

Volume: number one

issue one



# ROBBING THE CRADLE

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# Robbing the Cradle Newsletter Setting The Record Straight



**G**reetings ladies! It was one year ago that I started reading about how more and more young women, 14-20 years of age were contracting HIV. One thing is for sure, young women right now are getting infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI's) by males at least 3 to 5 years older than them.

The more I read, the more I started wondering if girls in South Carolina were at risk like females in other towns, cities, and states. So I decided to interview young ladies from around our state, 57 altogether. The young ladies lived in Richland, Lexington, Florence, Kershaw, and other counties. They came from all kinds of backgrounds.

Through our interviews I learned plenty of important information from them directly. So we decided to create this newsletter to share with you some of what they said. This is the real deal as I heard it from other females your age.

One of the things you will see.... is many young females your age are misinformed about HIV/STI's. Too many girls don't know the facts about

sexual diseases. Second, they feel like that they to have sex even though they are not ready to deal with the pain and hurt early sex can cause. Everywhere you turn the message to have sex is in their face. So what is a girl to do?

Trying to figure out what's right, what's wrong, what's best for me?" It is our dream that you set goals and become the type of woman who can handle her business. With support from the Midlands HIV Prevention Collaboration and the AIDS Benefit Foundation of SC we are able to get the word out, before another female gets "hit".

So please take the time to get into this newsletter. Share it with your parents or any adult that cares about you. If we do the right thing, together, maybe you will decide that your life is worth saving.

Sincerely

Bambi W. Gaddist, DrPH  
Executive Director  
SCAAHAC

# 21 QUESTIONS????

## Facts & Myths about HIV/AIDS & Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's)



**O**K ladies, you've heard of 21 Questions. Well, here are 21 Answers. Don't worrying about counting them....they are in here! So, girls let me holla at you about some real serious things affecting you. You might think that what I'm about to say doesn't have anything to do with you...If you think that...your **dead wrong**.

I want to talk to you about HIV and AIDS. Yeah I know what you thinking... I'm clean, my man is clean, I ain't even tryin to get caught up in all that nonsense.

**WAKE UP!** It is YOUR problem because you, my sister, are at risk if you are sexually active. The rate of HIV infection is growing everyday in the African American community. On top of that, did you know that HIV infection among young and old black women is growing at the fastest rates?

According to our Robbing The Cradle study, girls listed different reasons for putting themselves at risk for pregnancy, HIV infection or other sexually transmitted diseases. Reasons they gave us were:

1. "I'm Scared to lose my man".
2. "I'm afraid that my man may get violent if I try to say no to sex or leave the relationship."
3. "They buy me gifts, food, and clothes to get in the "drawals"
4. "They offer you alcohol or drugs and that changes how you think."

We don't know if you may be putting yourself at risk for some of the same reasons, but we are coming to you... straight up... to ask that you take a step back and face the facts.

After you read this newsletter, we hope you stop *just thinking about* what your life may be like if you became HIV positive, got a sexually transmitted infection (STI's), or pregnant. We want you to decide to *start doing something to make sure you don't* end up struggling later on, all stressed out, wondering what you're going to do cause you done "messed up".!

Ask yourself is sex really worth it right now for me? Am I making blind decisions that could negatively change the rest of my life? Sisters learn the truth about HIV/AIDS and other STI's. Learn now **or** suffer later. So we're setting the record straight.....GET IT?????

**SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: FACTS AND MYTHS ABOUT HIV**



# MYTH

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HIV is the same as AIDS.

There is a cure for HIV.

HIV is transmitted through casual contact like hugging, toilet seats, & touching.

You can tell if a person is HIV positive by looking at them.

In order to get tested for the HIV virus a teen must have your parent's permission.

In order to get tested for any sexually transmitted disease a teen must have your parent's permission.

If someone is HIV positive and uses a condom for protection, ~~illegal~~ to have sex with a partner **without telling** them they are HIV positive.

Alcohol and other drugs do not affect your risk of HIV infection.

