

### **Public Opinion on the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the United States**

Overall, HIV/AIDS is a concern to many in the United States, both as a personal concern and as a problem facing the nation. African Americans and Latinos express more concern about the epidemic than their white counterparts.

In 2004, 21% of the public name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation (a share that had been on the decline since 1995, but increased somewhat since 2002). African Americans (43%) and Latinos (31%) are much more likely than whites (17%) to identify HIV/AIDS as the nation's most urgent health problem. In fact, HIV/AIDS ranks first among African Americans as the most urgent health problem facing the nation. Young people are more likely than their older counterparts to name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation.

### **Perceived Progress On HIV/AIDS**

Views on the nation's progress in the area of HIV/AIDS are mixed. While more people say the United States is making progress (47%) on HIV/AIDS than losing ground (36%), this gap has narrowed since 1997. In 2004, African Americans are more likely than other groups to say the U.S. is losing ground rather than making progress in the area of HIV/AIDS. Between 1997 and 2003, the share of African Americans who said that the U.S. was losing ground on HIV/AIDS remained fairly steady at around four in ten, increasing to a majority in 2004.

Nearly six in ten (57%) Americans believe that spending more money on HIV/AIDS prevention in the United States will lead to meaningful progress in slowing the epidemic. African Americans are more likely than whites to say that increased spending will lead to progress.

### **Personal Concern About HIV/AIDS**

In addition to concern about HIV/AIDS as a national epidemic, many Americans are personally concerned about the disease. Overall, almost two in ten (17%) Americans say they are personally "very concerned" about becoming infected with HIV and more than one-third (36%) of parents with children age 21 or younger say they are "very concerned" about their child becoming infected.

African Americans and Latinos are much more likely than whites to express personal concern about the epidemic. Four in ten African Americans (43%) and three in ten Latinos (30%) say they are personally "very concerned" about becoming infected with HIV compared to one in ten (10%) whites. African American and Latino parents are also more likely than white parents to say they are "very concerned" about their children becoming infected with HIV (66% of African American parents, 46% of Latinos and 26% of whites).

### **Knowledge About The Epidemic and Its Impact**

A large majority of the public (71%) say that most of what they know about HIV/AIDS comes from the media, and people are well-informed about certain aspects of the HIV epidemic. Large shares know that there is no cure for AIDS (90%), that there are drugs that can lengthen the lives of those with HIV (88%) and that there is not currently an HIV vaccine available (79%). A smaller share of the public knows that a pregnant woman with HIV can take drugs to reduce the risk of her baby being infected (43%) and that having another STD increases a person's risk of getting HIV (41%).

Most Americans are not aware of how the epidemic impacts different groups in the United States: 39% of the public knows that African Americans account for about half of all new HIV infections in the U.S.; 40% of the public knows that half of all new HIV infections each year are among young people. Even fewer are aware that women with HIV have more difficulty than men accessing care and treatment (12%).

### **Women's Views Of The HIV/AIDS Epidemic**

In general, women and men share similar views on key aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, including the progress the U.S. has made against the epidemic, knowing someone who has HIV/AIDS and personal concern about the disease. However, women (19%) are somewhat less likely than men (24%) to name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation.

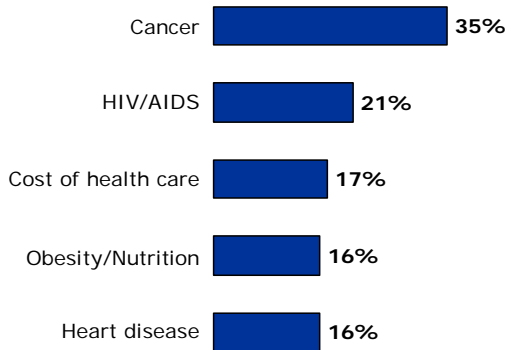
This month's Kaiser Health Poll Report featured topic uses data from the 2004 Kaiser *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS*. See topline (Pub#7141) for complete question wording and responses to this survey.

## HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation

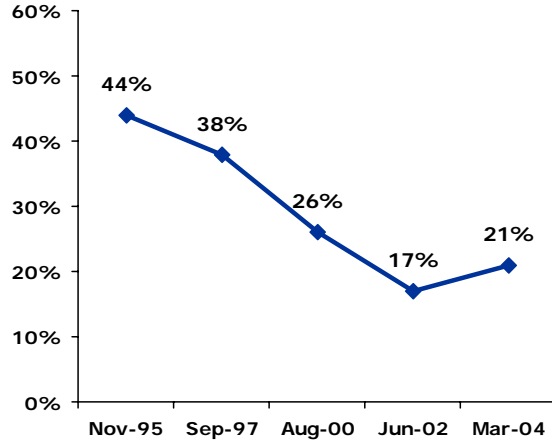
In 2004, the public ranks HIV/AIDS second (behind cancer) as the most urgent health problem facing the nation. While the share of the public naming HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation declined dramatically between 1995 and 2002, this share has increased slightly between 2002 and 2004.

### HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation

What do you think is the most urgent health problem facing this nation today? (Mar 2004)  
(Open-ended – top 5 responses shown)\*



Percent naming HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation...



