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## PRESS RELEASE

### GMFA LAUNCH INTERACTIVE CAMPAIGN

#### **Gay men give their reasons for safer sex** ***New data highlights unsafe sex***

LONDON, 29 MARCH -- What's your reason for safer sex? That's the question being asked by GMFA's innovative new advertising campaign launched today to encourage men to play safe. And new data published this month highlights the continued need to encourage men to adopt or maintain safer sex strategies; according to the survey from Sigma Research, 50% of London's gay men had unprotected anal intercourse in the previous 12 months.<sup>1</sup>

GMFA's new campaign uses reasons for safer sex gathered from London's HIV positive and negative guys to encourage others to protect themselves and their sexual partners. And you'd be surprised at how many reasons there are!

"Telling guys to use condoms is one thing but, by showing them the diverse range of reasons why it is important, we hope to help guys really think about the kind of sex they are having," said Matthew Hodson, Head of

programmes for GMFA. “The campaign not only highlights the benefits of safer sex, but the possible consequences of taking risks.”

The web and mobile phone screens used in the campaign highlight an interactive element. Guys are encouraged to get involved and send in their own reasons for safer sex to [competitions@gmfa.org.uk](mailto:competitions@gmfa.org.uk) – there’s a chance to win condoms and lube for the best ones! Information about the campaign and competition can be found on GMFA’s MySpace site ([www.myspace.com/gmfa\\_uk](http://www.myspace.com/gmfa_uk)) and the winning reasons will be shown there too.

As well as the magazine ads, internet banners have also been produced so that guys can click through to GMFA’s website ([www.gmfa.org.uk/sex](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/sex)) for further information on safer sex.

“This campaign is all about interactivity. We really want people to get involved by sending in their own reasons for safer sex,” added Hodson. “We’ve already had a great response and some of the reasons will also be featured in the latest edition of F:S.”

The new Sigma research also showed that 30% of guys whose last HIV test was negative had unprotected anal sex with someone whose HIV status they did not know. 4% of guys whose last test was negative had sex without condoms with an HIV positive guy. 27% of gay men with unknown HIV status had unprotected anal sex with guys whose status they did not know.

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For more information about this or any other of GMFA’s campaigns and actions, contact:

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## **References:**

1. Sigma Research. *Consuming Passions. Findings from the United Kingdom Gay men's Sex Survey 2005*. Published March 2007.

## **Notes to editor**

The Reasons fro Safer Sex campaign can be seen in full from 31<sup>st</sup> March at:

[www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices/adcampaigns](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices/adcampaigns)

## **About GMFA:**

GMFA was established in 1992 and is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. GMFA's mission is to improve gay men's health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. We believe that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves, and so we use the knowledge and ideas of our 170 volunteers (most of them gay men) to design and plan our thought provoking sexual health interventions. Yearly we deliver three new mass media campaigns in the gay press to disseminate up to date information regarding HIV and STIs to the gay male community. Independent surveys have concluded that our campaigns reach up to 55% of the London gay population and we are the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. In addition to this we distribute our own health magazine, FS, free to London's gay bars and clubs to further educate gay men about relationships, their bodies, general health and STIs. Annually, we deliver 1000 hours of group work to educate gay men in safer sex, and over the last fourteen years have provided courses for over 10,000 gay men. We have recently launched two new websites containing information for gay men on sex and sexual health ([www.gmfa.org.uk/sex](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/sex)) and details of sexual health services available for gay men in London ([www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices](http://www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices)). Over the next couple of months we intend to launch websites for HIV positive gay men and a gay sports and social groups site. All of our sites can be accessed at [www.gmfa.org.uk](http://www.gmfa.org.uk).