

BYC04 (SS) 19.4.89

INTERVIEWER: I haven't read that so I will just assume I don't really know anything about you. Can you start off by telling me a bit about what the most important relationships are in your life at the moment. I don't just mean with boys or whatever, but in general?

INTERVIEWEE: My little girl. She is the most important thing to me right now. With looking after her and making sure everything is alright for her. And my friend, my best friend, that's JACQUELINE, they are the most important apart from the obvious which is my mum and my family.

INTERVIEWER: Do you see much of your family?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes well I live with my mum and my mum's boyfriend.

INTERVIEWER: Right. So if you wanted advice or support or information where would you go for that?

INTERVIEWEE: To my mum or to SHEENA which is the youth worker. Like if I have got a problem at home, like I had a problem last week, I come round here to SHEENA because I know she will sort me out.

INTERVIEWER: And you said before you have been coming here for five years?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So you came here to the youth club when you were young, so you are..?

INTERVIEWEE: Seventeen now.

INTERVIEWER: So you have been coming here since you were about twelve so you know SHEENA quite well, right. Just to move from that, I want to ask a few things about AIDS and what you know about it. Can you tell me where you got most of, any information you've got about AIDS where you got it from?

INTERVIEWEE: We talked a bit about it at school and we talked about it in the youth club, with my mum, from the television and articles I've read in magazines.

INTERVIEWER: So can you tell me what you think it is?

INTERVIEWEE: AIDS? What I think it is and I don't know whether I'm right..

INTERVIEWER: It doesn't matter.

INTERVIEWEE: It's like a disease which you can catch through body fluids and that's not what kills you but you could get a common cold while you had AIDS and that's what would kill you, because your body immune system has been, like its gone.

INTERVIEWER: So do you know what the difference is between HIV and AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: HIV is when you've not got the full blown AIDS is it, I don't know. That's what I think it is. HIV is what you've got and then you can contract AIDS through having the HIV but you might not necessarily get it, just if you've got HIV.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, it seems at the moment like generally people do get it, but we don't know definitely. Yes, that's right. Do you think you know anybody who's got AIDS or HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You do. Anybody you know well? I'm not asking you to tell me who it is?

INTERVIEWEE: Not particularly, I don't know him well. My ex-boyfriend knew him, he was a friend, he was a drug user.

INTERVIEWER: And has he actually got AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: Rumours. Whether he has or not. It wouldn't surprise me if he did have but. Because he's been doing drugs for like the past ten years.

INTERVIEWER: Have you had much contact with people who do drugs generally?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Not what you call intravenous drug users, not really them, I know a lot of people who like just take 'draw' or something like that.

INTERVIEWER: What's that?

INTERVIEWEE: Cannabis.

INTERVIEWER: Right, it just that there's lots of different names for it and that's quite a local name so I was just going to check it out. And we call that dope but you call that draw. Yes. It's just interesting all the different terms for it. Right, would you see yourself as being at any risk?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Can you imagine that you might be ever?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I mean it's like if you sleep with someone you don't know who that person has slept with and the person they have slept with, slept with. Yes, I suppose I could be but not at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Is it something that you think about at all?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I do.

INTERVIEWER: So do you think that you would behave differently in relation to sex now than you would if AIDS didn't exist?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I don't know because as soon as I started my sexual once encounter its always been AIDS, it's always been there. Being young it has always been there.

INTERVIEWER: That's right, so you are saying you only had sexual intercourse once and you got pregnant?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Sad that, isn't it.

INTERVIEWER: It's a sod. You are not kidding, it's a sod. You said you didn't even enjoy it? Is that right? That's rotten.

INTERVIEWEE: No I was seeing him for, he was a very very good friend for three years and then I started going out with him as my boyfriend and we had sex but not sexual intercourse, and I just thought I would get away with it just this once and I was pregnant. I did have sex afterwards once I knew I was pregnant though. You make up for it don't you.