It is better to have oral sex because ~~you can't~~ get HIV through oral sex.

Using an animal skin condom correctly or birth control pills can reduce the risk of HIV infection.

Using Vaseline or oil is good for a condom

I think I'm ready to be sexually active

# FACT

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HIV is the Virus that causes AIDS.

There is **NOT** a cure for HIV.

HIV is transmitted through blood, semen, vaginal secretion, and breast milk.

~~Looking~~ test is the only way to know if a person is HIV positive. A person could have HIV for years without showing signs or symptoms. It is **important** to GET TESTED. Know your HIV status.

If you are **16 or younger** you can be tested for HIV without your parent's permission, ~~but~~ you must first sign a waiver stating that your parent will be notified if the test result is positive.

In South Carolina who have the right to seek out health care (like in the health department) and be treated at any age.

~~By law~~ a person can be prosecuted, if they have sex without informing their partner of their HIV positive status.

Alcohol and other drugs can increase your risk of HIV infection because of the affect

~~Yes~~, it is possible to get HIV or other sexual diseases through oral sex. HIV is transmitted through anal, oral, and vaginal sex.

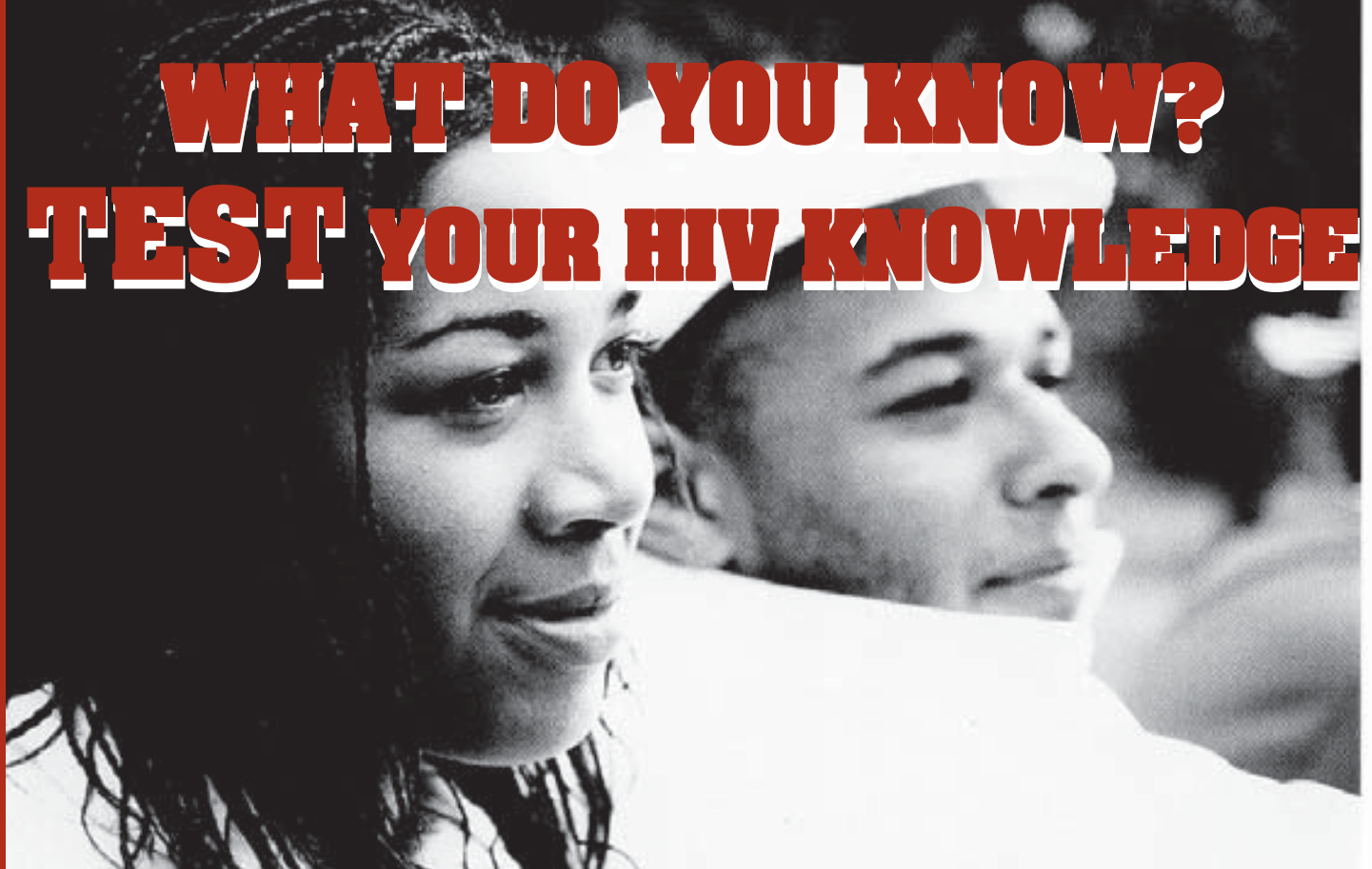
HIV can pass through animal skin condoms. A latex or polyurethane condom can reduce the risk of HIV infection.

