

How Little is Known About HIV

By Tania Sotelo

“A virus such as HIV does not have the capability to reproduce on its own; the virus needs to infect the living cells in the organism in order to replicate. The immune system usually finds a way of killing viruses, but it happens to be that HIV attacks the immune system itself. As 2.6 million people got infected with HIV in 2009 now there 33.3 million people around the world that are living with HIV, and about a million living with AIDS. HIV transmissions are usually through unprotected sex or needle sharing (AVERT, 2011).

In my community people with HIV are not conscious of the responsibility they have in their hands. There is a large possibility these people HIV positive are spreading the disease without being aware. This would be a “domino effect”, it would carry on and the chain will never be broken. If these individuals are tested, they are then aware of the precautions they have to take to be able to not contaminate their partner.

The prevalent problem about my community is that teenage girls are common to get pregnant at an early age. While they have sexual contact they don't realize the risks they go through with or without using protection. The responsibility is for both sexual partners. If they are detected with HIV not only does it affect them, but also the person developing in the girl's womb if they were to become pregnant.. It is difficult to predict if either side has ever had sexual contact before therefore, it is extremely risky to have sexual contact because either person can obtain a sexually transmitted disease such as HIV.

As you can see HIV is not a virus you can cure but you can live with. As there are treatments as well there are people that support and want to help those who are HIV positive. I

am currently working with my school to have a health fair to inform people about HIV. I would also like for there to be HIV testing booths so teenagers can obtain and know they are at no risk of HIV. This would increase awareness and responsibility of teenagers who do come back positive.

It is after the fact; these teenagers have realized the atrocious mistake they have done, that's when they regret their actions. The teenagers, who are diagnosed, then have to live with the consequences that they have a virus they will have to live with for the rest of their lives. It is necessary for them to take a new direction in their life. Now it will be difficult for them to adapt to their new lifestyle, but there are support groups and help they can obtain. What they haven't realized is that this new change can help them to enhance their choices; they can view it as a new opportunity God has given them to take more responsibility. The girls who are not diagnosed on time can transmit HIV to their child, but if they get tested on time, precautions can be made so their offspring will not become carriers.

As you can see teenagers in my community are not aware of the outcomes of not knowing about HIV. There are many people who can be saved from this disease that unfortunately has affected us throughout history. They need to know and I am hoping more support groups become available in my area because there are many people who need to know and need support.

References:

Unknown. "AIDS & HIV Information." *What Is HIV?* Registered UK Charity Number: 1074849, 2010. Web. 29 Oct. 2011. <www.avert.org>.