In this interview I will ask you to talk about AIDS. I want you to know that you don't have all my question. 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. I will first ask you to tell me everything you know about AIDS, then I will ask you some more specific questions. I may ask the same question more than once. I do this to make sure that you tell me everything that you know and that I understand everything that you say. Please don't worry about whether your answers are right or not. Just tell me everything that comes to mind. You don't have to talk about yourself or your behavior. No one else will hear the tape but myself and we will not be reporting to the people here what you said.

My first question is, please tell me everything you know about AIDS?

S: Everything I know, well this is what I know about AIDS so far. Is that it's a disease that breaks down the immune system and it could be passed onto... it could be transmitted from sexual behavior or through blood, and from blood plasma, from one person's body to another. And I know that so far there is not a cure for it. And it's deadly. And that it's spreading rapidly. That's all that comes to mind right now.

I: Ok, anything else?

S: No, not really.

I: Ok. Can you tell me anything more about how AIDS is passed from one person to another or how it's spread?

S: Just. As I said, through blood, through transfer of one person's blood to another person's blood. The one person who has the AIDS virus then passes it to another person who may not have the virus will possibly contract the disease. Or sexually through one person's semen or through the other person's blood or fluids.

I: Ok. You told me that AIDS is passed on when, through sexual activity. Can you tell me anything more about that?

S: Well, not really.

I: Ok. What about with the blood. Is there anything more you can tell me about that in terms of how AIDS is passed from one person to another?

S: Well, I can use examples, just like drug users or needles. Or hospitals, where Arthur Ashe got his blood transfusion. Or the hospitals are not careful with their instruments, their syringes, and scalpels that they have there. That's about all I know about blood.

I: Ok. Does it matter how often a person would have sex or have a blood transfusion? In terms of their risk of getting AIDS?

S: It doesn't matter how much because it could be your first blood transfusion and the person might be unlucky, or a person could be their first time having sex with another person who has the virus. So it doesn't matter how often you do it.

I: Imagine that a person may have a blood transfusion or have sex only once. What happens to a person's risk of getting AIDS if they have a blood transfusion or have sex many times?
S: Well, I believe the risk becomes higher. Because the blood transfusion, well, not higher, but most hospitals are careful and they're careful that all that and find out the information about the hospital [inaudible]. Then your risk wouldn't be as high as having sex all the time, because a lot of people get out of control and have unprotected sex and there's really no such thing as protected sex. There's like 80-90% with a condom or whatever or as effective so. That risk becomes higher. And as far as blood transfusions, it could be, depending. That's it..

I: Ok. Can you tell me how a person can prevent getting AIDS if they are going to have a blood transfusion or have unprotected sex?

S: Well as far as the blood transfusion, not really unless you, unless they'd be, found more information on the person who you were receiving blood from or the hospital checked it. And for having sex, I'd say you better be careful with vows and sex after marriage, make sure you know that person.

I: How well do you think this would really protect a person from getting AIDS, those methods that you talked about?

S: It would, it would lower the risk, I don't want to say it would take the risk down to zero. But it would lower it for a lot more [inaudible] how far a person takes it. Really besides, really sure, or just really, depending on if either one had AIDS, or he or she would be, would uh... it would depend on the person, what the person does is up to them..

I: What do you think may lead a person to have unprotected sex or get a blood transfusion?

S: Unprotected sex. I don't know what really affects them to have unprotected sex. Probably not thinking, not using their head. And blood transfusion, depending on their... doctor said that they need blood.

I: Imagine that a person goes out and they are planning not to have unprotected sex, or they are planning not to have a blood transfusion. What do you think may mess up their plans?

S: Well, for the blood transfusion, if they need blood, then that would mess up their plans. And as far as unprotected sex, only thing that would mess up their plans, if they don't got any control of themselves, or very little control. Or temptation would mess up their plan to have unprotected sex.

I: What affect does alcohol have on people?

S: Alcohol, very different effects cause alcohol could have violent effects. People act violent. People that act little bit more wild and crazy. Far as healthwise, it's not very healthy. You could have, later on down the line, liver problems, stomach, it slows down, it slows your thinking down because it kills brain cells. And people, some people act very violent when they have too much alcohol, like domestic violence could be because of alcohol abuse. And modern day violence, it goes on to society.

I: Does drinking make much of a difference in a person's risk of getting AIDS?

S: Yes. Because, hum, you drink too much, drinking kills brain cells. Alcohol rushes to the brain. It is absorbed through the brain and... which causes the person to think very slowly or react very slowly. And let's say you get in a fight and you bleeding and the other person's bleeding and one person has AIDS and that's a way to catch it, or unprotected sex is related to drinking. You know, he's, he drunk and he want to go out and he wake up in the morning and he doesn't know where he's at, but yet what he did could last to, in catching the AIDS virus.
I: Ok. Is the risk of getting AIDS different for people who drink a little bit every day compared to people who drink a lot every weekend?

S: I think it could be different because the weekends is usually when people go out searching. Out of the weekends, nobody...cause during the uh... You drink a little, like you're not, let's say, drunk. Then you still have a little bit of control of your thoughts because the week day, the week days, usually the work days when people don't usually go out act wild [inaudible] the weaknesses and the people go out and do what they please. The weekdays usually calm days, that go to work in the morning, after that you sit down, watch TV, eat dinner and go to bed. Cause usually, weekdays aren't, they're just more calm than weekends.

I: Does it matter how often a person is exposed to AIDS?

S: Does it matter? Could you clarify that?