\*Note: Adds to more than 100% because of multiple responses

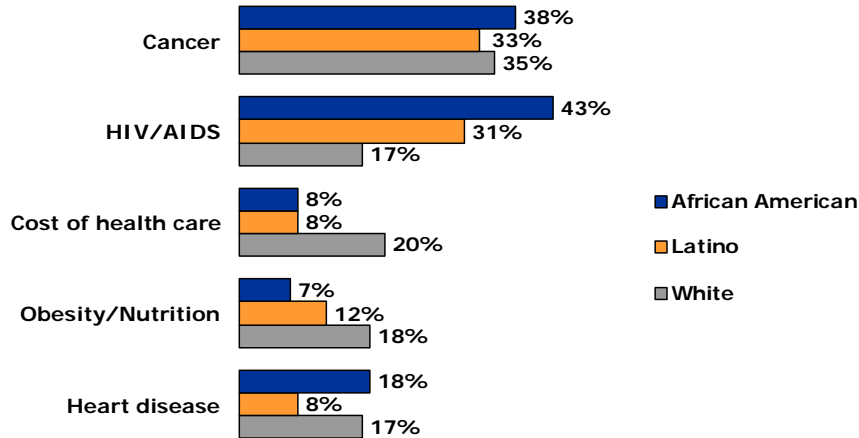
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Health Poll Report*

### HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation By Race

Among African Americans, HIV/AIDS ranks first as the nation's most urgent health problem, a percentage that is significantly greater than among whites or Latinos. More than four in ten African Americans (43%), three in ten Latinos (31%), and 17% of whites say that HIV/AIDS is the most urgent health problem facing the nation.

#### HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation By Race

What do you think is the most urgent health problem facing THIS NATION today?  
(Open-ended – top 5 responses shown)\*



\* Note: Adds up to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

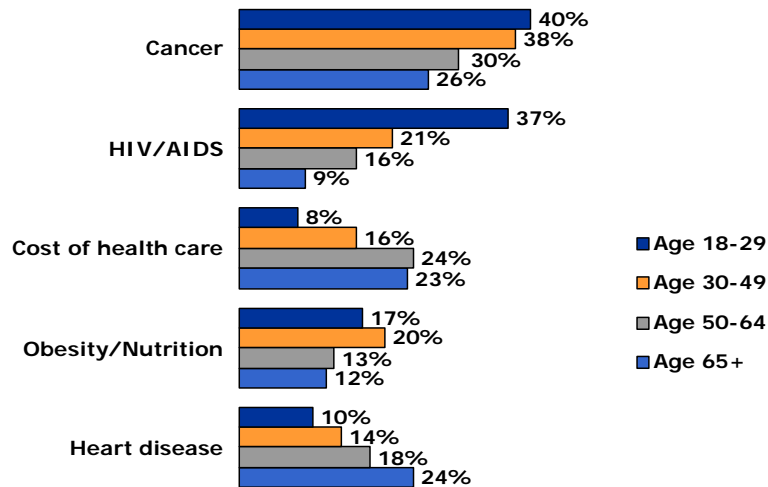
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

## HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation By Age

Young people ages 18-29 (37%) are more likely than their older counterparts ages 30-49 (21%), ages 50-64 (16%) and ages 65 and over (9%) to name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation.

### HIV/AIDS As Most Urgent Health Problem Facing The Nation By Age

What do you think is the most urgent health problem facing THIS NATION today?  
(Open-ended – top 5 responses shown)\*



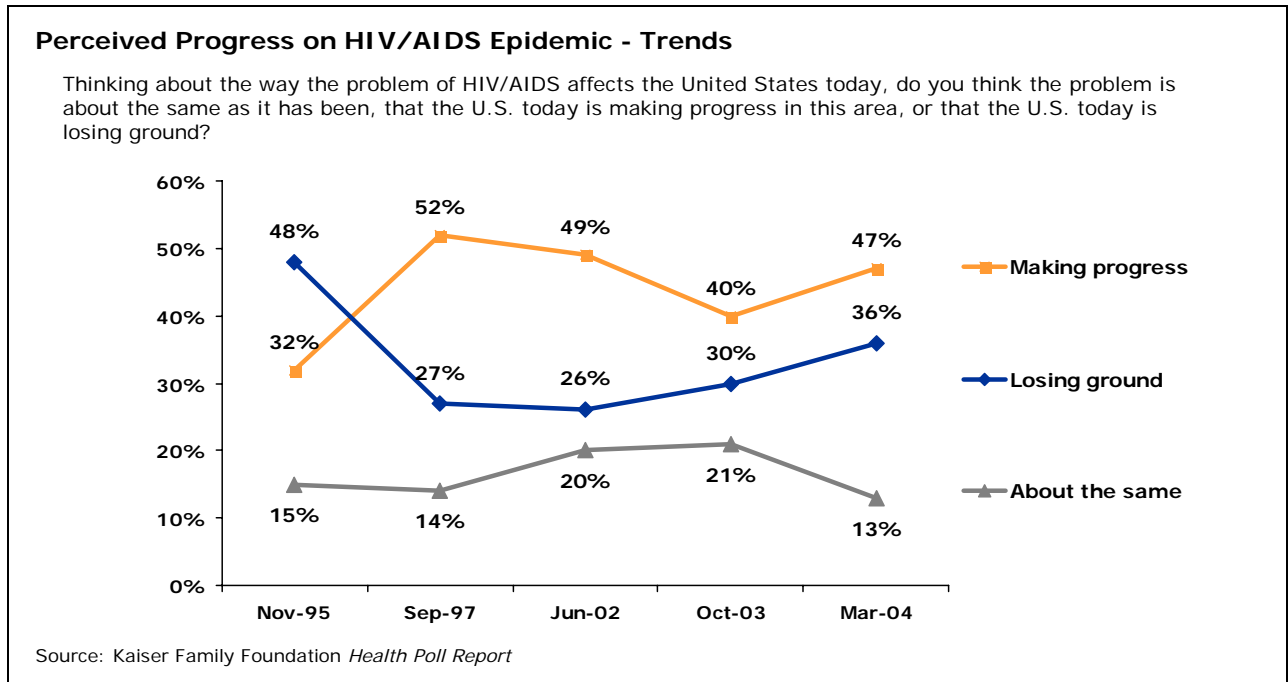
\* Note: Adds up to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

