

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday January 28, 2004

Contact: Dave Abdo
(617) 565-1500

HHS Awards Grant Worth \$488,434 to Healthy Futures to Support Abstinence Education

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson has announced a grant worth \$488,434 to Healthy Futures of Boston to develop and implement abstinence education programs for young people ages 12 to 18.

“When adolescents become sexually active, it can have negative effects on their physical and emotional health,” Secretary Thompson said. “This grant to Healthy Futures can help create an environment that supports teens in their decision to remain abstinent until marriage.”

Today’s 1pm grant announcement, located in Nurse’s Hall at the Massachusetts State House, was one of 28 recently announced grants across the nation. The grants go to public and private entities, including community-based and faith-based organizations, hospitals, health centers, school systems, and other youth services agencies.

"President Bush's initiative to educate teens and parents about the health risks associated with early sexual activity is obvious by today's formal announcement of HHS providing Health Futures with the needed resources they require to help local teens make responsible choices", said Brian M. Cresta, Regional Director for HHS in New England.

Abstinence education interventions are designed to reduce the number of adolescents who engage in premarital sexual activity and, consequently, the number of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, and to encourage youth to avoid other risky behaviors associated with early sexual involvement, such as alcohol and drug use.

Today’s grant is the first installment of what can potentially be a 3 year \$1,461, 302 grant award to Healthy Futures.

#####

Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>.