On this week in Indiana history, Ryan White was born. He contracted HIV through a contaminated blood transmission in 1984 while being treated for hemophilia. HIV/AIDS was poorly understood at the time, and he faced discrimination and hostility.

Ryan quickly became a national symbol of the AIDS crisis of the 1980’s, and helped change public perceptions of individuals with the disease. Ryan passed away on April 8, 1990.

Ryan White left behind a legacy of the importance of perseverance, compassion, and understanding.

The HIV assistance act, providing resources for treatment and support to people with HIV/AIDS, bears his name.

The Ryan White CARE Act was enacted August 18, 1990; and in 2009 the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act.