INTERVIEWER: What have you got to lose. And did it get any better?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I suppose so. I can't slag him that much, it's cruel.

INTERVIEWER: Had you been out with anybody before him?

INTERVIEWEE: I was with him when he was my friend, but when I was actually going out with him it was only quite casual so I was seeing other lads at the same time.

INTERVIEWER: And would you say you had a sexual relationship with them but didn't have sexual intercourse, is that what you are saying, or was he the first you had a sexual relationship with?

INTERVIEWEE: No. One or two I messed about with but not actually done anything like sexual intercourse.

INTERVIEWER: So what, it's a bit difficult but like messing about, what do you mean?

INTERVIEWEE: Well you know, kissing and what can you say. I've slept with lads but not actually..

INTERVIEWER: Just not gone all the way.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, that's what I mean.

INTERVIEWER: And was that your decision that you didn't want to?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me why?

INTERVIEWEE: Well because he meant a lot to me and I felt like, not like I owed it him, but like well I wanted to but I thought a lot of him and I wanted that closeness with him, whereas the other ones I liked being close with them, like sleeping with them but I didn't want to be that close with them.

INTERVIEWER: So it's like a way of saying, 'you're special'. Did you feel you were under any pressure from him?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You wanted to?

INTERVIEWEE: I wanted to but I think I was under pressure.

INTERVIEWER: Had you been under pressure from other lads before that?

INTERVIEWEE: Oh yes. You know what lads are like.

INTERVIEWER: Well yes. What I'm interested in is how you manage to resist and what you said to them and how you kept them?

INTERVIEWEE: Well you just say, I'm sorry I find it hard not to swear..

INTERVIEWER: Oh do, feel free.

INTERVIEWEE: Because you just say no. If you want to see me, see me but that's going too far. That's being used and I don't want to be used by people.

INTERVIEWER: But you felt that he was putting you under some pressure?

INTERVIEWEE: He was putting me under pressure, but then again I wanted to, but I was under pressure.

INTERVIEWER: And did you talk about using contraception? Or did you decide quite suddenly when you actually decided to do it?

INTERVIEWEE: Well with us it was like something we weren't going to do, we had fell out and it was when I got back with him that night, and we just did it. We hadn't thought about doing it and it hadn't even entered my head that I was going to.

INTERVIEWER: Right so it was about making up kind of thing?

INTERVIEWEE: Sort of yes.

INTERVIEWER: So you had never thought about really about using contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: I mean you knew about contraception, had you ever thought about what you might use if you did use anything in the future?

INTERVIEWEE: I was going to go on the pill. I went to the family planning clinic and it was open half nine .. half eleven or something and I didn't know that at the time, and I had gone in the afternoon on the day I got pregnant and I thought it didn't matter, I will go next week. I will get away with it just this once. Its comical isn't, but it wasn't comical at the time.

INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry, I am not laughing at you at all.

INTERVIEWEE: No it's the situation isn't it. I have a laugh myself, but then again I have got a little girl and I love her a lot.

INTERVIEWER: This might sound like a daft question but how did you feel when you found out you were pregnant. How soon did you know?

INTERVIEWEE: About two weeks after because I just thought it would be my luck, so I went for my test and I found out I was and he came with me and I said to him we might as well finish now, we are not going to stay together, we're too young. We are not going to get married or anything like that, we might as well just split up now and he convinced me that he loved me and he wanted to stay with me, and then when I was three months I saw him walking down the street with this other girl, even though she was six months pregnant. I was with him this time last year and she's six months pregnant.

INTERVIEWER: And is he still with her?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Well it's better for me really.

INTERVIEWER: Well if it was going to happen, it's better it happened quickly.

INTERVIEWEE: It weren't the fact that, I knew it would happen anyway, it was just that he convinced me that it wasn't going to and then it happened. Whereas I knew it was.

INTERVIEWER: It made it worse?

INTERVIEWEE: It just made it, it was just a shock really more than anything.

