

Those sheer numbers draw hundreds to the organization's annual fundraiser, raising more than \$100,000 each year.

"Tulips and Pansies: A Headdress Affair" combines fashion and flowers to raise money.

Village Care organizers got the idea for the over-the-top event about seven years ago because of all the support they've gotten from the fashion industry. And it took off.

The designs are intricate, the headdresses elaborate.

"We always feel for the model who has to wear these things, because the designers tend to get a bit carried away," florist Reed McIlvaine said. "But you get to make a statement for the cause."

"It's great to be a part of something so special," designer Justin Teodoro said. "And whatever we can do as an individual or an industry just to help out, I'm all for that."

For more on Village Care, click [here](#). To view our video click on <http://abclocal.go.com/wabc/story?section=news/local&id=6145325>

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# abc

Local News 

## Helping those with AIDS in NYC

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Eyewitness News

NEW YORK (WABC) -- It is a staggering number. New York City has the highest rate of people living with AIDS. It is more than the number in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami and Washington combined.

And the agencies that help them often need help themselves.

Eyewitness News reporter Carolina Leid has the story of one of them and their rather unique fundraiser.

"I wanted to commit suicide," client "Sheila" said. "Really."

Sheila says she didn't know where to turn when she learned she was HIV positive about 10 years ago, until she found Village Care of New York.

"I was always isolated, and this is how Village Care helped me to break that cycle of isolation, by being here with my peers," she said. "And they talk with me through difficult times I might have in my life."

Everyday, the not-for-profit service organization helps 1,200 people living with HIV or AIDS.

"We're supporting the person where they are in their lives," vice president and COO Emma DeVito said. "We're not judging them. We really are engaging them in care and empowering them to get to where they want to get."

But even with round-the-clock support at its five locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn, DeVito says she sees an alarming trend.

"I think there is a misconception that AIDS is treatable, that it's not a big deal anymore," she said. "In New York City alone, we have more than a 100,000 people with AIDS today."