

Study: Religion may reduce spread of AIDS

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A U.S. study says people with HIV who have strong religious ties are less likely to spread the virus that causes AIDS.

The RAND Corp. study says HIV-positive people who say religion is an important part of their lives are likely to have fewer sexual partners and engage in less high-risk sexual behavior.

"Moral beliefs may indicate an underlying altruism and a desire to make sure no one else is infected with HIV," behavioral scientist David Kanouse said in a release. "Promoting these feelings could then be used as a component of HIV prevention programs."

Lead author Frank H. Galvan, a professor with the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, says the study suggests that there's a role for religious institutions to play in the fight against the spread of HIV.

"They have these core belief systems that do have a positive impact on the lives of people who are HIV-positive and who are sexually active," said Galvan. "Religiosity is an untapped resource in the whole struggle against HIV and AIDS, and should be looked at more thoroughly."

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