

mtvU & Kaiser Family Foundation Launch PosorNot.com to Challenge Stigma, Fight Spread of HIV/AIDS

Wyclef Jean, Fall Out Boy, Will.i.am, Alyssa Milano, Say Anything, Perez Hilton, Angels & Airwaves, Atmosphere, and Many More Helping Fuel Game's Viral Spread

Developed in Partnership With POZ Magazine, "Pos or Not" Confronts Stereotypes Through Personal Stories of Americans Living With and Without HIV/AIDS

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mtvU, MTV's Peabody and Emmy Award-winning college network, and the Kaiser Family Foundation, in partnership with POZ Magazine, today unveiled "Pos or Not" (www.posornot.com) an online game that challenges stereotypes and breaks down the barriers that may prevent people from talking openly about HIV/AIDS, getting tested, and using protection.

People from across the U.S. — half of whom are living with HIV and half who are not — share parts of their lives for "Pos or Not" by divulging their HIV status to help dispel myths and misconceptions about HIV and AIDS. Players confront their own HIV stereotypes as they guess whether a profiled participant is positive or negative based only on a photo and a few personal details, such as what they do on the weekends or their favorite kind of music.

Among the participants who are positive, we've provided a window on the circumstances in which they learn their HIV status — including after the birth of a child, calls from ex-lovers, and long-postponed HIV tests. HIV negative participants share how the disease has touched their lives, claiming boyfriends, girlfriends, mothers and best friends. Every individual stresses that HIV affects everyone and that the only way to truly know your own or some else's HIV status is by getting tested.

While "Pos or Not" confronts stereotypes and popular misconceptions about HIV/AIDS, it also provides users with information about HIV prevention, as well as local HIV and STD testing resources from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC). In addition, players are invited to join the game to help underscore that there's no way to tell a person's HIV status from how they look or what they do.

Several of the most requested acts on college campuses and major pop culture figures are also lending their efforts to help stoke the online viral spread of “Pos or Not,” including Wyclef Jean, Fall Out Boy, Will.i.am, Alyssa Milano, Say Anything, Perez Hilton, Angels & Airwaves, Atmosphere, The Spill Canvas, 30 Seconds to Mars, Aesop Rock, Motion City Soundtrack, All Time Low and Rise Against. Beginning today, these and many others are sending the game to their fans, families and friends, via a feature that allows users to share “Pos or Not” with everybody in their e-mail address books with only a couple clicks.

“‘Pos or Not’ is an urgent analogue to HotorNot.com, designed to capture college students’ attention and harness the viral nature of the Web in the ongoing fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS,” said Stephen Friedman, GM, mtvU. “‘Pos or Not’ was created to shatter myths, challenge assumptions and promote responsible sexual behavior — and we salute every participant, as well as the team of college students who conceived the game, for breathing life into it.”

“‘Pos or Not’ confronts the stigma and stereotypes that fuel the continued spread of this disease some 25 years since the first diagnosis,” said Tina Hoff, vice president and director of Entertainment Media Partnerships at the Kaiser Family Foundation. “‘Pos or Not’ has the powerful effect of allowing young people across the country to learn more about those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS and in doing so hopefully form a more personal understanding of the disease.”

“The HIV-positive community has the unique ability to debunk myths and dissolve dangerous stereotypes around HIV/AIDS,” said Regan Hofmann, editor-in-chief of POZ magazine. “Having a face-to-face encounter with a person living with the virus can also positively affect the choices people make regarding behaviors that can lead to their contracting HIV. I think that ‘Pos or Not’ is a wonderful way to allow the HIV community to serve as an awareness and prevention tool for those who are — but who do not believe themselves to be — at risk.”

“Pos or Not” was inspired by the winners of the “Change the Course of HIV Challenge,” a nationwide competition that asked college students to propose a viral, Web-based game that would creatively engage people to help combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. The winning concept was submitted by a team from the Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy and included designers Brendan McLeod and Matthew Laurence, programmers Chris Camilleri and Gabriel Montagne, and artist Chip Lundell.