### Perceived Progress on HIV/AIDS Epidemic - Trends

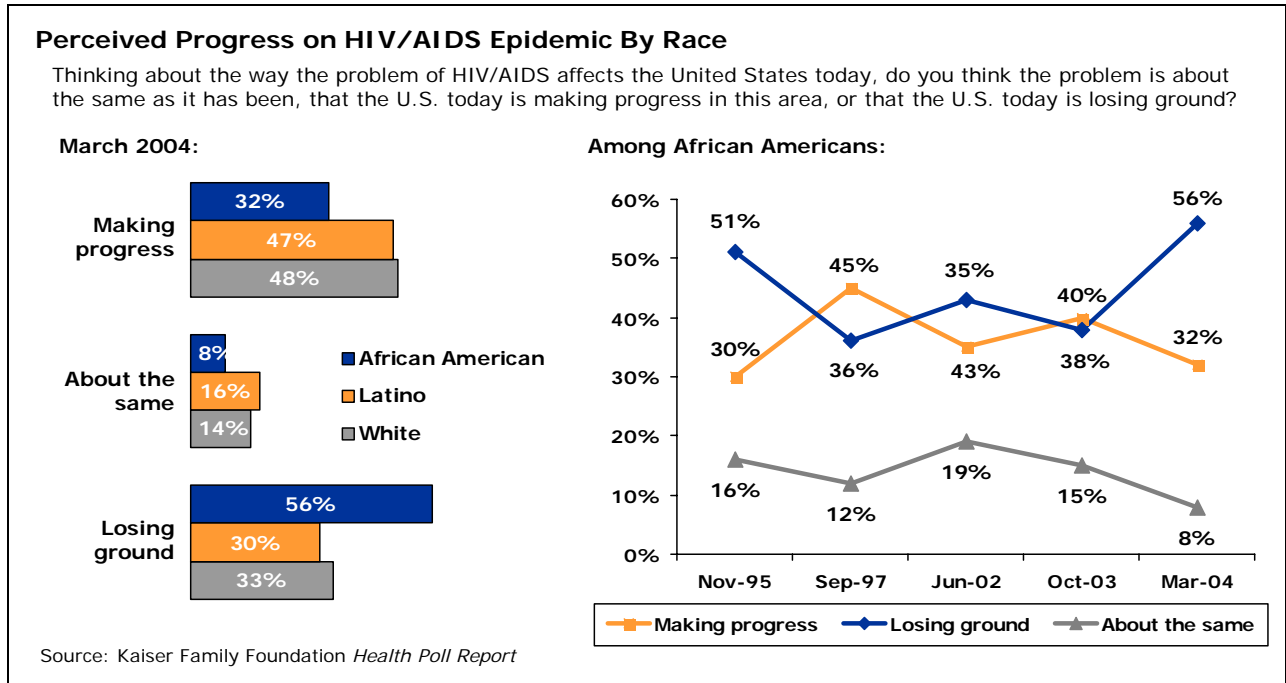
Since 1997, the public is more likely to say that the United States is making progress on the problem of HIV/AIDS than is losing ground. However, the percent who say the United States is losing ground on HIV/AIDS increased slightly between 1997 and 2004 while the share who say the United States is making progress on the problem of HIV/AIDS has remained fairly steady.

In 2004, almost half (47%) of people overall say the United States is making progress on the problem of HIV/AIDS and just over one-third (36%) say the United States is losing ground.



### Perceived Progress on HIV/AIDS Epidemic By Race

In 2004, African Americans are more likely to say the United States is losing ground (56%) when it comes to the problem of HIV/AIDS than making progress (32%), a percentage that is significantly greater than among whites or Latinos. Between 1997 and 2003, the share of African Americans who said that the U.S. was losing ground on HIV/AIDS remained fairly steady at around four in ten, increasing to a majority in 2004.

