I: In this interview I will ask you to talk about AIDS and I want you to know that you don't have to answer all my questions. If you don't want to answer a question, just let me know and I will go on with the next one. You can also ask me to stop the interview at any time. In this interview you will be asked to talk about everything you know about AIDS and I will first ask you to just tell me the things you know about it. And then I will ask you more specific questions about that. Sometimes I may ask you the same question more than once and I do this to make sure that I understand everything you are trying to tell me. Please don't worry about whether your answers are right or not I just want to know what you know about it and so just tell me what comes to mind. You don't have to talk about yourself or your behavior, just want to know what you know about it. No one except for me and the people I work with at CMU will hear this tape. And will not put your name on it. Just a number so we cannot trace it back to you.

So my first question is please tell me everything you know about AIDS?

S: Well, I know mostly the general stuff that you can't get it from talking to somebody or kissing. And you can't get it from sitting somewhere, drinking out of the same cup. But you can get it from hum, having sex or sharing the same needle, or a child can get it from their mother. Because it is a high concentration of blood so. And hum, ..... 

I: Have you heard other things about it? Are there other things you know about it?

S: Hum, that hum, you don't die from AIDS, you die from the hum, things like a cold. Because it makes your immune system, instead of fighting off it sends signals that make it just not do anything. And so you die because your immune system can't fight off a common cold or anything.

I: Can you tell me more about how the AIDS virus can be passed on from one person to another? You already mentioned a little bit about it, just asking again.

S: No. [Inaudible] cause like we have the family health counsel come to our school and they told us that last year. I know you can get from your mother having sex with somebody, or sharing a dirty needle. And you can also get it from the mother's breast milk.

I: Are there any others things that you about it you can get it from?

S: Hum,...I don't remember.

I: Ok. So you told me that hum babies can get it from the mother. Can you tell me more about that? How that works?

S: Because since there's a high concentration of blood then the blood from the mother going into the baby so. All the things that the mother had is going into that child.

I: And hum, is there anything the mother can do to prevent passing the AIDS virus on to the kid, or to the baby?

S: I don't, I have no idea.

I: Ok. Let me see, and can you explain how it is passed on from the mother to the kid by breast milk. Do you know how that works?

S: Because hum, in the milk there is a high concentration of blood so that goes into the child and so the child will catch it.
I: And do you think there is a way that the mother can prevent passing it on that way?

S: Omly if they can use formula instead of breast milk.

I: And how well do you think that would protect them? The baby?

S: Well, if the, if it hasn't really showed up well maybe the baby child won't get it. So, bigger chance....then feeding the baby breast milk instead of just using formula.

I: And about sharing needles can you explain how that works? How it is passed on to people?

S: Well, the needle goes into the vain and so then the hum, guess the virus is on the needle because it's going into your blood system and so somebody uses it right after you then the same thing is going into their system.

I: And hum, do you think it matter how often a person shares needles?

S: The first time could do it. It doesn't have to be the third or fourth. It could be the first time.

I: But if they do it more than once?

S: There is a bigger chance than just doing it that one time. Maybe you got lucky but, doing it over and over probably get it then.

I: So it's a higher chance? Do you think there is a way a person can prevent getting the AIDS virus if they are sharing needles?

S: Well, if you know if you are going to be sharing needles first off you should tell the person that you are sharing them with and then the person might not want to share needles with you and then they just might not care. I think that's all.

I: So how, why would this protect them?

S: I mean if you didn't share needles then there would less chance of you getting it from that person if the person was honest with you and then just give the needle to you and not tell you. Then maybe you're not going to catch it.

I: How well do you think that would protect them if they do that?

S: Well. I think they have a 50/50 chance.

I: Ok. What do you think may lead a person to share needles?

S: Hum, hum.....it could be used for drugs and your friend just happens to come over that day and you decide to use drugs with the needles and you all just share it and pass it around.

I: Are there any other things that may happen or may lead a person to share needles?

S: I don't know, medicine. There is a prescribed medicine that you have to use needles for, like insulin.

I: So you mentioned a person goes out planning not to share needles, what do you think may mess up their plans?
S: Hum, listening to their friends, and just peer pressure.

I: Sharing them?

S: Not wanting everybody to think that they are, I don't know, not down with it, so maybe they will use it just to prove a point.

I: Hum, you also told me that the AIDS virus can be passed on when people have sex, can you tell me more about that? How that works?

S: Well, since there is high concentration of blood in the hum, the semen, then when they have sex then it is passed on to the girl. So that's how you can get it and in the class they told us even if hum, you do use a condom there is a chance that that might not always work because it can break or slip off, whatever. And then sometimes when it's just the mood, you just forget all about the condom and then that messes up everything.