INTERVIEWER: Did you decide straightaway you were going to have the baby?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. The family tried, well not tried to make me have an abortion, they really wanted me to because with me being so young, but I can't say I'm against abortion. I don't like abortion but then say I know someone who has had an abortion and I wouldn't condemn them for having one, because that's their choice. Whereas me. I'm against it for myself. As soon as I knew I was pregnant that was a baby. I know it was only a tiny little blip of a thing, but to me it was a baby and I couldn't kill it. Plus at the time I had him with me and he didn't want me to and his family didn't want me to so it was like..

INTERVIEWER: Do you feel it was mostly your decision?

INTERVIEWEE: It was my decision.

INTERVIEWER: They couldn't have pressurised you into it?

INTERVIEWEE: No they couldn't. If everyone had wanted me to I would still not have had one.

INTERVIEWER: So you are not involved with anybody at the moment?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you might be? Is it something you hope is going to happen again or do you just feel like you want a break from it?

INTERVIEWEE: I am happy just being at the moment, just going out on a Saturday night and if someone walks me home they walk me home and if they don't, they don't, and I am not that bothered. I'm not looking for another relationship.

INTERVIEWER: Right. Do you get much time to go out? Does your mum babysit and?

INTERVIEWEE: I go out quite a lot, I'm quite lucky like that. Well no, not a lot, I go out Sunday night, because that's the night to go out now, because Fridays and Saturdays it's a bit, whatever, Sunday night is the night to go out.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting. Round here you mean?

INTERVIEWEE: Well what it is, the local pub has a big disco on a Sunday and everyone crams packed into the place so I go out then but she doesn't mind minding the baby if I come up, like I was up at the youth club one night last week, I will probably be up here

one night this week as well, so I get a break. Not that I need one because the baby is dead good normally.

INTERVIEWER: She's lovely, really sweet. If you did meet someone that you found attractive can you imagine having a one-night stand or?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I can.

INTERVIEWER: I'm not being at all critical, I am just interested in?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I've been very close just recently, put it that way but I stopped because for a start off I didn't want another baby, after last time.

INTERVIEWER: You think you might be a bit fertile?

INTERVIEWEE: I think I might be, but it would have to be someone special which the person was.

INTERVIEWER: Is it somebody you know anyway? Or was it someone especially attractive?

INTERVIEWEE: I was almost in exactly the same position I have been before with someone who is a very very good friend, he's the baby's godfather, he's been around all the time from the beginning just as a friend and what stopped me was the fact that that was how it began with the baby's father, just as a friend. And I couldn't cope with the hurt again, plus he's going to Australia in November and if I had got properly involved with him it would just break my heart.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, sounds like you have been very sensible. It's hard though isn't it, it's hard being sensible. Would you make sure you used contraception if it happened again?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think you would use?

INTERVIEWEE: I suppose it depends on the moment. If I was with someone in a relationship and I thought I was going to have sex with him then I would probably go on the pill, but if I wasn't and it was just like I can't see me having a one-night. It was like, I know it would have been a one-night with him.

INTERVIEWER: But it's someone that you know already?

INTERVIEWEE: It's someone special. But if say for instance I went out and I met some boy and he came back to our house, I would make sure he used a condom.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that would be difficult to get him to use a condom, do you think it is quite a hard thing to do?

INTERVIEWEE: Well lads don't like wearing them. From what I know, from when I have heard them, because I have like knocked about with lads in a gang situation and from what they say, because they talk to you like you are just one of the boys, they don't talk to you like you are girl, you know, you get no respect. And from what they have said, it takes a lot to get them to use one. But if I was with a lad and it was just going to be a one-night I think they would use one anyway with me. I don't think they would want to be a dad.

INTERVIEWER: That's a point. Do you think lads care about that.. Do you think they actually want to avoid being fathers, or do you think they don't think about it?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't really think AIDS comes into it. It frightens me I think, like it used to be, well you might get pregnant but now it's, you might get AIDS.

INTERVIEWER: It lasts a lot longer.