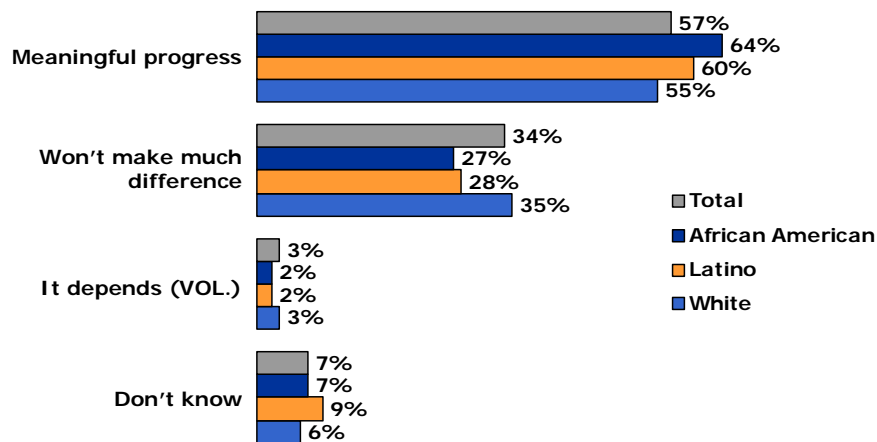


### Will Spending On HIV/AIDS Prevention In The United States Lead To Progress?

Nearly six in ten people overall (57%) believe that spending more money on HIV/AIDS prevention in the United States will lead to meaningful progress in slowing the epidemic, while about a third (34%) think that spending money won't make much difference. African Americans (64%) are somewhat more likely than whites (55%) to think that spending on prevention will lead to meaningful progress.

#### Will Spending On HIV/AIDS Prevention In The United States Lead To Progress?

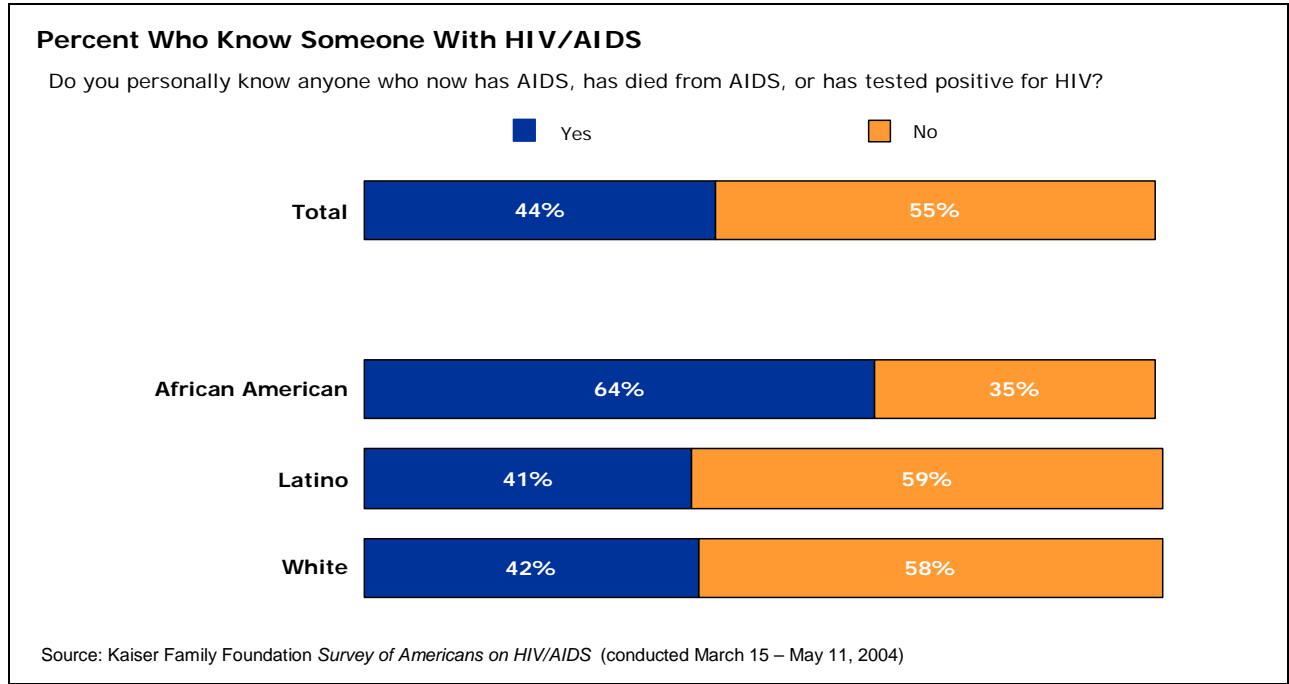
In general, do you think that spending more money on HIV/AIDS prevention in the United States will lead to meaningful progress in slowing the epidemic, or that spending more money won't make much difference?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