I: Yeah. And so what do you think a person can do to prevent getting the AIDS virus if they are having sex?

S: Well, I think you should tell you partner that you have the AIDS virus, I mean and then you should have counseling or something and try to find out the best ways that you can prevent from passing it on to him or her.

I: And hum, imagine a person who doesn't have the AIDS virus and they don't want to get it what should they do?

S: Hum, if you hum, I mean if your partner tells you that they do have AIDS, and you know that you don't want to get this and there is no fool prove way of you never getting it, even using a condom or foam or whatever then you should just tell you partner, then "I want to be with you put I don't want to die."

I: Yeah. Do you think it matters how often a person has sex?

S: Well.

I: For getting the AIDS virus?

S: Well, like the with news you can still get it the first time but there is more chance of you getting it having a multiple, having it multiple times than just having it once.

I: Hum, I forgot to ask you a question. How well do you think hum, talking to their partner about the AIDS virus would protect a person from getting the AIDS virus if they are having sex?

S: I think it would help a lot. I mean informing your partner instead of just keeping it to yourself because you think that they might leave you mean. I think that that would build the trust more, because you actually came to me and told me this.

I: (Yes)

S: And you trusted me enough to help you out.

I: What do you think may lead a person to have sex? Or to have unprotected sex?
S: Cause when you are doing all that stuff that leads up to having sex, you not, you not thinking about a condom or anything. You just doing what you feel.

I: Are there any other things that may?

S: And sometimes people say, "I heard that it doesn't feel the same when you do it with a condom." Or "I'm just not going to wear one, it doesn't happen to me."

I: And so if someone says that? Yeah

S: Laughter

I: Imagine that person goes out planning not to have sex, what do you think may mess up these plans?

S: Pressure from boyfriend or girlfriend I mean, "if you love me you would have sex with me." And pressure from your friends, well "he's your boyfriend and that's part of being a girlfriend is to have sex."

I: Yeah. Are there any other things?

S: You can feel yourself that that's the only way you can keep them is to have sex with them.

I: (Yes) What do you mean by that?

S: I mean the only way to hum, keep the relationship together.

I: What effect does alcohol have on people?

S: It makes you not think as rationally as you would.

I: Ok. Are there any other things that alcohol does to people?

S: Hum, you don't have the same reasonings but, it makes you not able to think the way you would if you weren't under the influence. You wouldn't make the same decisions.

I: Do you think those risk, oh does drinking make much of a difference in a persons getting AIDS?

S: Yeah, cause when you are drinking I mean if you are really heavily drinking you can get just really drunk you don't even know what is happening to you cause, your mind is totally shut out. And it would just like do anything till you wake up the next morning and wouldn't remember a thing.

I: Do you think this risk is different for people who drink a little bit everyday compared to people who drink a lot every weekend?

S: I mean it is still all slowly making it, it's still all slowly killing you so.

I: (Yes) So you don't think it makes a difference?

S: Well, they just drink a little bit every day and you just drink heavily on weekends. Still about the same effect.
I: Does it matter how often a person is exposed to the AIDS virus?
S: Yes.
I: Can you tell me why?
S: I mean like how exposed?
I: In any of the ways that you mentioned before? So by sharing needles, sex, being born, well we already did that once? Giving breast milk to a baby?
S: Well maybe the first time you are exposed to it maybe you might not contract it but the multiple times you are exposed to it one of the times, something is going to happen.
I: Hum, can you tell me what happens when a person gets infected with the AIDS virus?
S: Well, the virus really doesn't mean you are sick yet you have to get full blown AIDS. To really be sick, that means that you've gotten some kind a infection. And just totally you are getting ready to die so you have to. I mean the HIV you can still do normal everything but having full blown AIDS, it slows you down. You feel weaker; you are not strong.
I: And what happens before that when you have HIV. Let's start with HIV?
S: HIV, you are really not sick then you don't really get sick until you get full blown AIDS.
I: So HIV is before AIDS?
S: Yes.
I: And do you know anything else about HIV?
S: Well, you are not, might be as likely to get HIV instead of full blown AIDS. Like if you do have sex, share needles or whatever, it's likely that you won't pass it on as much as if you have full blown.
I: Ok. Do you know how long it takes for a person with the AIDS virus to develop AIDS? Is there?
S: I have no idea. It's not a limited time I mean. Like if you have a boyfriend and they had AIDS and you had sex with them and maybe a few months later that they die, it might not show up and you could take years.
I: What do you mean by will not show up?
S: I mean it wouldn't, like they took you blood it wouldn't just show up in your blood that you had AIDS, it might take years for it to show up.
I: So, do you know why that is, or how?
S: I have not idea why that's.
I: Hum, how can someone learn whether he or she has the AIDS virus or HIV?
S: Go to the clinic.