I: Does it matter how often a person is exposed to AIDS in terms of their risk of getting AIDS?

S: Probably. You saying that um...

I: Does it make a difference in terms of their risk if the person is exposed to AIDS more or less?

S: Truthfully, I can't answer that, because it could make a difference if exposed. Then again, people take that for granted and don't really think about it. [inaudible] just keep on doing what they are doing, with drug use. Or what have you. Then again people could open up their eyes and see that whatever they're doing or lifestyle that they're living, and they cause them to slow down. Or use their head more.

I: Can you tell me what happens when a person gets infected with the AIDS virus?

S: Yes, ah, AIDS virus is a breakdown of the immune system. What it does, it breaks, a person doesn't actually die from AIDS. It breaks down the immune system. The immune system is the system that helps your body fight back from the diseases like antibodies. And two celebrities that I'm familiar with that died from AIDS, one just recently, rapper Easy E [inaudible] died from the collapsed lung. Caught it from the AIDS. And Arthur Ashe, tennis star died from pneumonia because their bodies couldn't fight back cause the immune system broke down.

I: Can you tell me about what happens when a person develops AIDS?

S: What happens?

I: (Yes)

S: You mean what happens to their body?

I: (Yes)

S: As I said it breaks down their immune system.

I: Ok. How can someone learn whether he or she has AIDS?

S: Well. As far as I know, whenever they start, the person starts to get sick and takes a visit, takes a check to the doctor, whatever, and the doctor comes back and tells them that they have the AIDS virus. And that's usually after you, you usually find out.
I: Ok. What would make you think that a person has AIDS?

S: There's nothing that make you think a person has AIDS unless he or she comes out and...and straight tells me. That they have the AIDS virus, but... You can't tell by looking at a person like if I'm walking on the street and just I, I just happen to pass somebody I wouldn't be able to tell. But I think after the person has the disease for so long, he starts losing a lot of weight and he's now real thin. The person looks sick but that's the only thing you can tell about the person. And by that time the person's usually in the hospital bed. So.

I: What kinds of people have a lot to worry about from AIDS?

S: What kinds of people?

I: (Yes)

S: Drug users, he use syringes a lot and uh, police, policeman, paramedics because they have to deal with a lot of things with blood. Let's say a person is shot, stabbed, cut, what have you. They have to worry about the blood into their system. Who else, people who use, who go out, say, every weekend and have unprotected sex, or even just protected sex I mean, who just constantly have sex. That's the type of people who have to worry. Stop and watch themselves.

I: When can people stop worrying about AIDS?

S: Right now I wouldn't be able to tell you that because well, as far as I know, there's not, the cure hasn't been found and it depends on them. If they decide to take care of their life, they don't use drugs or decide not to have unprotected sex. Or what have you, and they don't usually deal with issues with blood or maybe would not be... Right now, I could say there would not be a time that a person has 100% could, could just not worry about AIDS, be nonchalant about it. At the most if you don't have unprotected sex and and you don't have to deal with issues where blood is involved and doctors and so forth. Then a person won't have to worry as much.

I: Do you think people are making too big a deal about AIDS?

S: It depends whether the person who is so paranoid of the disease that if he finds out that another, another person that he usually socializes with has AIDS, then decides not to socialize with him, that's when you worry about it too much. Especially when they are ignorant about the disease. But far as concerned about it, I don't think people are too much, I think people are too little concerned about it because it's so big now, it's hitting closer to home.

I: Where have you learned about AIDS?

S: School, like in health class. And TV and sometimes reading about it. Friends.

I: What things do they skip about AIDS in health classes at school?

S: Things do they skip about? ....Right now, they didn't skip anything that I remember. But so far they didn't skip anything about it.

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

S: Probably not, because well, I do know enough about it but well, while I wasn't listening, a kid could be HIV positive. And he decides to cut himself. I took him down to the office right, and I patched him up. I wouldn't, I would not take it for granted, I wouldn't put on the plastic gloves,
and...I do know enough about it. I don't think I really want to think about it that much. I would be more nonchalant about it.

I: Is there anything more you would like to know about AIDS?

S: Well, I can't name specifically what I would like to know but if there is anything that I don't know, I would like to know cause I don't want to be totally ignorant and positive about the disease. I always like to gain knowledge as much as I can.

I: AIDS is cause by a virus called HIV. What does that tell you about it?

S: What does it tell me about AIDS?

I: (Yes)

S: It tell me that, really I can't say much but it does tell me that HIV, I know is the virus that leads to AIDS. And I can't really say how much it tells me.

I: What does safe sex mean?

S: Truthfully they say that well, they say well, the media says like sex with a condom...well, I couldn't say that's safe sex, because it's only 80% effective. So, with the 20% you have to add, it's 20% non-effective. So if 20% gets the advantage, then you have enough to be safe.

I: Ok. Can you tell me more about condoms, like what are the safest condoms to use for protection against AIDS?

S: I wouldn't know about that. I'm not into condoms and stuff like that. So I can't really tell you.

I: Ok. Do you know what else condoms protect you against other than AIDS?

S: It's 80% effective against non expected pregnancies.

I: What does IV drug use mean?

S: I think it stands for intravenous. Something like that. I don't know what the definition of that is, but just from guessing, I think something like, there's more like inside you like heroin injected into your body and stuff like that.

I: Do you think needles can be cleaned?

S: They can be. They can be cleaned, I don't know that much about needles and stuff like that. But if you cleaned them right, then hopefully it would be clean.

I: Do you know the correct way to clean a needle?

S: No.

I: No? Ok.