College students helped conceive “Pos or Not” and are pioneering the future of digital activism every day, so mtvU, the Kaiser Family Foundation and POZ Magazine are calling on users to imagine ways the game can be even more viral and impactful. Anyone with a vision for how “Pos or Not” can be effectively executed on other platforms (mobile, social networks, etc.), remixed, or in any way serve as an even more powerful call to action on the HIV/AIDS epidemic are encouraged to send ideas to MyIdeas@PosorNot.com. mtvU and the Kaiser Family Foundation are committing to incorporate the best concepts into future versions of the game — or a completely re-imagined iteration — so it continues to evolve and reach more people.

“Pos or Not” follows on the success of “Darfur is Dying” (DarfurisDying.com), mtvU’s student-developed videogame — now played more than 3 million times by over 1.5 million people — designed to spread awareness of and spur action to end the genocide in Darfur. “Darfur is Dying” is a narrative-based simulation where the user, from the perspective of a displaced Darfurian, negotiates forces that threaten the survival of his or her refugee camp. The game is a key element of mtvU’s nearly four-year, student-led, Emmy Award-winning Sudan campaign.

Representatives from mtvU and the Kaiser Family Foundation will be presenting “Pos or Not” at the fourth annual Games for Health Conference, taking place May 8-9 in Baltimore, Maryland. To learn more about the conference, please visit gamesforhealth.org.

About The Kaiser Family Foundation

The Kaiser Family Foundation is a non-profit, private operating foundation dedicated to providing information and analysis on health care issues to policymakers, the media, the health care community, and the general public. The foundation is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries. Information on HIV/AIDS is available at www.kff.org, and a daily news summary report on developments in HIV/AIDS is available on www.kaisernetwork.org, the Foundation’s free health information service.

About mtvU

Broadcast to more than 750 college campuses and via top cable distributors in 700 college communities nationwide, mtvU reaches upwards of 9 million U.S. college students— making it the largest, most comprehensive television network just for college students. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, mtvU can be seen in the dining areas, fitness centers, student lounges and dorm rooms of campuses throughout the U.S, as well as on cable systems from Charter Communications, Verizon FiOS TV, Suddenlink Communications, AT&T u-Verse and nearly 70 others. mtvU is dedicated to every aspect of college life, reaching students everywhere they are: on-air, online and on campus. mtvU programs music videos from emerging artists that can’t be seen anywhere else, news, student life features and initiatives that give college students the tools to advance positive social change. mtvU is always on campus, with more than 500 events per year, including exclusive concerts, giveaways, shooting mtvU series and more. For more information about mtvU, and a complete programming schedule, visit www.mtvu.com.

mtvU also owns and operates the College Media Network, the largest interactive network of online college newspapers in the US, and www.RateMyProfessors.com, the Internet’s largest listing of collegiate professor ratings. The College Media Network comprises nearly 600 campus publications that serve institutions including Brown University, the University of Illinois, the University of Southern California, the University of Texas at Austin and Duke University, with a combined enrollment of over 5.5 million students, reaching an average of 5 million unique users each month. www.RateMyProfessors.com reaches approximately 2.9 million college students each month, via the site’s more than 6.6 million student-generated ratings of over 1,000,000 college professors.

MTV Networks, a unit of Viacom (NYSE: VIA, VIA.B), is one of the world’s leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. MTV Networks, with more than 150 channels

worldwide, owns and operates the following television programming services - MTV: MUSIC TELEVISION, MTV2, VH1, mtvU, NICKELODEON, NICK at NITE, COMEDY CENTRAL, TV LAND, SPIKE TV, CMT, NOGGIN/THE N, VH1 CLASSIC, MTVN INTERNATIONAL and THE DIGITAL SUITE FROM MTV NETWORKS, a package of 13 digital services, all of these networks trademarks of MTV Networks. MTV Networks connects with its audiences through its robust consumer products businesses and its more than 300 interactive properties worldwide, including online, broadband, wireless and interactive television services and also has licensing agreements, joint ventures, and syndication deals whereby all of its programming services can be seen worldwide.

About Poz

POZ is the premier lifestyle, treatment and advocacy magazine for people living with — and those affected by — HIV and AIDS. The award-winning magazine and website (www.poz.com) provide the most complete and expert HIV/AIDS information available in the United States. Together, the magazine and website reach more than 70 percent of all of those living with HIV/AIDS who are aware of their status. The website provides extensive opportunity for both public and private social networking and represents one of the largest communities of openly HIV-positive people in the world. For more information, please visit www.poz.com.

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