



FACT SHEET

What is the Circle of Promise?

The **Circle of Promise** is a new campaign launched by Susan G. Komen for the Cure to engage African American women in the fight to end breast cancer forever by fostering increased awareness, support, empowerment and action.

The **Circle of Promise** empowers African American women to make a promise to take control of their health and become ambassadors to their community. Specifically, we want women to promise three things:

- Educate! Get the word out about breast cancer's impact on the African American community and how early detection and treatment can save lives now.
- Engage! We need African American women to get involved in the global breast cancer movement by joining the **Circle of Promise** and serving as campaign ambassadors within their local communities.
- Give! Foster relationships within the African American community that will help increase financial support for breast cancer research and additional community-related programs.

The interactive Circle of Promise microsite, www.circleofpromise.org, is the primary location where people can sign up and answer the campaign's call to action: eliminate breast cancer by taking control of your health and by helping other women do the same.

Bringing the Campaign to Life

The Circle of Promise will also come alive at various events around the country. The campaign will continue to leverage its sponsors' involvement at many of those events.

At the local level, the campaign will rely on grassroots support from the Komen Affiliate Network, women's membership organizations, churches and other key groups.

Nationally and locally, the Circle of Promise will ask for support of public policy measures that seek to fight and end breast cancer in the African American community.

Why is the Circle of Promise so important?

Although breast cancer continues to impact people from all backgrounds, there are significant differences within the mortality rates amongst racial groups.

From 2000-2003 African American women had a 36 percent higher death rate than other women, giving them the highest death rate and poorest survival rate of any racial or ethnic group for breast cancer.

Thanks to improvements in early detection and treatment, breast cancer deaths among all women have steadily declined since 1991. However, African American women still have a higher breast cancer death rate than white women even though they develop breast cancer less often.

While 90 percent of white women diagnosed with breast cancer survive for at least five years, only 77 percent of African American women survive for that long.

There is also evidence that tumors are more aggressive among African American women than they are in white women.

In the past two decades, great improvements have been made in the treatment of breast cancer. As a result there are more than 2 million survivors in the U.S. today!

Who is involved?

The Circle of Promise is co-chaired by author and TV personality, René Syler and Susan G. Komen for the Cure Board Member, Alexine Jackson. These women exhibit strength, passion, and dedication in their fight against breast cancer and are ready to touch the lives of other women through the Circle of Promise.

At a national level, Susan G. Komen for the Cure is recruiting partners to help grow the campaign in the African American community:

- “Ambassadors,” or African American women who are recognized as role models within the community, are being asked to join the Circle of Promise and motivate others to do the same.
- Sponsors, including companies and individuals, are being asked to join the campaign and lend their resources.

Local partners will also be asked to spread the word and motivate women to join the Circle of Promise through events and distribution of campaign literature.

The **Circle of Promise** campaign will be supported by organizations and companies that believe in our movement and are committed to having a positive impact on the African American community. Ford Motor Company and ESSENCE magazine are founding supporters of the **Circle of Promise** campaign.

How you can join the Circle

- **Join us:** register today at www.circleofpromise.org and make your promise to take care of yourself first and then become an ambassador to your community! We'll provide you with all of the resources and tools you need to make changes in your own life and to share lifesaving messages with others.
- **Spread the word:** invite your girlfriends, mothers, sisters, daughters and co-workers to join the Circle of Promise. Tell them you want them to join you in the fight against breast cancer's attack on the African American community before it's too late.
- **Be active in your commitment:** continue to fight with us by supporting public policy efforts, helping us to raise funds for research, and by making sure that the **Circle of Promise** is alive in your community!