Dead wrong. Oil of any kind on latex will break

If you are having second thoughts....If you are feeling pressured or forced....If thinking about having sex is causing frustration with your spiritual beliefs or causing problems at home....If you don't know your HIV status or theirs either....If you haven't been to the doctor for a physical...or If you are afraid to talk straight to your partner, **YOU AIN'T READY!!!!**

# WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

## TEST YOUR HIV KNOWLEDGE



**Circle all the right answers, check the correct box, or fill in the blank.**

- 1) HIV is the virus that causes \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) African American women are the fastest growing number of new HIV cases in South Carolina.  
☐ True    ☐ False
- 3) There is a cure for HIV?  
☐ True    ☐ False
- 4) Teens need parental consent to get tested for HIV in South Carolina  
☐ True    ☐ False
- 5) HIV is transmitted through which bodily fluid(s)?
  - a) Blood
  - b) Semen
  - c) Vaginal Secretions
  - d) Breast Milk
  - e) All of the Above
7. Which of the following can help you reduce your risk for HIV infection?
  - a) Using a latex or polyurethane condom correctly and consistently each time you have sex
  - b) Having multiple sex partners
  - c) Abstaining from sex
  - d) Both a and c
  - e) None of the above
- 8) Abstinence is the only sure way to reduce your risk of HIV infection.  
☐ True    ☐ False
9. What is a dental dam?
  - a) A dam the mouth
  - b) A curse word
  - c) A piece of latex (rubber) used for oral sex
10. Which type(s) of condoms reduce your risk of HIV infection?
  - a) Animal Skin
  - b) Latex
  - c) Polyurethane
  - d) None of the above