I: And what do they do?

S: They take your blood. And they analyze it. I don't know how long that takes, I guess a couple of weeks. I don't know.

I: And do you know what they test for?

S: No.

I: And why do you think someone would decide to be tested?

S: Knowing that they had unprotected sex or sharing needles or any of those.

I: What would make you think that a person has HIV?

S: You can't really, I mean it's not really a noticeable thing. That they have HIV. They look like a regular person.

I: Is there, so there's not any way that you can tell or?

S: Not really.

I: What kinds of people do you think have a lot to worry from HIV or AIDS?

S: I don't know, I think anybody can get it.

I: Yeah

S: That's what I think, nobody is, hum immune from it.

I: When can people stop worrying about AIDS at all?

S: I don't know, more and more people are getting AIDS so it's spreading more and more. Unless you like, I really, you can't unless you find everybody who has it because everybody, a lot of people are having unprotected sex or sharing needles. You can't find every single person.

I: That's true. So do you think people are making too big of deal of AIDS?

S: No, I think it's a problem and I think that they should keep looking for a cure because then until they find one it, more and more people are going to start dying. And it's starting to spread more and more now because, now more and more people are having unprotected sex and everything. So, it's spreading more and more.

I: Where have you learn about AIDS?

S: My mother told me about the lady that came to their school because she was, or she is a teacher and she's explained to me, and I learned about it at school and about how can't get it from kissing, it would take I don't know 2 quarts of spit. [Laughter]. It's got to be a long kiss. [Laughter]. And all the ways you can't get and the ways that you can.

I: So you learned from your mother? Did you learn some other things from other places?
S: Yeah. My heard it from the peers and everywhere.

I: Did you also learn about at school?

S: (Yes)

I: Do you think they skip certain things about AIDS in health class at school?

S: No response

I: Are there other things that you learn somewhere else that you didn't learn in school?

S: I didn't know that you have to, I learned the kissing from somewhere else, but I don't really think you could get it from kissing. I mean I know you couldn't get it from just being next to the person. Or drinking after them, or doing all the normal stuff, you have to do with something else.

I: Do you think you know enough about AIDS to protect yourself from it?

S: Yes, I mean but you can learn something else everyday. There's something new every day.

I: Do you think you know enough to be safe?

S: Yes

I: Are there any things you would like to know more about? About AIDS?

S: I'd like to know how far they've gotten with a cure to it. I mean you always hear how they are working on a cure, working on it, but they are not saying well "where are you?" in the progress.

I: That's true. Are there any other things you are unsure about that you would like to know more about?

S: No.

I: I have some question about terms that people use when they talk about AIDS. For example: AIDS is caused by HIV and HIV is a virus does that tell you anything about it? That HIV is a virus?

S: I thought, yeah I know that HIV is the virus. But they never really talked about, usually they just talk about AIDS not the virus they think if you have the virus then you AIDS. But that's not true.

I: It's not true?

S: No. When you have HIV, it's different than AIDS. HIV is just a virus.

I: Well, can you explain to me how the two are related, how it works?

S: I think, I know that they are two different things. It's just the virus and then when you get infected by something like a cold I guess you have AIDS then.

I: Ok. I'm sorry if I keep asking the same things. What do you think safe sex, or have you heard of the term safe sex?
S: (Yes)

I: Do you know what it means?

S: They say the best safe sex is no sex. And if you are going to then you should have protection. And that you should not use lambskin condoms because those things, they are not very good; you should use latex.

I: So these are the safest condoms to use or are there other?

S: There other ones you could use. I think a sponge or a diaphragm or foam with a spermicide. I think that's what you're supposed to use, I think the best way to use a condom and foam with a spermicide.

I: So, what else do condoms protect you against?

S: They protect you against pregnancy or any other STD's besides AIDS like gonorrhea, chlamydia. The other one I can't remember.

I: The whole list.

S: Yeah.

I: Do you know what IV drug use means?

S: Hum.

I: Have you heard about the term?

S: IV drug use. I mean I heard it before hum, it's that kind a like sharing needles.

I: Do you hear it a lot, or just?

S: Vaguely.

I: Do you think needles can be cleaned?

S: Yeah, they have to be. Yeah they can be cleaned they can be sterilized.

I: Do you know how that works?

S: I don't know, I have no idea how to sterilize a needle.

I: Ok.