

ALLIANCE OF PROFESSIONAL TATTOOISTS, INC.

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PRESS RELEASE

*** For Immediate Release***

The Alliance of Professional Tattooists, Inc is dismayed by the recent television offering from The Learning Channel titled, "Tattoo School". This program is one of several aimed at viewers who share an interest in tattooing and other forms of body art. The majority of those viewers are not professional tattooists and should not be encouraged to engage in tattooing without a proper apprenticeship program. The A.P.T., Inc. recommends a minimum of three years study under a Master Tattooist with direct supervision in a professional tattoo studio.

Tattooing is a licensed practice in most states usually overseen by the Department of Health. Lack of knowledge of infection control, known as Standards of Precaution, and lack of bloodborne pathogens training by instructors familiar with the tattoo process, can create serious health risks when attempted by the lay person. Tattooing should not be attempted in a classroom setting.

We are appalled by the apparent disregard for public safety by this network for this and other shows which create both misconceptions about responsible tattooing and unrealistic expectations for the process. These shows are nothing more than entertainment. However, there is never a disclaimer or warning for the viewer to "not try this at home".

Since the A.P.T.'s inception in 1992, the Kansas City, Missouri based organization is nationally recognized as establishing standards of practice for the tattoo industry. Approximately five thousand members have attended the Prevention of Disease Transmission seminar. This 6-hour tattoo specific

bloodborne pathogens training seminar is the primary force in keeping tattooing safe for everyone. It was created in 1992 by A.P.T. founders Micaela Michielli and Dr. Kris Sperry, along with Cathy Backinger of the Center for Disease Control, in response to the increased awareness of AIDS, HIV, Hepatitis, sexually transmitted and other communicable diseases that were present in the media in the mid to late 1980s. To date, there have been no occurrences of HIV nor AIDS contracted from receiving a professionally executed tattoo.

With the alarmingly rapid growth rate of untrained or improperly trained non-professional tattooists generated by television shows, business publications and the internet, the public can be at risk. The A.P.T. advises potential tattoo recipients to be aware of the risks involved when getting a tattoo outside of a controlled studio environment. While tattooing often takes place at large venues at tattoo conventions, the public should look for:

- * The Department of Health Inspection Certification for the State and County the event is being held in.
- * Proof of annual training in Bloodborne Pathogens from a tattoo specific provider such as the A.P.T.'s PDTT seminar.
- * Gloves are being used and changed when ever your artists touches anything not being used in your tattoo, eg. phone, ink bottles, hair and clothing, etc.
- * Needles and tubes be either sterilized single-use or disposable and placed into a puncture proof sharps container when the tattoo is complete.
- * The artist is using proper sterile absorbent bandages to cover new tattoos.
- * Hand washing takes place whenever needed.
- * Aftercare is given in writing and verbally.
- * Standard Precautions are understood and being adhered to.