



Get Your Church or Community Group Involved Today

Pin-A-Sister™ Examínate Comadre™

About Pin-A-Sister™/ Examínate Comadre™

Pin-A-Sister™/Examínate Comadre™, an initiative by Access Community Health Network (ACCESS), is a faith-based, breast cancer outreach and awareness campaign. The program's mission is to educate and reduce health disparities and decrease the number of African-American and Hispanic women who develop breast cancer. Celebrating the campaign's 10th anniversary this year, our awareness and outreach efforts have reached an estimated 4 million people since 2007, spreading the word about the importance of regular proactive screenings. In fact, through the program's promotions and referrals by community partners, ACCESS has identified 465 cancers and precancers through its screening program.

The campaign strives to educate African-American and Hispanic women about the importance of getting regular mammograms. The myriad of responsibilities women juggle as wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, employees, business owners, heads of household or as primary caregivers, often cause women to put their health care needs last. Pin-A-Sister™/Examínate Comadre™ encourages women to take action and take control of their health.

A common story we hear from women diagnosed with breast cancer is that they had a feeling something was wrong and were too afraid to see the doctor about a lump they felt. Understanding the power of the faith community and the important role faith plays in the lives of African-American and Hispanic women, Pin-A-Sister™/Examínate Comadre™ engages clergy from various denominations, religious and spiritual backgrounds to promote the importance of healthy living and encourage women to get regular mammography screenings and become better stewards of their health. By reaching women with this powerful message and leveraging the “power of the pulpit,” the campaign continues to build momentum and inform women about the benefits of early detection and treatment. In fact, over its ten-year history the campaign has spread to other organizations such as sororities, professional organizations and other community anchors who use the initiative to spread the word to their members.

“I think this program has really impacted the women in our church, because they look forward to it every year. It seems like more women are coming in, and they tell me, ‘Oh, I got my mammogram.’ That’s what’s important. Early detection is the key, and that’s the key to survival and better treatment options.”

– Longtime Pin-A-Sister™/Examínate Comadre™ supporter and breast cancer survivor
Deaconess Lillouise Lewis, New Friendship Baptist Church

Pin-A-Sister Sunday™/Domingo de Examinare Comadre™

Pin-A-Sister Sunday™/Domingo de Examinare Comadre™ is the campaign's hallmark event, which is typically held on or around Mother's Day each year. On this special day, faith-based and community partners take a moment to do three simple things:

- Recognize breast cancer survivors
- Talk about the importance of early detection
- Conduct a pink ribbon pinning ceremony to engage women in taking control of their health

How to Host a Pinning Ceremony

Please note that the content below serves as general guidelines for places of worship but, can be altered to fit the needs of any interested organization:

- A pre-event briefing should be held before services and include a member of the clergy and a pre-designated Pin-A-Sister™ /Examinare Comadre™ spokesperson (i.e. First Lady and/or faith leader, breast cancer survivor or a special guest).
- We will provide you with ribbons in advance of your event. Ribbons should be distributed by ushers or your volunteers along with the faith programs prior to the service. Attendees should be instructed not to wear the ribbons until the pinning ceremony.
- During the announcement portion of the service, designated spokespersons are called to the pulpit for the pinning ceremony Please see "Sample Scripts for Ribbon Pinning Ceremony" on next page.

DID YOU KNOW?

According to a 2005 research study, African-American women who heard, read or saw information about breast cancer four or more times in church-sponsored activities were **15 times more likely** to report getting a mammogram within the past year than those who encountered information only once.

Breast Cancer by the Numbers

According to the 2006 Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force Report, the state of Illinois has the sixth highest breast cancer death rate for women of color and uninsured women. In fact, the breast cancer death rate for African-American women in Chicago was 116% higher than for white women. Below are more facts on the health disparities that exist among women of color:

- About 1 in 8 women in the U.S. will get breast cancer during her lifetime.
- Each year, more than 40,000 women die from breast cancer.
- The overall lifetime risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer is 10.14% for African- American women and 13.83% for Caucasian women. However, about 31 out of every 100,000 African-American women die from the disease each year compared to just 27 out of every 100,000 Caucasian women.
- Breast cancer appears an average of 10 years earlier in Hispanic women compared to Caucasian women. (*Arizona Cancer Center Study, March 2009*)
- 80% of breast lumps are not cancerous—see your doctor right away to be sure.
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Hispanic women.
- More than 90% of women who find and treat their breast cancer early are cancer-free at five years.

For more information, contact 312.526.2374 or email Rachel.Nagengast@achn.net. You can also visit www.achn.net/pinasister for additional resources. You can also follow Pin-A-Sister on Facebook.

Sample Script for Ribbon Pinning Ceremony

[Remarks by Faith Leader, First Lady and/or Presenter]

At this time, we will have a special announcement by [name of designated spokesperson] who is going to share information with us about a special faith-based health initiative that talks about the importance of regular breast cancer screenings.

[Remarks by Designated Pin-A-Sister™ Spokesperson]

As we celebrate Mother's Day, we would like to take a few moments to remind all women about the importance of being good stewards of our health. We are charged "to prosper and be in health even as our souls prosper." The ushers have passed out a pink ribbon to every woman who entered the sanctuary today. Many of you recognize these ribbons as the symbol in the fight against breast cancer. Today, our congregation is joining forces with thousands of individuals across Illinois and across the country to promote breast cancer awareness among women of color. At this time, I would like to introduce [name of breast cancer survivor] who would like to share her personal testimony.

[Remarks by Breast Cancer Survivor]

Good morning, my name is _____ and I am a breast cancer survivor. To give you some background, African-American and Hispanic women are less likely to get breast cancer but if they do develop this disease, they are **40%** more likely to die than white women. And I am here today as a living testimony of the importance of early detection. [*Survivor tells her story*]. Therefore, I encourage all of my sisters to take command of their health and get mammography screenings regularly and follow-up care immediately if needed. So that we can be in health and prosper even as our souls prosper.

[Remarks by Designated Pin-A-Sister™/ Examinee Comadre™ Spokesperson]

Ladies, I would like for you to do the following:

Please stand, ribbon in hand and turn to a sister sitting next to or nearby you. Please recite this commitment after me: "Sister, we commit ourselves to get regular mammogram screenings and to schedule follow-up visits when necessary, as we stand together in the fight against breast cancer."

In observance of the many women whose lives have been touched by breast cancer and as a symbol of our stand against cancer, please pin your sister with a pink ribbon now.

Sample Suggested Quotes and Scriptures:

Please note that additional quotes and scriptures are available online at www.achn.net/pinasister.

1. "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
(2 Corinthians 12:8-10 New International Version)
2. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."
(Proverbs 3:5-6 King James Version)
3. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint."
(Isaiah 40:29-31 King James Version)
4. "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."
(Psalms 31:24 King James Version)

Source: Knowledge About Breast Cancer and Participation in a Faith-Based Breast Cancer Program and Other Predictors of Mammography Screening Among African-American Women and Latinas, Julie S. Darnell, M.H.S.A., A.M., Chih-Hung Chang, Ph.D. and Elizabeth A. Calhoun, Ph.D.

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