



# APICHA Launches New Subway Ad Campaign to Target Young Gay Men

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**Contact:**

Nalini Tiwari (917) 345-2282

[ornalini@devitofitterman.com](mailto:ornalini@devitofitterman.com)

Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS (APICHA) launched a new advertising campaign in the New York City subway system on Monday, September 6th, 2004. The subway poster campaign targets Asian and Pacific Islander (API) young Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), gay men, and men who are questioning their sexuality. The posters will be displayed throughout the subway system for one month. The cost of the campaign is \$40,000.00.

The ad poster shows two young men, one is Chinese and the other is South Asian. One man is coming out of the closet and the other is trying to push him back into the closet. The caption at the top of the poster says, "As if it's not hard enough to keep some things in the closet, as young API (Asian Pacific Islander) men, we gotta protect ourselves too." The caption at the bottom says, "APICHA's here to support you. Just call us – it's free! 866-APICHA-9."

APICHA Executive Director Therese Rodriguez said, "We are very grateful for the financial support we have received from the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for this media campaign. It is a very effective way for APICHA to educate our young API men about their sexuality and most importantly, how to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Statistics show that nearly 50% of new HIV infections in the U.S. are among young people, especially young Men who have Sex with Men (MSM). That means approximately 20,000 young people will be infected this year. The best way to turn that number around is to educate young people to make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual activity. Whether they choose sexual abstinence or safer sex with condoms, it must ultimately be their decision to make. Our goal is to help them to make that choice."



The concept of the ad campaign was conceived by APICHA's staff and peer educators, the YMSM Community Coalition, and the Young People's Advisory Committee. The photo and graphic design are by Joseph Salim.

Alan Lau, is 18 years old, one of the two young men pictured in the poster, and a member of the group that designed the campaign. He said, "It took us about 5 months to agree on the wording for the poster and the photo image we wanted to use. We didn't want to offend or scare off the young men who are still in the closet. Also, our choice of the words, "protect ourselves", not only refers to protection from AIDS, but also about how to protect ourselves when dealing with issues regarding coming out of the closet, including anti-gay violence, harassment, and discrimination. APICHA is a safe haven for young API men who need help with issues like growing up, coming out, their relationships with family and friends, and their health and sexuality concerns."

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#### ABOUT APICHA

Founded in 1989, Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS Inc. (APICHA) provides comprehensive primary care and other medical services, including mental health, STD and Hepatitis and supportive services targeted to Asians and Pacific Islanders, the LGBT community and individuals living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Over the last twenty-one years, APICHA has shown a considerable growth from a grassroots HIV prevention-focused organization to a patient-centered medical home.

In 2010, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) awarded APICHA Medical Services Level 3 recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home, the highest level of recognition. In 2011, APICHA served over 2,600 patients, including a majority of people of color, LGBTQ and low income individuals in New York City. About a half of APICHA's patients identify themselves as A&PIs from over 20 ethnic groups, including Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Thai, or Indonesians. APICHA has been a pan-Asian organization with multilingual/multicultural staff fluent in 17 languages with 24 fulltime staff capable of speaking one or more Asian languages.

For more information: [www.apicha.org](http://www.apicha.org)