*Circle all the right answers*

# HOLLA .....

## *How to Talk with Your Man... Just Say What You Mean*

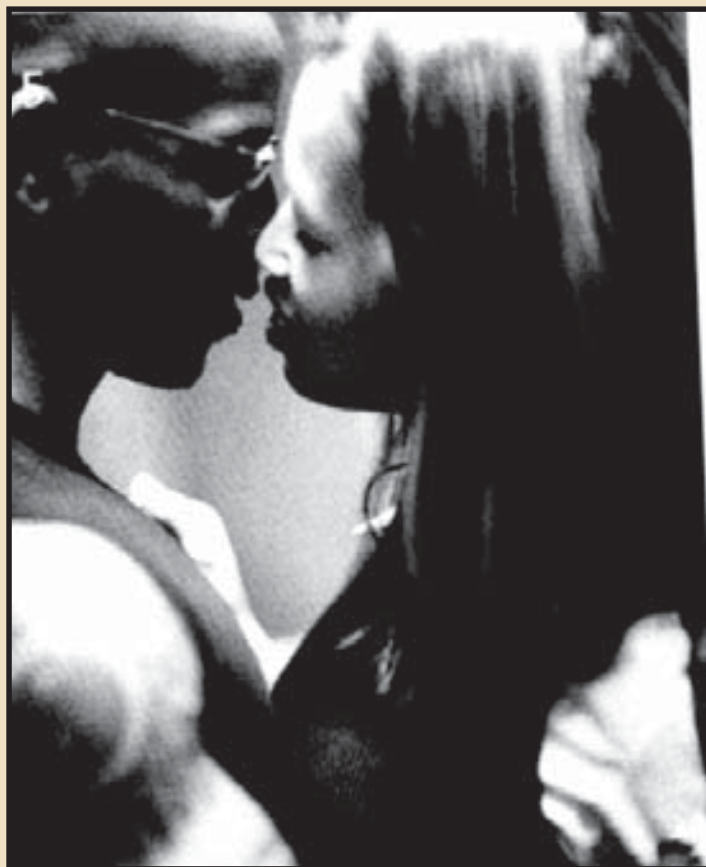
**S**ometimes girls are not ready to make the decision that is right for them. Sooner or later though, the time is coming and you will have to step up and make a decision. We don't care how old you get...the decision will have to be made over a life time.

Making the decision to have sex gets even harder the older you get and you really know the deal for real. We know old folks that need to just say NO! The other thing is, the longer you know the person, the harder it gets to say no or use protection from STI's.

Peer pressure and fear of loss can cause you to have sex even when you know deep, deep, down inside that you are not ready. If you have ever felt this way, like you were in too deep and you've been up all night "freaking" cus you know you could be stepping off the edge. Or you're freakin cause you think your pregnant????/

It is a good idea to **prepare** exactly how you may react in different situations. The time to figure out what your going to say AND how you are going to say it should start **before** you find yourself caught up in the wrong situation.

Talking with partner about your decision to wait (abstain) can be a very hard thing to do. In the conversation it is important to *say what you mean*. If you **don't want to** have sex but don't want to lose your cool or points with your man, there are a lot of things you can say. **Remember.....** it is important to **"Just Say What You Mean"**.



Here are a few "tips" you could say to your "friend" when they want you to have sex, but you're not ready:

- ❖ "I'm waiting until I get married before I have sex."
- ❖ "I've made a promise to myself, my family, and God to wait."
- ❖ "I care about you but I'm not ready to do this."
- ❖ "I don't think that this is the right time for me. I'll let you know when it is time."
- ❖ "I don't want to get pregnant, I don't want HIV, or some other STI."
- ❖ "I choose not to put my life in your hands. I'm taking control for me by deciding not to have sex right now."

There are some lines that are “wack” to say if you are trying to really handle your business. First, you are beating around the bush. You’re tryin to get out of just saying what you believe is best for you. Remember... you are the one that will have to “jam” with the consequences. Here are some lines girls we talked to said they were using to delay sex. We call them.....

### LINES THAT MIGHT WORK NOW....BUT WON'T WORK FOR LONG

- ❖ “My period is on”.
- ❖ “I have a headache”.
- ❖ “My momma’s coming home soon”.
- ❖ “Not right now...maybe later”.
- ❖ “Stop....Stop....Giggle.....Stop...Come On Now.....!”

The only sure way to reduce your risk is to abstain from sex, period. And just as a point....you don’t have to explain yourself, but it might be better if you do. That way if they keep begging, and you go off on them, they can’t say they haven’t been told!



If they don’t like the fact that you are straight up with them about your feelings or they just ain’t trying to hear NO.....they will get over it.

### What Happens If I Have Made The Decision Not To Wait?

Now, if you choose to have sex it is important to know your HIV status first. You need to know their HIV status, too. If you are afraid to discuss getting tested you might want to **CHECK YOURSELF!**

Use a latex condom correctly and every single time you have sex. Talking about condoms may seem hard to do, but it is very important if you want to reduce your risk of HIV infection.

Oh yea, if your expecting him to bring protection..you need to check yourself. If you’re so ready, bring yur own or **CHECK YOURSELF!**

Here are some things you can say to your boyfriend.

