



**MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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KIDS GET A MOBILE AND A COKE, BUT NO HIV MEDICATION

UNAIDS has released statistics showing that 1.8 million men, women and children died last year from HIV-related conditions, including 260,000 children under 15 years.

“We seem destined to get a mobile phone and a soft drink to almost everyone on the planet, but sadly we don’t have the commitment or drive to ensure those that need them can access HIV treatments. We ought to be ashamed” says Andrew Burry, General Manager of the AIDS Action Council.

The UNAIDS Report of the AIDS Epidemic reveals that just 36% (about 5.2 million) of 15 million people in low and middle income countries needing HIV treatments are receiving it. “The world must step up its funding of HIV treatments” explains Mr Burry. “HIV antiretroviral treatments have saved many lives, but governments are procrastinating when it comes to making the necessary investments to make HIV history.”

This week the AIDS Action Council is encouraging parents, teachers and youth workers to talk to our young people about HIV and how to protect themselves. Approximately half of the 7000 new HIV infections worldwide every day are in young people under 24 years.

“We are at a critical stage in the HIV epidemic” highlights Mr Burry. “What will we be able tell future generations about what we did to prevent unnecessary death and suffering today?”

The AIDS Action Council of the ACT is a community based organisation established to minimise the social and personal impacts, and transmission, of HIV/AIDS. The Council remains as the only community based HIV specific agency in the ACT region and has developed into a strong organisation with services based on sound evidence, specialist knowledge and professional practice.

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For more information contact:
Andrew Burry
mobile 0433 547 640
andrew.burry@aidsaction.org.au