

Recent Developments at HAI Address Critical Unmet Needs of NYC Youths

ISSUE

Mental health of
New York City youth

REPORT

NYC Public Schools commissioned Applied Research and Consulting to conduct an assessment of the mental health needs of students in the NYC school system six months after the attack on 9/11. Using a sample of 94 schools, 75,000 children were projected citywide to have symptoms consistent with post traumatic stress disorder. Similarly, about the same number of students were found to have symptoms of major depression, agoraphobia, separation anxiety and conduct disorder. ↗



ISSUE

Violence in New York City
public schools

REPORT

On January 6, 2004, New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced his plan to flood the city's most troubled schools with police officers in an effort to reduce youth violence. In fiscal year 2003, the city paid \$6.82 million to victims of violence in the city's public schools. ↗

HAI'S RESPONSE

In 2002 HAI launched *Loss & Gain*, a theater arts program led by renowned playwright Elizabeth Swados. The program benefits its teenage participants, for whom the process of creating and performing an original theatre production offers a constructive emotional outlet, and also its high school audiences. See excerpts of *Loss & Gain* and interviews with cast members at HAI's website: <http://www.hospitalaudiences.org/hai/prev-ed/lossgain.htm>



Above: cast of *Loss & Gain* perform.

Below: cast of *Respect* perform.



HAI'S RESPONSE

HAI's *Respect* project examines lack of respect as an underlying cause of youth violence and features a powerful performance piece written and performed by NYC youths under the direction of Tony Award winning choreographer George Faison. The fourth version of *Respect* began touring NYC schools in March this year. See excerpts from the performance and interviews with cast members at HAI's website: <http://www.hospitalaudiences.org/hai/prev-ed/respect.htm>

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This April, HAI will provide **Hope And Inspiration** to an audience of more than 26,400 people at more than 964 events by offering opportunities...

...to enjoy dance, theater, concerts and more

◆ In April, HAI's **Cultural Events Program (CEP)** will make the following events accessible to NYC residents who are culturally isolated due to age, frailty, physical or mental disability:

<i>A Raisin In the Sun</i>	The Royale Theatre
Universoul Circus	Prospect Park
New York Yankees	Yankee Stadium
New York Mets	Shea Stadium
<i>Great Men of Gospel</i>	New Federal Theatre

Other components of HAI's CEP include: the **Community Performing Arts Series**, which mounts dance, drama and music performances throughout the year in each of the five boroughs; the **Omni*Bus Program**, which comfortably and safely carries people who are bed confined and those using wheelchairs from hospitals, nursing homes and rehabilitation centers to attend cultural events throughout NYC. April destinations include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY Botanical Gardens (Orchid Show), Circle Line Cruise, the Bronx Zoo, Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum and jazz at Winter Garden; **Tickets To Go**, which provides seniors age 60 and over with discounted tickets subsidized by the NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, presently has offerings for *Twentieth Century*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Die Walkure* at the Metropolitan Opera and Roberta Flack at the Colden Ctr. in April; **STEP** (Student Ticket Enrichment Program), which offers discounted Broadway, Off Broadway and cultural events tickets to NYC public schools; and **Describe!**, which makes live theater performances accessible to visually impaired and blind individuals. Twenty-five children in the Vision program at Grover Cleveland High School in Ridgewood, Queens "saw" their first Broadway show ever last month, attended an audio described presentation of *Aida!*

◆ In April, the **On-site Performance Program** will provide holiday celebrants with live music for Easter, Passover and the start of spring. Scheduled performances including a wide array of artists such as the Burdetskiy Family Circus, Sean Grissom - Cajun cellist, Ricardo Greenaway on steel pans and Justin Style, magician extraordinaire. Returning to HAI is singer/guitarist Robin Blair, whose extensive career in children's performance programming includes: co-creator/co-producer of the critically acclaimed live action and puppet television series *Once Upon a Tree*; Director of Program Development of Children's Broadcast Corporation and writer/producer/host for the mid-morning radio program, *Alphabet Soup*. Ms. Blair will perform at facilities for seriously ill children throughout the metropolitan area in April.

...to develop competence through artistic expression

◆ In April, HAI's **Arts Workshops Program** will begin new workshops at FECS (Federation Employment and Guidance Service) Day habilitation programs and at Riverdale Manor. In Brooklyn, workshops will be offered for the first time at Evelyn Douglin residences. The HAI Loft Gallery will present "Nourishing the Spirit," an evocative exhibit reflecting on philosophical and spiritual sustenance. The opening reception will take place on Wednesday, May 5th, from 6pm to 9pm.

...to acquire skills for supportive/independent living

◆ In April, HAI's **Prevention Education Program**, which uses theatrical role-play to develop decision making skills with respect to HIV/AIDS, homelessness, youth leadership and violence prevention will present *Peace-by-Peace* violence prevention presentations, HIV Prevention and Housing Readiness workshops at Monroe College, Pablo Neruda Academy, Peter's Place Drop-in Center, Icahn House, and Huntington House. The *RESPECT* project continues to tour NYC venues and recently received a glowing review by Deputy Director of Operations, Marlon D. Forbes at Crossroads Juvenile Center in Brooklyn: "Most importantly, the scenes showed young people - who were mirror images of our population -- making smart decisions and finding acceptable means of gaining respect, no matter what the circumstances."

...to gain access to information and to learn more about our mission

◆ Visit HAI's website, www.hospitalaudiences.org and view *Access for All: Guide for People with Disabilities to New York City Cultural Institutions* and its update, *Addendum 2001, On the Go: A Guide to New York City Culture at a Discount for Seniors* and the monograph, *Live Arts Experiences: Impact on Health and Wellness*.

This April, HAI will reach a projected audience of over 26,400 people at more than 964 events... through:

Cultural Events Program	3,400 people at 84 events
On Site Performance Program	10,000 people at 200 performances
Arts Workshop Program	10,600 attending over 650 hours
Prevention Education Program	2,400 attending over 30 workshops