- ❖ “If you care about me you will use a condom.”
- ❖ “No glove no LOVE.”
- ❖ “I care about you, but I also care about myself.”
- ❖ “I don’t want to get pregnant, HIV, or some other STI so I want to use a condom.”
- ❖ “I know you look clean but ... I’d feel better if we use a condom.”
- ❖ “Have you been tested for HIV? I need to SEE the results.”

Ladies, you’ve GOT to Think about your future:

- ▲ Do you have things you want to do when you grow up?
- ▲ Think about how HIV or pregnancy could change the vision you have for your future.
- ▲ Is having unprotected sex really worth your LIFE?
- ▲ How are you going to like it when folks at school and in your “group” have your name trashed all in the streets?

We’re telling you now, it’s going to hurt more than you are going to want to admit. So save yourself the grief....hold up!



# DEAR SHANEQUA

Dear Shanequa,

I am fifteen years old and I think I am in love. I have been "sexing" this fine guy for six months who is 23. He buys me whatever I want. The only problem is, the only time he buys me stuff is when he can "Get In My Drawls". I know what we're doing is not right because he always makes me smoke weed before we do it. Another thing that bothers me is he doesn't like to use condoms. I don't want to get HIV or get pregnant, but I love him. Shenequa can you please HELP me?

Signed,  
Dazed and Confused

Dear Dazed and Confused,  
Get with the program! How many times must you get played before you understand that you have more to offer than a blunt and a bed? The next time old boy tries to get to you to have sex and you don't believe it's in your best interest let him know how you feel. Tell him straight out "I'm not ready for the consequences of unprotected sex. Now I know it is hard to resist a man who you've only known for six months but think of ways you can say "I don't want to have sex" and mean it! I'm behind you all the way!

Shanequa

P.S. Get Tested, Start off on the right foot!

Dear Shanequa,

I met this guy two weeks ago named Deshawn as he was walking in the store. I knew I had to holla because he had a green Suburban sitting on dubs, and I knew he had money. He asked me out on a date, my mom doesn't allow me to date yet, so I told her I was going to spend the night at my friend Keisha's house.

Deshawn is all that and I want him. He's in college and he has a nice car. On our date he began to really pressure me into having sex. I don't want to get pregnant but I want to please him. All the girls be hating when he picks me up and I love that. Shenequa how can I keep this man without having sex with him?

Signed,  
Had to Holla

Dear Had to Holla,  
Girl, a Suburban sitting on dubs will make you do a double take, but is that really important. Look, home girl, I know you like riding in and looking good, but your health may be at stake. Lets take a moment and think, has Deshawn been tested for HIV, and what if your moms finds out you've been lying to her. The consequences are too great. If Deshawn really cares about you, he will understand you're not ready for sex. By the way, it's okay not to want to have sex, and if you think "I have a headache" will keep him off you are dead wrong! Tell Deshawn exactly how you feel and if doesn't get the picture Tell him Peace, Holla Back! Hopes this helps  
Shanequa





# Are You At Risk?

## Assessing Your Risk

Are you At Risk? Eighty-five (85 %) of teens we talked to reported knowing that African American women are the fastest growing number of new HIV cases in South Carolina. All that is fine and good, but the ??? is, How do you plan to keep from being in the #####?

With That it mind, we figured that it is important to fill you in on what puts you at greater risk for HIV, pregnancy and other STI's. More important, we wanted you to know ways to cut down on your risk. SO.....Check this out!

