

The Sentinel for Health Awards Fact Sheet

WHAT: The Sentinel for Health Awards were developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to recognize exemplary achievements of TV writers who inform, educate and motivate viewers to make choices for healthier and safer lives through their storytelling.

The Awards are administered by Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S), a partnership between the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, the CDC and the NIH's National Cancer Institute (NCI). HH&S serves as a one-stop-shop for writers, producers and others in search of credible information on a wide range of public health topics.

The Sentinel for Health Awards recognizes exemplary health storylines in five categories—prime time drama, prime time comedy, prime time minor storyline, daytime drama, and Spanish-language telenovela. Storylines recognized by the awards program have dealt with a range of public health topics – including diabetes, fetal alcohol syndrome, HIV, substance abuse, breast cancer, safe sex, autism, organ donation, and disability.

Past award winners are:

- 2000 – “Viki’s Breast Cancer,” ***One Life to Live*** (daytime drama)
- 2001 – “Raul’s Diabetes,” ***The Young and The Restless*** (daytime drama)
- 2002 – “Tony’s HIV,” ***The Bold and The Beautiful*** (daytime drama)
- 2003 – “Neil’s Alcoholism,” ***The Young and The Restless*** (daytime drama)
- 2004 – “Kevin and Lily: The Danger Within,” ***The Young and The Restless*** (daytime drama)
 - “Choice,” ***Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*** (prime time drama)
 - “Heartbeats and Deadbeats,” ***Strong Medicine*** (prime time minor storyline)
 - “No More Wire Hangers,” ***One on One*** (prime time comedy)
- 2005 – “Autism Spectrum Disorder,” ***All My Children*** (daytime drama)
 - “Volcano,” ***Without a Trace*** (prime time drama)
 - “Leaps of Faith,” ***7th Heaven*** (prime time minor storyline)
 - “Prescription for Trouble,” ***The George Lopez Show*** (prime time comedy)
 - “Graciela Refuses to Have Cancer,” ***Anita, no te Rajes*** (Spanish-language telenovela)

The entry form is available at <http://www.learcenter.org/html/projects/?cm=hhs/sentinel>.

WHY: Analysis of data from the Healthstyles Survey indicates that more than half of female prime time and soap opera viewers report learning something about a disease or how to prevent it from a prime time or daytime show. After hearing something about a health issue or disease on a soap opera, one-third of regular viewers took some action. After hearing something about a health issue or disease on a prime time show, nearly half of regular viewers took some action. Summaries of the Healthstyles Surveys are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/communication/healthsoap.htm>.

WHO: CDC and NCI communication staff, as well as representatives from academic, public health, entertainment and advocacy organizations, advise on the annual award activity and assist with judging activities.

WHEN: The seventh annual award ceremony will be held on September 27, 2006 at the Writers Guild of America, west.

HOW: First Round Judging is conducted with CDC and NCI topic experts, including specialists in health communication, media relations, health education, behavioral science and epidemiology, who evaluate entries for accuracy of depictions. Second Round Judging is conducted with representatives from academic, advocacy, entertainment and public health organizations, who evaluate entries for entertainment value and benefit to the viewing audience.