

**BYC08**

INTERVIEWER: Can we start by, tell me how old are you?

INTERVIEWEE: Twenty-three.

INTERVIEWER: Twenty-three, and how old were you when you had the kids? Tell me about the kids?

INTERVIEWEE: I was nineteen, nearly twenty when I had the first one. I got married when I was four months pregnant.

INTERVIEWER: Did you plan the baby?

INTERVIEWEE: No. But I wasn't taking any contraception either.

INTERVIEWER: Why was that?

INTERVIEWEE: Because the only thing that I really knew about, the pill at that time, and I couldn't have that because my family have heart disease so he couldn't prescribe that, so I just didn't.

INTERVIEWER: And did no one tell you about other things like the cap or stuff like that?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I wouldn't go to the doctors because you know, being unmarried. I was really embarrassed about it.

INTERVIEWER: What about your parents, did they explain or give you much?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Well they are both dead now, my parents, but they never really talked about it, intercourse or anything like that.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't talk to friends and stuff about it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, we used to talk about it as friends but, like. I knew about things like the coil and that but I didn't use it.

INTERVIEWER: So what was your reaction when you found out you were pregnant?

INTERVIEWEE: Once my family knew and DALE'S family it was.....

INTERVIEWER: So you wanted the baby?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Good. At least you did. So what happened after that then, you got married straight away?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Well we got married when I was four months pregnant. And then I had the baby and when she was a few months old I got pregnant again.

INTERVIEWER: And was that a mistake again?

INTERVIEWEE: No. But after that I had the coil put in.

INTERVIEWER: So you're not going to have any more then?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you are still with your husband then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And that's going OK?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you remember back when you were at school what type of, did you have any sex education at school?

INTERVIEWEE: Not really, just sexual intercourse and periods. That's all we were told about.

INTERVIEWER: Was it a Catholic school?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So was abortion talked about or not?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes we did because I done my speech on the .....

INTERVIEWER: And was it on anti-abortion?

INTERVIEWEE: Well I was against it. The only way I agree with abortion is like if you could lose ..... you know what I mean, that's the only way I would have one, but I don't think it's fair on the baby. Let someone else have it if they don't want it.

INTERVIEWER: So you never really thought when you get pregnant, you know, you never thought of having an abortion?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Not unless I was told there was something wrong with it.

INTERVIEWER: So what did you do, did you leave school at sixteen?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What did you do after that?

INTERVIEWEE: I went to ... college on an office skills course, but I didn't stick it very long, about three months and then I had a few office jobs but I didn't like it, I just kept walking out and then I got a job in [DEPARTMENT STORE], you know in town, and I stayed there up to having the baby.

INTERVIEWER: Have you been working since?

INTERVIEWEE: I work in the pub at the top here, well I can't work in the day with the baby, but it's like 5 o'clock to 8 o'clock at night, twelve hours a week really.

INTERVIEWER: So when did you first hear about AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: When there was a programme on the television I think.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see it, I mean is that where you saw it, on the TV?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What did you think of them?

INTERVIEWEE: Well when it all came out to me it was when I was having the second baby, on my first one I lost a lot of blood and I had to have a blood transfusion after I had my first one, and then on the second one I was frightened, you know, because you can catch it can't you with.

INTERVIEWER: With blood transfusions at that time.

INTERVIEWEE: So I was a bit scared then when I was going to have the second one. But I didn't need one.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ask them about that then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What did they say?

INTERVIEWEE: They just said that it was all checked, the blood and that, but you know the States .....so I just didn't want to have a transfusion after I had the baby.

INTERVIEWER: And from the stuff you saw on telly, how would you say you can catch AIDS or HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: Using needles and all that with drugs, if you had a blood transfusion like, you still could really I think, sleeping around.

INTERVIEWER: What would you call sleeping around?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know, you just have to be careful. I would never, well I have only ever slept with my husband.

INTERVIEWER: That's the only person you have slept with?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. But I don't know, I think people should be more frightened now, like girls, one-night stands and things like that.