### Percent Who Know Someone With HIV/AIDS

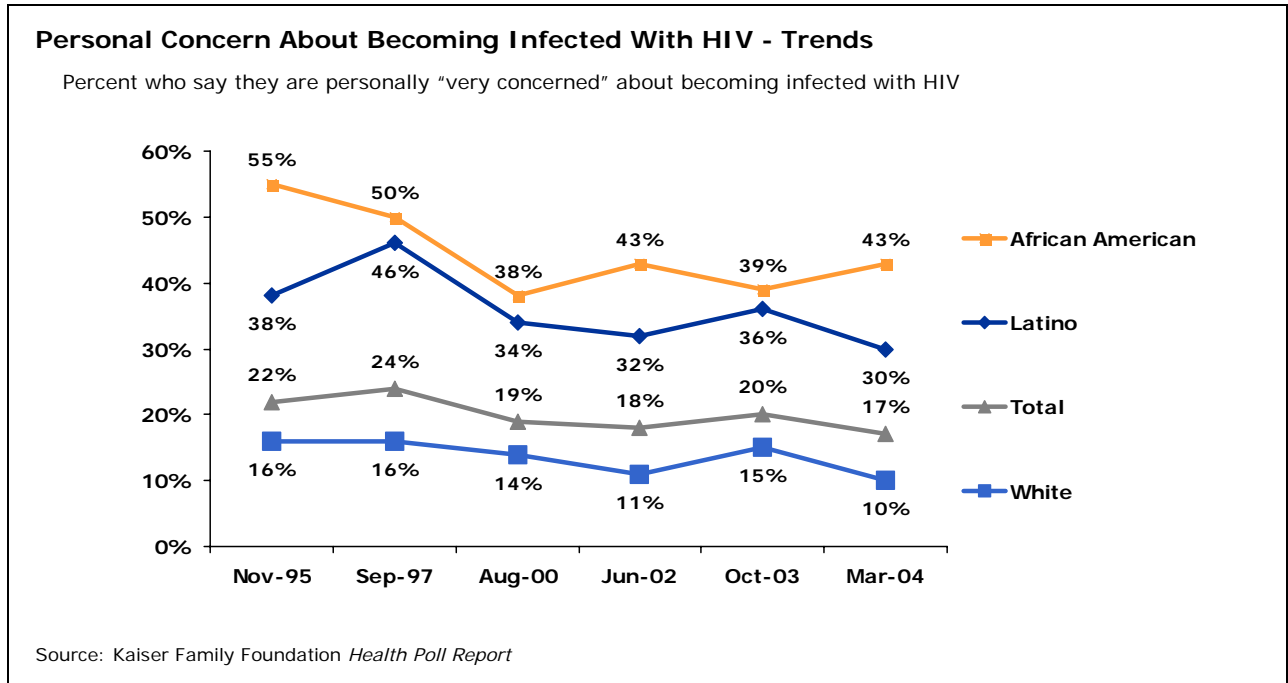
More than four in ten (44%) Americans say they know someone who has HIV or AIDS, or has died from AIDS. African Americans are much more likely to say they know someone (64%), compared to whites (42%) and Latinos (41%).



### Personal Concern About Becoming Infected With HIV – Trends

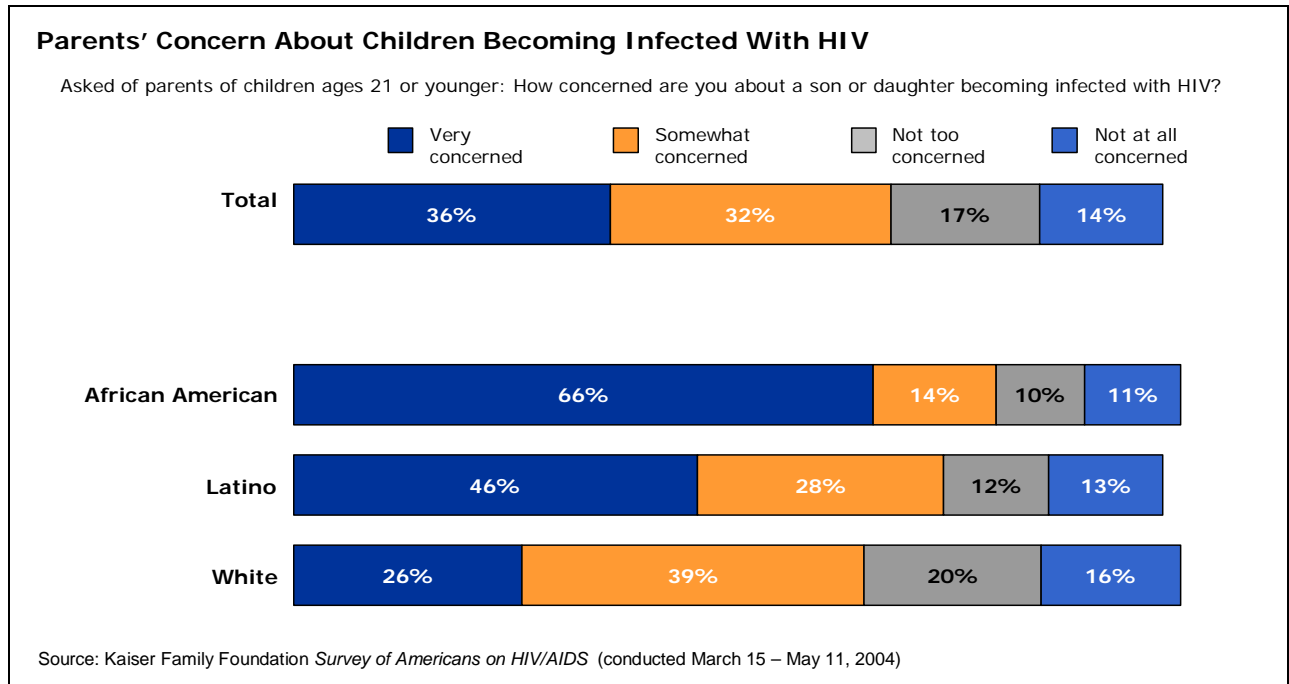
In 2004, 17% of Americans say they are personally “very concerned” about becoming infected with HIV. African Americans (43%) and Latinos (30%) are much more likely than whites (10%) to say they are “very concerned”.