INTERVIEWEE: I know, but then when you are in the situation I don't think it comes into it. It has not done yet for me. If I went on holiday that's the situation where I think I might have a one-night stand.

INTERVIEWER: And somebody you didn't know anything about at all.

INTERVIEWEE: Then it would come into it then. It would be on my mind.

INTERVIEWER: So can you imagine say, just a for instance, say you were going on holiday, can you imagine taking condoms with you?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You could do that?

INTERVIEWEE: It wouldn't embarrass me going into a shop and buying them or anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it does embarrass a lot of women? Just thinking of your mates?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because I'm quite an open person, I don't get embarrassed easily. I don't. I'm not shy or, actually I'm quite a bit of a loud mouth I think. You know, I talk a lot, I'll talk to anyone. But it's the way I have been brought up, in a situation with a lot of people round me, so I don't get embarrassed with things like that and I can talk about sex and I can talk about things like that because I have been very open with my mum as well. I think that's made me like I am.

INTERVIEWER: So what do you think when people say, if girls carry condoms then that means they are a slag, what would your response be to that?

INTERVIEWEE: No they are not a slag. I have been called every name under the sun because when I got pregnant, I was pregnant to everyone except the father of the baby.

INTERVIEWER: As far as rumour, yes.

INTERVIEWEE: As far as rumours was concerned I was pregnant to everyone except the father of the baby and he didn't help much because he said, people knew I was pregnant but when people asked him and he told them I wasn't so it made it look I'd been a slag. I have not, but according to everyone else I have been.

INTERVIEWER: When you say everyone else who do you mean?

INTERVIEWEE: Well people at school, I was pregnant at school, so people at school and people that know me know I'm not, and they are the people that matter to me so I don't care whatever anybody else says.

INTERVIEWER: It's just that one of the things about the education around AIDS are that they are trying to encourage girls to carry condoms. But a lot of girls say I couldn't possibly do that, because everybody would say I was a slag. So it's quite interesting to hear you say well I can, you can cope with that as long your mates know.

INTERVIEWEE: I wouldn't condemn anyone because you can't say you know the ins and outs of things. I know a girl and she would be classed as a slag, she was even classed as a slag in my book, but.

INTERVIEWER: So what would your book be, what would your definition be?

INTERVIEWEE: Well she has slept with most of the lads that I know. But then again she got pregnant last year and she had an abortion and I wouldn't condemn her for that, I wouldn't call her for that, because I have been in her position. I know what everyone was saying about me, just what they were saying about her, and they shouldn't because they didn't call all the lads who she had been with, so.

INTERVIEWER: Dead right, yes.

INTERVIEWEE: I'm not women's lib. I suppose I am, but I'm not.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean, you are but you're not?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I think women they are not a weaker sex, but they can't be like men. No matter how hard they try, women aren't men. They should have the same opportunities and, and they should have, you know, they shouldn't be called slags for sleeping around because fellas don't get called slags for sleeping around, but then again I wouldn't want mind a fella opening a door to me or sending me flowers. I wouldn't mind if I was going out with someone them paying for me when they took me out. Do you know what I mean, so I am women's lib but I'm not. I'm a boarder.

INTERVIEWER: Contradictions there.

INTERVIEWEE: I contradict myself a lot.

INTERVIEWER: Well I mean life is contradictory. It's not black and white which is what you're saying, isn't it. But you think there are different rules for men and women?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes there are different rules for men and women, they are different and you can't get away from the fact can you.

INTERVIEWER: But do you think the different rules around sex are wrong. That the boys get away with it and the girls don't?

INTERVIEWEE: I am an example of being treated like shit aren't I. Because there's me with my baby but where is her dad, messing about with every girl that walks past.

INTERVIEWER: Is he?

