality health care, housing, and HIV prevention education—directly and indirectly increase the risk for HIV infection and affect the health of people living with and at risk for HIV. These factors may explain why African Americans have worse outcomes on the HIV continuum of care, including lower rates of linkage to care and viral suppression.



Stigma, fear, discrimination, and homophobia may prevent African Americans from accessing HIV prevention and care services.

• **Would you like us to visit your program or school to provide evidence based programming on pregnancy prevention, STI prevention, healthy relationships and more?** For more information visit, [www.LocalCommunityHealth.com](http://www.LocalCommunityHealth.com) or call us today to schedule at (315) 787-8132.



Olivia Catalano, Olivia Clinton, and Lilian Urrutia  
**FLCH's Reproductive Health Team**