The percent of people saying they are personally “very concerned” about becoming infected has remained fairly steady since 2000. However, since 1995, concern for all groups has fallen, particularly among African Americans and Latinos.



### Parents' Concern About Children Becoming Infected With HIV

More than one-third (36%) of parents of children age 21 or younger say they are "very concerned" about their child becoming infected with HIV. African American and Latino parents are more likely than white parents to say they are "very concerned" about their child becoming infected with HIV. Two-thirds of African Americans (66%) and nearly half of Latinos (46%) say they are "very concerned" about their children becoming infected, compared with about a quarter (26%) of white parents.

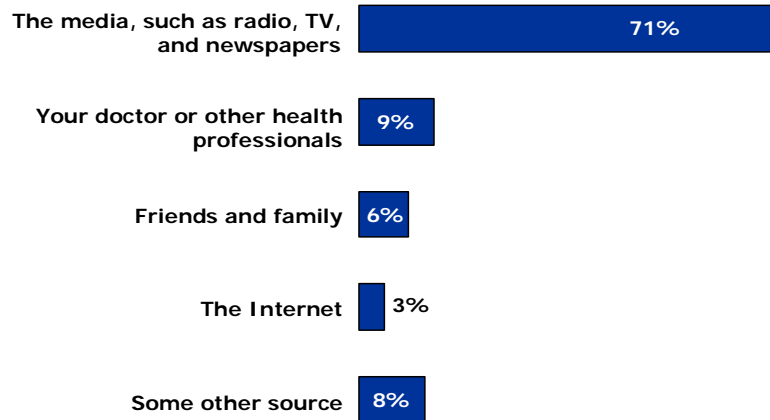


### Sources Of Information About HIV/AIDS

A large majority of the public (71%) say that most of what they know about HIV/AIDS comes from the media, while nine percent say it comes from their doctor or other health professional, six percent say friends and family, and three percent say the Internet.

#### Sources Of Information About HIV/AIDS

Thinking about everything you know about HIV/AIDS, does this information mainly come from things you've seen and heard from...



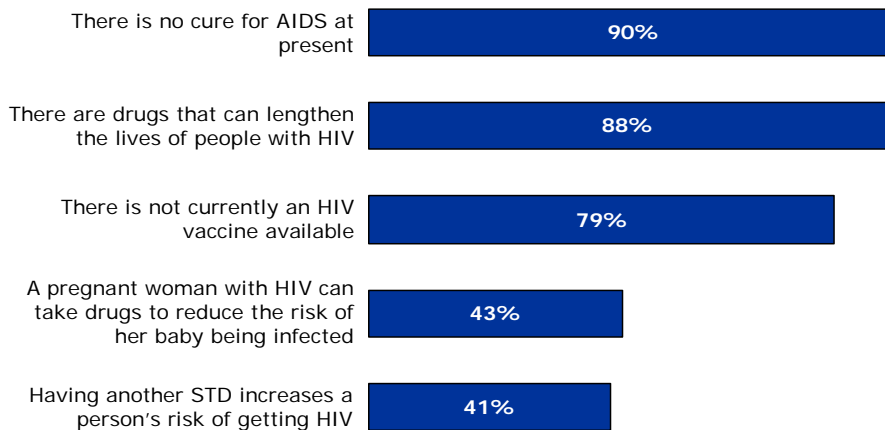
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

## Knowledge About The HIV/AIDS Epidemic

People are well-informed about certain aspects of the HIV epidemic – large shares know that there is no cure for AIDS (90%), that there are drugs that can lengthen the lives of those with HIV (88%), and that there is not currently an HIV vaccine available (79%). However, fewer people know that a pregnant woman with HIV can take drugs to reduce the risk of her baby being infected (43%) and that having another STD increases a person's risk of getting HIV (41%).