## CHECK YOURSELF

### You are at risk if you:

- ◆ Are having unprotected sex
  - ◆ Having sex with multiple partners-(that means more than 1 person)
  - ◆ Engage in sexual behaviors (oral, vaginal, anal)
  - ◆ Not able to communicate your feelings
  - ◆ Are not tested for HIV
  - ◆ ABSTAIN from having sex period! If people talk about you for not doing it...who cares...are they payin your bills?
  - ◆ Use a latex condom each and every time you have sex
  - ◆ Use a latex dental dam\* (see notes) or condom, reduce the number of sexual partners
  - ◆ Tell your partner how you feel (ex. No, I don't want to have sex! Or I will not have sex without a condom!)
- Get tested for HIV; know the status of you and your partner

# Parent's AND Caregivers Corner ; **What You WANT To Know**



Parents I know we want the best for our children, but there is an alarming fact that more and more teens are becoming sexually active. Do we think teens are responsible enough to have safe sex? No! But we have to face the fact that many of our children are and if we don't address our

children first they will learn the hard way.

- ❑ **Parents should provide monitoring and supervision of teen's dating**  
Be aware of partners age  
Provide information about the increased risk associated with older men

- ❑ **Monitor unexplained material possessions**  
Large number of teens reported that partners frequently use gifts, money and/ or some cases, basic necessities to persuade them to have sex

## **Target Teens Early**

The average teen has all already been sexually active by **age 13** and they reported that the likelihood of abstaining from sex decreases once they start having sex! So if your slow....

## **Have honest discussions addressing the real world challenges that teens face**

- Challenges related to abstaining Pressure from males (e.g. they keep begging and asking, using flattery)
- Some teens are planning to have sex (eg. "sex feels good") Sexual assault (e.g. the girls report family members and associates, date rape....NOT strangers)
- Discuss HIV / STI testing and their right to seek healthcare.

## **Provide Information about all Sexual Contact**

- 36% of girls in this study did not define oral and anal sex as sexual contact. The majority (66%) did not know there is a increased risk for HIV infection through anal membranes and oral

- A small number of girls who report not being sexually active have experienced “forced sex” which places them at risk

**Provide Age Appropriate Information about Consumer Issues Related to Condom Use**

- Teens report that condom use significantly reduces the risk of HIV infection, however, they were unclear about the effectiveness of latex vs. animal skin condoms.

**Provide assertiveness skill training within the context of real life situations**

- Although teens understand the advantages of abstinence, too many of them few **do not** have the assertiveness skills necessary to communicate their honest desire to abstain
- Teens acknowledge the risk of pregnancy or HIV infection, but few feel comfortable talking out loud about their reasons they want to abstain

Some teens feel embarrassed to admit they are virgins, especially males.

So final message....

**STOP THE TUG OF WAR  
Teens Get The Message...Now  
Talk Straight and Give Them  
Some Skills to Make It Happen!!**

**RESOURCES IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY**

If you have questions or need information about HIV/AIDS, STI's, abstinence, pregnancy prevention, or other issues there are many resources available in your community. We may answer any questions you have about.

**HIV/AIDS/STI's**  
[www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)  
[www.aidsinfo.nih.gov](http://www.aidsinfo.nih.gov)  
[www.scaahac.org](http://www.scaahac.org)  
[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**PREGNANCY PREVENTION**

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy  
 1511 Gregg Street  
 Columbia, SC 29201  
 (803) 771-7700  
[www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org)

**ABSTINENCE RESOURCES**

[www.friendsfirst.org](http://www.friendsfirst.org)  
[www.safeinc.org](http://www.safeinc.org)  
[www.abstinence.net](http://www.abstinence.net)  
[www.freeteens.org](http://www.freeteens.org)

**SPECIAL THANKS**

The South Carolina African American HIV/AIDS Council and writing staff would like to thank the following for their assistance in the implementation of the Robbing the Cradle Study development of this Newsletter. With your help we can develop a dialogue between parents and their children.

- Midlands HIV Prevention Collaboration
- AIDS Benefit Foundation
- Debra Kinnard
- Stephanie Williams





# Parents,

You Have TWO Choices:

**1** Talk to your kids  
about Sex,

**2** Or they will learn  
the wrong way,

in the streets...

it's never too late...



Funded through The South Carolina Department  
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In Collaboration with the Interfaith Community AIDS  
Resource and Education Coalition (I-CARE)

CALL THE SOUTH CAROLINA  
HIV/AIDS COUNCIL

**803.254.6644**