



Giving the Gift of Life

*HHS Message of the Day
June 29, 2004*

Highlighting Donation: Secretary Thompson is leading the effort to raise awareness of organ and tissue donation among Americans and helping them make informed decisions about donation.

Say Yes to Donation

- Our organ donation initiatives really are having a positive effect on Americans, especially among minority communities.
- We must encourage more Americans to register and give the gift of life. Each donor can save or enhance up to 50 lives.
- Now is the perfect time to give the gift of life by saying yes to organ and tissue donation on your donor card or driver's license, signing up on your state's registry and talking with family members.

Donation Facts

- Today, one donor can save or enhance up to 50 other lives across America. One person truly can make a difference by becoming a donor and giving the precious gift of life.
 - ✓ While medical advances are enabling Americans to receive lifesaving transplants, there are not enough donors to help everyone in need.
 - ✓ Last year, close to 6,000 Americans died while waiting for organ transplants.
 - ✓ Currently, more than 84,000 of our citizens are on the waiting list for a donation.
 - ✓ Approximately 30,000 people will be diagnosed with diseases that a bone marrow transplant could cure.
- This Administration is committed to increasing organ and tissue donation.
 - ✓ Nearly \$25 million is included in the President's 2005 budget proposal for organ procurement and transplantation efforts at the Department of Health and Human Services and nearly \$23 million to support a bone marrow donor registry.
 - ✓ In addition, we continue to increase donations through the "Gift of Life Donation Initiative." This campaign encourages businesses and organizations to make information on donation available to their employees, volunteers, and members, provides donor cards for individuals to carry with them, promotes the development of donor registries, and encourages states to educate teenagers on donation through their drivers' education classes.
 - ✓ To make organ donation more viable, the President recently signed into law the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act, authorizing grants for travel reimbursement to potential donors. It also helps increase public awareness and education about organ donation programs.

HHS Programs

- *Decision: Donation -- A School Program that Gives the Gift of Life* includes print, video, CD-Rom, and Web-based materials that teachers can integrate into existing curriculum and training programs.
 - ✓ It is designed for easy application in a variety of classes, including driver education, English, health, math, biology, and social studies.
 - ✓ For example, there is a simulated blood test lesson for biology classes and an English lesson on how to write a persuasive donor awareness essay.

- ✓ Learn more by logging onto www.organdonor.gov.
- Secretary Thompson created the Workplace Partnership for Life, which works with employers of all sizes and their employees to create a nationwide network of "donation friendly workplaces" – organizations that give people the information, the encouragement and the chance they need to donate life. In less than two years, more than 7,500 partners have signed on.
- We have an organ donor Web site, www.organdonor.gov, which gets 40,000 hits a month. Roughly 2,000 of those hits are to download an organ donor card.
- HHS is developing a driver's education curriculum to educate new drivers about organ donation before they get out on the road.
- HHS has a national campaign targeting Hispanics to share the message about organ donation.