### Knowledge About The HIV/AIDS Epidemic

Percent who say the following statements about HIV/AIDS are true... (correct answers)



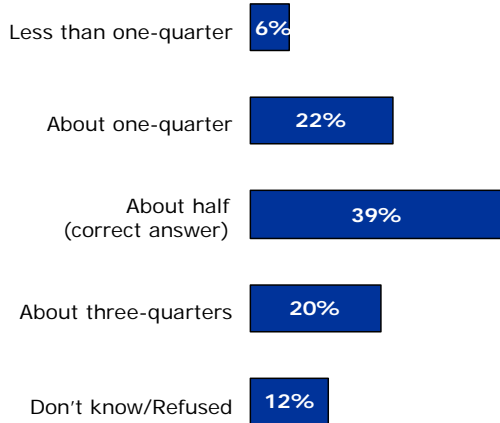
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

## Knowledge About Impact Of HIV/AIDS On African Americans And Young People

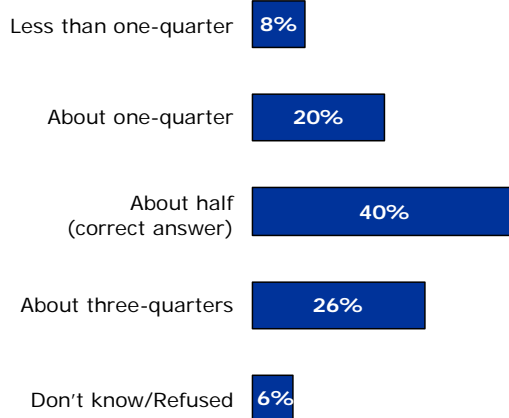
Most Americans are not aware of how the epidemic impacts different groups in the United States. About four in ten adults (39%) know that about half of all new HIV infections in the United States occur among African Americans, and a similar share (40%) know that half of all new infections in the United States occur among people under age 25.

### Knowledge About Impact Of HIV/AIDS On African Americans And Young People

What proportion of all the new HIV infections in this country do you think occur among African Americans?



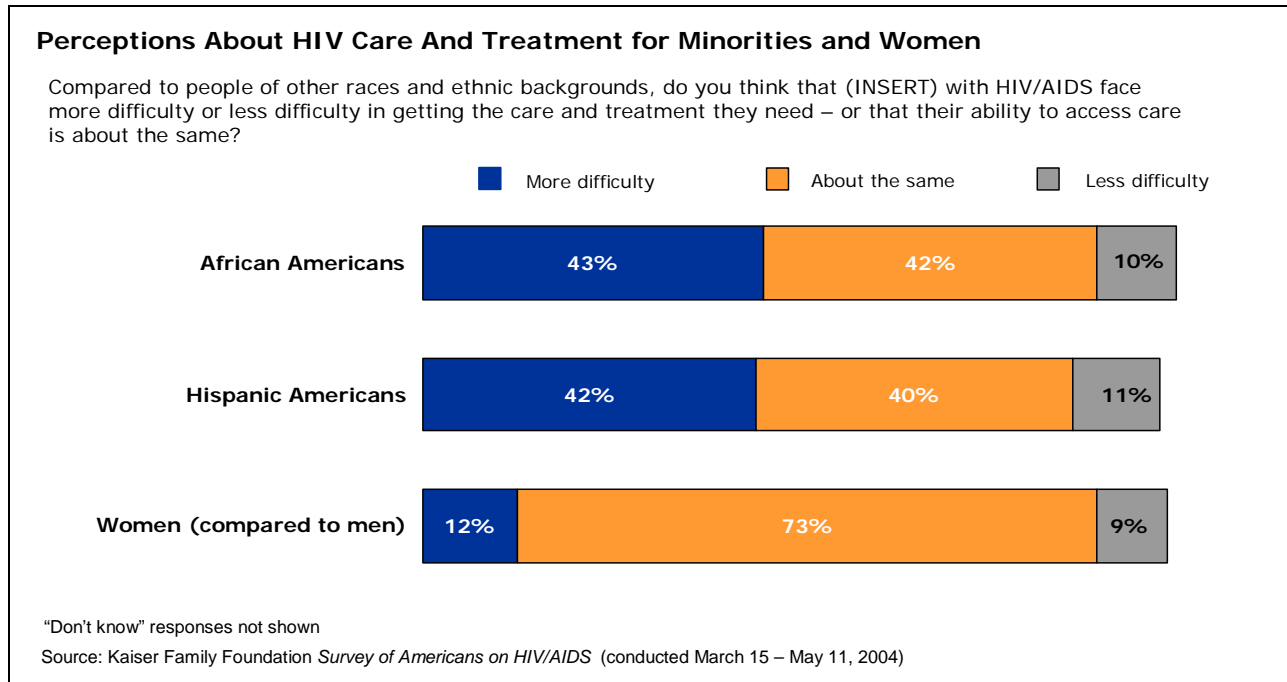
What proportion of all the new HIV infections in this country do you think occur among people under age 25?