INTERVIEWEE: Apart from the one who he's actually still with who's pregnant. But then again a girl knows before she sleeps with someone that she gets pregnant. You know that the boy isn't going to get pregnant, so OK, it's supposed to be a shared responsibility but it's not a shared responsibility, it's your responsibility.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think most girls think about that? Do you think they really think they are taking a risk, or do you think they put it out of their heads? I mean you took a risk didn't you?

INTERVIEWEE: I knew I was taking a risk when I did it and I knew that if I did get pregnant that it was me that was going to get pregnant and I knew for a fact he wouldn't stay with me, so then it was my risk and my responsibility even though everyone says well it shouldn't be, it should be shared, but it's not and it can't be because like I said, men and women are different and women have the babies and women know that. You know that men don't get pregnant so then it's your responsibility.

INTERVIEWER: So you are not friends any more with her dad? Do you still see him?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes a bit, because when the baby is older I never want her to be able to accuse me of stopping her from seeing her father. I don't want to have that. When the other girl has her baby I know he won't be around and he won't want to see her, but at least she won't be able to blame me.

INTERVIEWER: Right. How old is he?

INTERVIEWEE: Seventeen. Girls grow up quicker than boys, you can't blame, I don't blame him at all, I just wish he'd done it when I said he should do it, at the beginning.

INTERVIEWER: Rather than raising your hopes or getting you into a ..

INTERVIEWEE: Rather than lying.

INTERVIEWER: Difficult. Perhaps he didn't know what he wanted, but?

INTERVIEWEE: Well with the girl he's with now, they are playing happy families, she is a lot older than him. She had a flat. He left me because she had a flat and he wanted to

go and live in a flat and be grown up and all the rest of it. But I don't think he will stay with her because he can't commit himself at seventeen.

INTERVIEWER: Has he got a job?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes he has got a job, but it's a duff job. Not very good. It's better than no job though.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think, you say you took a risk, you got pregnant, do you take risks generally in other things? Are you someone that's prepared to take a risk?

INTERVIEWEE: I used to be, I think I've changed since I had the baby because simple things like crossing the road, I used to just run across the road and you don't care, do you.

INTERVIEWER: You've got a push chair in front of you.

INTERVIEWEE: Even when the baby is not with me or most of my friends are driving now. Before I was pregnant it was yes, jump in the car and lets go here and lets go there and speeding about down the motorway, now I won't do it even when the baby is not with me because I have got that responsibility, I've got to look after her. It's me, it's like our thing, if my mum had died before I had the baby I am sure I would have just done myself in. I would have killed myself, but now I if she died I have got my baby to think of, I am not thinking of me anymore. I am not thinking of my feelings any more I am thinking about her because she's got nobody except me. She relies totally on me. So it's up to me to look after me and her.

INTERVIEWER: What about other sorts of risks, I mean you are smoking, do you see that as a risk?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. It's terrible smoking, a horrible habit. It is, I think it's awful but I can't help it. Last Monday, we all gave up, everyone said they would give up, it's like a group of about five of us and we all said we would give up but I didn't want to give up smoking.

INTERVIEWER: You have got to want to as well though or it won't work.

INTERVIEWEE: You have got to want to otherwise you can't. I will have to soon because I'm getting my own flat and I won't be able to afford it. I really think seriously, I'm a smoker and I really think that cigarettes should be £5 a packet.

INTERVIEWER: And then you'd have to stop.

INTERVIEWEE: And then everyone would stop and no one would start and I really seriously think that cigarettes should be made illegal. Really I do.

INTERVIEWER: Strong words. What about drink, do you drink at all?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Much?

INTERVIEWEE: I go out and I get drunk. I have been drinking since I was about twelve. And that should be made illegal as well.

INTERVIEWER: Instead of you developing will power?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you drink a lot. I mean when you say you go out and get drunk how often?

INTERVIEWEE: I drink the same as everyone else my age.

INTERVIEWER: So what would you drink on a Sunday night?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I don't know now because its different now because with the baby here, but before I had her I used to go out and we used to do the same pubs every

week and it would be the Churchill, and I used to have two Pils in there, down to the Red and two pils in there, down to the and I can't stand lager, I always drink Pils. Down to the North, have a pernod and black, or vodka and orange and a Pils. And that would be me off my head.

