Young Black Men's Health and Hip-Hop Summit Addresses Sex and HIV

October 30, 2015

A conference titled "Black Lives Matter: Health and Hip-Hop" offered real talk about sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS for young black men. Held October 24 at Morgan State University in Baltimore, the daylong event was sponsored by Maryland's four historically black colleges and universities, the Black AIDS Institute, and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

"Hip-hop music has long influenced and shaped perceptions about health, sex, drinking, dating, masculinity and a number of other important topics," the press release from the Black AIDS Institute stated. As such, the event aimed to "harness hip-hop's candor to address sexual behavior, masculinity and the influence of hip-hop on the health of black men."

Participants critiqued popular hip-hop songs, discussed aspects of healthy sexuality and learned the latest HIV science and treatment news.

"We believe understanding both the science and the cultural context of HIV is critically important for both treatment and prevention. In Maryland, among those newly diagnosed with HIV, the proportion of those ages 20 to 29 nearly doubled—from 16 percent in 2003 to 31 percent in 2012," said Jeffrey Hitt, director of the Infectious Disease Prevention and Health Services Bureau at the Maryland health department, in the press release.

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