

UNAIDS

## International cricketers team up to 'THINK WISE' about HIV prevention

<p>Feature story</p>

June 7, 2013

Cricketing greats from around the world have once more teamed up to promote HIV prevention and anti-stigma messages as part of the global THINK WISE campaign on AIDS. The initiative will run through the 2013 International Cricket Council's Champions Trophy Tournament taking place from 6-23 June in England and Wales.

A partnership between the International Cricket Council (ICC), UNAIDS and UNICEF, THINK WISE uses the power of cricket and cricket players to reach out to large numbers of people - particularly young people - on AIDS issues. The partnership will be profiled at the prestigious international tournament through dedicated matches, site visits and coaching clinics with international players and other promotional activities.

"I am delighted once again that the ICC is partnering with THINK WISE to continue promoting the importance of HIV awareness," said ICC Chief Executive, David Richardson.

Celebrating ten years of the ICC working with its UN partners on AIDS, the ICC is dedicating six of the Champions Trophy matches - including the Final - to THINK WISE. Messages on the importance of HIV prevention and the elimination of stigma towards people living with HIV are the central focus of the campaign.

Over the years, THINK WISE has inspired many leading cricketers to join efforts to promote HIV prevention and reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination. Current and former players who have championed the campaign include Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka), Graeme Smith (South Africa), Stafanie Taylor (West Indies), Darren Sammy (West Indies), Shakib Al Hasan (Bangladesh) and Virender Sehwag (India).

"As we mark 10 years of action on AIDS through cricket, we have seen how cricket can unite billions of people across the globe. The THINK WISE global cricket AIDS partnership and the inspiring involvement of cricketing greats gives important profile and builds momentum towards changing and saving lives," said UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel sidib.

At THINK WISE matches, all participating teams and officials wear red ribbons as a sign of solidarity

with people living with HIV. A public service announcement featuring Kumar Sangakkara and Virender Sehwag will be screened at selected tournament matches, THINK WISE messages will feature on the boundary boards and information about the campaign and HIV prevention will feature in match programmes.

During the tournament, players from England, New Zealand, South Africa and the West Indies will undertake specific AIDS awareness-raising activities with people living with HIV and young people.

### **West Indies urge children to THINK WISE**

On the eve of the 2013 Champions Trophy opening, West Indies captain Dwayne Bravo and teammates Darren Sammy and Jason Holder held a special coaching clinic at the Oval in London as part of the THINK WISE partnership activities. The trio attended the clinic alongside fielding coach Andre Coley and took part in a session delivered by UK NGO Cricket Without Boundaries.

Through interactions with the cricket players and coach, 60 children from three London schools had the chance to learn cricketing skills, while also understanding the background of THINK WISE and learning about HIV-related issues.

"It's very important to get kids aware of HIV at an early age, just like sport, the earlier you get involved in something the quicker you learn about it. It's good that THINK WISE is taking the initiative to educate children about HIV and I really enjoyed the experience," said Dwayne Bravo

Jason Holder who is at his first senior ICC men's tournament, added: "I think that THINK WISE is a very good initiative and it's great that these three organisations, the ICC, UNAIDS and UNICEF, have come together for this tournament. Hopefully the partnership will continue to grow from strength to strength for years to come."

The ICC Champions Trophy, featuring Australia, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and West Indies, will be played over 18 days from 6 -23 June.

[See the topic on aegis.org](http://aegis.org)