INTERVIEWER: I don't wonder.

INTERVIEWEE: That's what I used to drink on my night out. Or before we used to go in pubs before we could get in pubs, it used to be a bottle of cider. Drink a bottle of cider, or a two litre bottle of cider or whatever. But I mean I said about cannabis before, I really think cannabis should be made legal and alcohol should be made illegal. That's my view on it.

INTERVIEWER: It does a lot less harm.

INTERVIEWEE: I know. Well it does when you don't smoke it in tobacco. I don't smoke it, I don't take it myself but from the point of view of people who do because I know a lot of people that do. I don't see any harm in it. To my mum, a drug is a drug. If you smoke cannabis you are taking heroin and that's what it is.

INTERVIEWER: And alcohol is not a drug and..

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, alcohol is not a drug, it's just that. I didn't drink at all when I was pregnant, and I said I would give up smoking but I didn't. I used to smoke twenty Benson a day, but when I got pregnant I just smoked ten Embassy extra mild a day. I cut down as far as I could, but I couldn't cut down all together. As for alcohol, it's great but it's bad for you.

INTERVIEWER: So you just have to cope with Monday mornings.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: If I said to you what do you think you will be doing in five-years time, what would you say? Like what you hope to be doing?

INTERVIEWEE: What I hope to be doing or what I think I will be doing?

INTERVIEWER: Well both?

INTERVIEWEE: What I think I will be doing I really don't know. I really don't know what I think I will be doing. What I hope I will be doing is I will have a good job, and may be even looking for my own house or you know, I want to be, sixteen year old girls who get pregnant they have got this image, that they are on the social, they are dassing about, they don't want a job because of living on the social. It's impossible to live on the social I can tell you that. It's impossible to live on the money they give you. I'm doing one at the moment, I'm working as well, and if I got caught I don't know what I would do, but I can't afford to live on £40 per week. With a baby. At the moment I am supposed to be in a flat on my own with a baby living on £40 a week and you can't do it. So I don't want to get stuck in that rut and I want to get out of it, that's why I'm going to college in September.

INTERVIEWER: Right so tell me about that. The work you are doing at the moment, it's just for a bit of extra money?

INTERVIEWEE: It's like Saturday work. I think you are allowed to earn £15, I don't earn over that but I do overtime as well.

INTERVIEWER: But it's not a proper job?

INTERVIEWEE: No it's not a proper job, but when I was at school what I used to do when I was at school is I would never go in and I would go in for my exams and without fail I always used to pass them with an 'A' so when I was in the fifth year at school I thought oh, it don't matter, I don't need to go in school, I'll just go in the exam and pass

it with an 'A', which would have been alright except for the fact that I got pregnant and I couldn't face my exams.

INTERVIEWER: So you didn't take them?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I did. I was put in for seven, I was in all the top classes for everything and I was put in for seven GCSE's. I went in for three and then I found out I was pregnant, so I didn't go in for the rest. Out of the three I took I know I passed my art exam because I have seen my art teacher, but I have got nothing to prove that because I have got to pay about £50 to get the results.

INTERVIEWER: Because you didn't take them all?

INTERVIEWEE: So in September I want to go to college, and the exams I took in fifth year at school I want to retake them at college, because at least I have the knowledge I had already so it can be easier plus my art exam, I have seen my art teacher in town and I went up and spoke to him and he said, 'oh, you have really let yourself down dead badly'. I said, 'why, what did I get?' And I got a 'C'. So if he had said I'd let myself down when I got a 'C' I can obviously get more so I might as well go to college.

INTERVIEWER: Which college are you going to go to?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. I will have to go to one that's got a creche. You can't pick and choose, I've got to go to one with a creche because of the baby.