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)

### Perceptions About HIV Care And Treatment for Minorities and Women

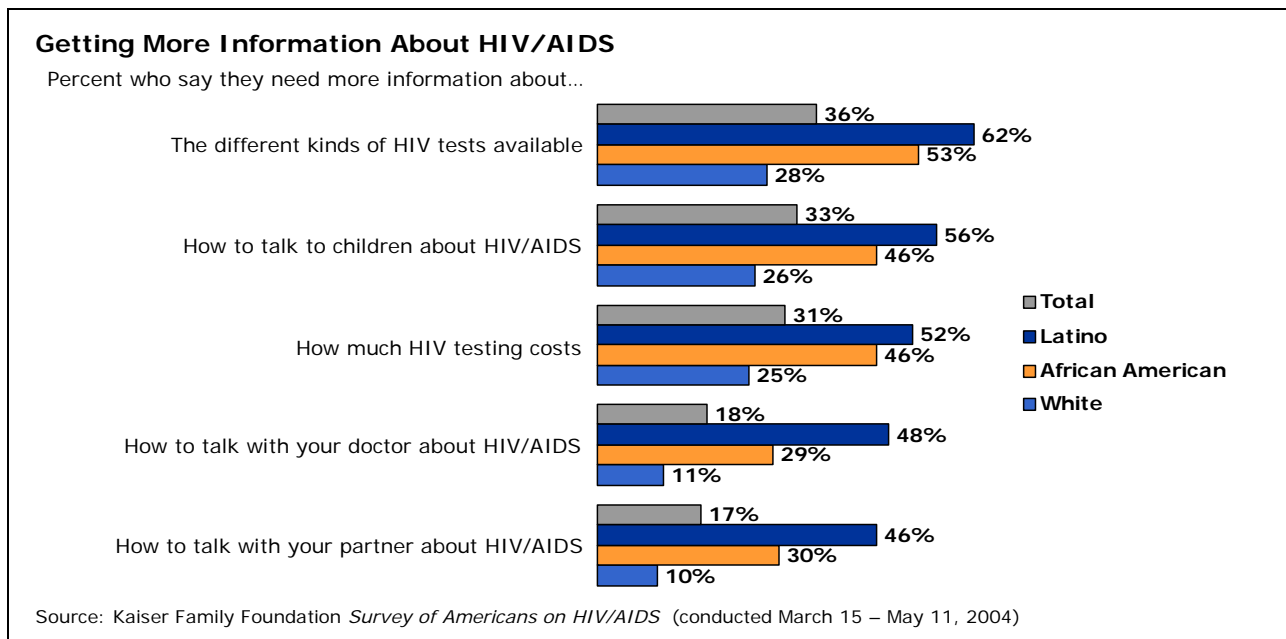
Most Americans are not aware that African Americans and Hispanics have more difficulty accessing HIV/AIDS care, with four in ten adults saying that African Americans (43%) and Hispanics (42%) with HIV have more difficulty in getting the care and treatment they need compared with people of other backgrounds. The public is even less aware of the difficulties faced by women with HIV in accessing care and treatment. Just over one in ten (12%) say that women with HIV have more difficulty than men accessing care and treatment, while nine percent think that women have less difficulty, and 73% think that men and women's ability to access care and treatment for HIV is about the same.



### Getting More Information About HIV/AIDS

The public indicates that they need more information about HIV/AIDS, with slightly more than one-third (36%) saying they need more information on the different kinds of HIV tests available and a similar share (33%) saying they need more information about how to talk to children about HIV/AIDS. Three in ten (31%) need more information about the cost of HIV testing. Fewer adults say they need information about how to talk to their doctors (18%) and their partners (17%) about HIV/AIDS.

Latinos are more than twice as likely as whites to say they need more information about HIV/AIDS. Similarly, African Americans are much more likely than whites to express a need for information. These differences are especially pronounced around issues of how to talk with a doctor or a partner about HIV/AIDS, where one in ten whites say they need more information (11% with doctor, 10% with partner) compared with almost half of Latinos (48% doctor, 46% partner) and one in three African Americans (29% and 30%, respectively).



## **Women's And Men's Views Of The HIV/AIDS Epidemic**

Women and men share similar views on many aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the United States.

### **Women's And Men's Views Of The HIV/AIDS Epidemic**

- Women (19%) are somewhat less likely than men (24%) to name HIV/AIDS as the most urgent health problem facing the nation, although in both cases they rank HIV/AIDS second behind cancer.
- Similar shares of women (47%) and men (46%) say the U.S. is "making progress" on the problem of HIV/AIDS and similar shares say the U.S. is "losing ground" (35% of women, 36% of men).
- While men (55%) and women (59%) are about equally likely to say that spending more money on HIV/AIDS prevention in the U.S. will lead to "meaningful progress" in slowing the epidemic, men (37%) are slightly more likely than women (30%) to say the spending more "won't make much difference". (Women (8%) are slightly more likely than men (5%) to say they don't know if spending more money on prevention will lead to progress against HIV/AIDS).
- Similar shares of women (46%) and men (42%) say they know someone with HIV/AIDS or who has died of AIDS.
- Women and men express similar levels of personal concern about themselves and their children becoming infected with HIV: 17% of women and 16% of men say they are personally "very concerned" and 36% of women and 35% of men say they are "very concerned" about their children becoming infected with HIV.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation *Survey of Americans on HIV/AIDS* (conducted March 15 – May 11, 2004)