INTERVIEWER: So you are going to do GCSE's next year?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know if it would be possible for me to do it, I mean you see me sat here now talking dead common, swearing and I smoke but I would really like to be a teacher. And I don't know if it would be possible for me to do it because you have got to go to teacher training college and with having the baby I don't think I would be able to do it. I don't know, I'm going to look into it.

INTERVIEWER: But you could go to one in Manchester? I mean I teach at the university, right.

INTERVIEWEE: What do you teach?

INTERVIEWER: Social Science, Sociology, and we have got women doing degrees at the university that have got young children and they are on their own. And it's not easy, but it can be done. There's a woman we have just accepted for next September onto our Sociology degree and she had a baby at sixteen. She's twenty-two now and she has done some GCSE's, she has done some 'A' levels, she went to [NAME OF COLLEGE] and did some courses. I don't know whether she did an OU course. She has done various bits and pieces while the baby was small, her little girl has just gone to school, and she starts with us in September. So it can be done.

INTERVIEWEE: You have really cheered me up now, because at school I was too involved with going out and seeing my boyfriend. To me I would be on my way to school in the morning and I would get halfway up the road, I would see his house and I would think, oh, I'm not going in, I will go and sit in his house all day. And I just didn't use to go in. And I knew I had to, but to me I had better things to do with my time.

INTERVIEWER: I used to feel like that at school too.

INTERVIEWEE: I seem to people, I give an impression to people that I'm daft as a brush, I really do, because I am, I am dead stupid and..

INTERVIEWER: You like messing about?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes I like messing about but with what I've done now, I feel like I'm a lot older. I don't act old, mature and all the rest of it, I'm still dead young. I've got a baby

and I jump down the street like a frog and I sing stupid songs to her. I don't sing nursery rhymes, I sing 'rapping' songs and things like that. But then again I feel I've got a knowledge for a person a lot older than me.

INTERVIEWER: Experience yes.

INTERVIEWEE: I have experienced that much.

INTERVIEWER: And other people can benefit from that experience.

INTERVIEWEE: I feel like, I mean not a lot of girls have been through what I've been through at my age. I'm not griping and moping.

INTERVIEWER: But you want to make use of it and do something with it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I have thought about social work. Because my ex- boyfriend, one of the reasons I was with him as well when we was friends, we were both on our own. My mum had to work because she was just a single parent and his mum was an alcoholic and I used to sort him out. I sorted his mum out and got her off the booze and I mean I'm only sixteen and I've done things like that. A lot of people come to me with their problems. I don't know what it is now, it might be because I'm a Pisces, I seem to be able to understand people's problems and where I live it's really rough, it's hanging, there is a lot of alcoholics, you know, like fellas.

INTERVIEWER: That's the estate you live in?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. It's [NAME OF ESTATE], do you know it? Oh it's bad, it's horrible. But I understand why they are like that. I don't just look at them and say, oh, look at him, the alcoholic. Like his mum, look at her, scruffy old cow. You know what I mean, can't be bothered getting off her butt, but I know the problems what made her like that. Like I know the problems that made him like he was. He got put inside for , but I know why he did it and I know the problems that made him like that. And I understand that and I would like, that's why I would like to be a teacher or something like SHEENA but it doesn't pay enough money.

INTERVIEWER: She does it part time does she? It can be alright if you do it full time.

BREAK IN RECORDING.

INTERVIEWER: You were saying about the flat?

INTERVIEWEE: When I get the flat I'm going to be stuck in and there's no way I'm going to be able to afford to go out at all. And with me being stuck in I am going to have to work because I'm going to have nothing else to do. Where before it was my social life, I wanted to go out and do this.

INTERVIEWER: So the baby has made it possible for you to think about studying?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes because I'm going to have more time.

INTERVIEWER: So you are getting a council flat are you? Do you know that definitely?

INTERVIEWEE: Well it's the flat where me and my mum lived. Well now my mum is going to remarry, she's bought a house, so we have had the flat put into my name.

INTERVIEWER: So you are actually going to stay where you are?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes but it needs doing. It's disgusting, it's a wreck. It's hanging.

INTERVIEWER: It's a start though?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, it is a start. It's a lot better start than what a lot of people get.

INTERVIEWER: I am not saying you should be grateful, or anything like that but at least it is some space.

INTERVIEWEE: No really I should be grateful because there are a lot of people a lot worse off than me. Mind you GEMMA isn't worse off than me now, but she was when she got pregnant at the same time as me. She had a little girl just before Christmas and she was in a lot worse position than me. I know I had all the heartbreak of what he did to me, but I pretended that happened to someone else and I got over it like that.

INTERVIEWER: Can you imagine yourself, we were talking in five-years time, would you want to be in a long term relationship in five-years time or are you just going to wait and see what happens?

INTERVIEWEE: Depends on what happens. I would like, thinking about when I was pregnant and I was totally on my own, my mum didn't speak to me for six months, my friend she's dead open with me, we have always spoken about sex and contraception and she said to me, 'if you are ever going to do anything come to me and we will go to the doctors and you can go on the pill', and we never had any problems like some girls can't talk about it. Well I was the other way round, and I still got pregnant, so she hurt.

INTERVIEWER: She felt you had really let her down?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I had really let her down. She didn't speak to me for six months. My best friend, she hasn't fell out with me, but because I was seeing him I didn't see her as much as, she got fed up with me altogether. She just thought, balls to you. He left me and I had no one, and I was just totally on my own and it's horrible, that is the worst thing. I had no one to turn to, I had no one to cry to, and all I wanted was someone to put their arms round me.

INTERVIEWER: And give you a cuddle.

INTERVIEWEE: Say you are alright, you are going to be alright. But I have got over that now. I know that I can do without that because I've been through it. But with him. His mum loves me, she thinks the world of me and she wants us to get back together, but there is no chance of that. Because if I did ever go back with him, before I needed him because I needed to feel needed. I feel needed because I've got a baby now. And he made me feel like that because he needed me. And then when he didn't need me anymore I had to go through that on my own. So now if I go back with him it will be on my terms. It would be, I know I can cope without you, so I don't need you, so go away.

INTERVIEWER: And now you've got your future to think about and her future to think about.

INTERVIEWEE: I've got things, like before it was, 'Oh, I need you' so every beck and call I was there. Or I would go round to his house and I'd say, 'oh, do you want a cup of tea, do you want this, do you want that'. Now it would be on my terms. If he did something I didn't like it would be the boot, straight out whereas before when he did it I thought, no, no, don't, I need you. Whereas now I know I don't need him and I can cope on my own. I wouldn't like to be an old spinster.

INTERVIEWER: There is a difference between wanting to be close to people and needing them. It's different. You are not saying that you don't ever want to care about anybody, you are just saying you don't want to be dependent.

INTERVIEWEE: I don't want to be dependent. And I know now that it's made me a lot stronger because I don't need to be dependent on people, I've done it. I've done it on my own. Whatever I've done, I'm going to bring my little girl up and I know I'm going to be on my own and I know she's going to be on her own. Because I can cope with it. I don't need people, well I do need people, I shouldn't say that, I do need people, what I

mean is I do need the affection and I do need SHEENA, she's been there for me a lot of times when I needed someone. But I was on my own and no one could understand how I felt and everything like that.

INTERVIEWER: I mean inside we are, when it comes down to it.

INTERVIEWEE: Yes when it comes right down to it. It sounds a bit stupid really but have you heard of Maze, the band Maze?

INTERVIEWER: No.

INTERVIEWEE: They have got this song called Joy and Pain and it is brilliant. And that just makes me happy you know, when I'm upset, because it's like OK you are down but you know you are going to be happy again. You know something is going to pull you out of it and you can just look to that?

INTERVIEWER: Maze, how do you spell it?

INTERVIEWEE: M A Z E. Joy and Pain it's called, it's really good.

INTERVIEWER: I will listen out for that.

END OF RECORDING.