INTERVIEWER: But you didn't do that anyway when you were younger?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Why didn't you, I mean were other girls doing that at the time?

INTERVIEWEE: Were the girls that I know? Yes.

INTERVIEWER: So how come you didn't?

INTERVIEWEE: I didn't want to.

INTERVIEWER: You weren't interested?

INTERVIEWEE: I had too much pride.

INTERVIEWER: That's fair enough. So do you think then the girls that did it didn't have much pride in themselves?

INTERVIEWEE: You don't get as much respect off anybody if you do, do you, you get yourself a name. Not like, if you have a steady boyfriend and then it don't work out and then, I mean that's not the same, but if you just been out with them for a night, you know, that's what I mean by that.

INTERVIEWER: How, do you know ways of protecting yourself against the virus?

INTERVIEWEE: Using a condom.

INTERVIEWER: So I mean, it's not really relevant to you in a way because you are in a steady relationship, but say your relationship with your husband broke up or something, but I mean what, would you see it as a problem then actually having a sexual relationship and would you be worried?

INTERVIEWEE: You mean if I meet anybody? I don't know really.

INTERVIEWER: I suppose you don't really think about it?

INTERVIEWEE: No I have never thought about it, I don't really know.

INTERVIEWER: But do you think you would be able to ask someone to use a condom?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: You wouldn't be embarrassed to do that?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Well if you are going to like have a sexual relationship with someone you shouldn't be too embarrassed to ask things like that, should you.

INTERVIEWER: No. I mean, I don't think so. It seems like a lot of girls do, especially younger girls. They are prepared to go to bed with someone but are still too embarrassed to actually ask them to use anything which is a bit worrying. Do you know, from what you have seen on telly, and stuff like that, do you know the difference between HIV and AIDS?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: You haven't heard, have you heard of HIV?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Is it not just the same as HIV positive? I thought it was the same.

INTERVIEWER: Well what it is, HIV is the virus that you catch, if you are HIV positive it means you have got the virus, and AIDS is just like a whole collection of symptoms that you end up being at the end of the illness. That's what you end up having. It's called that, but it is not actually the virus HIV. It's just that it seems a lot of people are confused between the two.

INTERVIEWEE: I didn't know that. You learn something new every day.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, you learn something new. Do you know people in this area who are injecting drugs?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, well I know, I don't know about injecting I know people who like, I suppose they do that as well but smoking and that.

INTERVIEWER: Was that heroine or what?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't really know.

INTERVIEWER: I mean you don't sort of mix with those sort of people, but there are people around?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. You know them because you see, I mean you can smell when you walk in, you know, when there's like a gang. I can smell it anyway.

INTERVIEWER: But you don't feel you are at any risk from any of those friends, it's not part of your life?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: So what about, you've got a little girl haven't you? So do you feel worried about them in terms of growing up?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. I think I will lock them in.

INTERVIEWER: Will you. Not trust them at all?

INTERVIEWEE: No. Well I will tell like, my Mum I was like ... my Mum was like well now to my age she would be sixty-two and she was pretty old-fashioned and well now, I will tell them and make sure they know everything before.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you were not told enough then?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. Well not in a way because I found out off my friends, but I tell them, I would make sure that they know everything.

INTERVIEWER: And what would you tell them?

INTERVIEWEE: I would tell them all about AIDS and sleeping with people.

INTERVIEWER: You would tell them not to sleep around or would that be if you did?

INTERVIEWEE: If you have a steady boyfriend. I would tell her not to sleep around obviously, but you don't know if they listen to you. But if they had a steady boyfriend I would tell her about precautions and things like that.

INTERVIEWER: And contraception. Because I mean it seems in a way from probably what when you were younger and sexually active and looking for boyfriends and things like that, the situation has changed an awful lot from what they will be growing up in. It is not the same world in that way.

INTERVIEWEE: No. I mean I didn't think, I didn't think once about AIDS when I was going out with my boyfriend. I don't think it was known about much then was it.

INTERVIEWER: When you were at school, because it might be different at a Catholic school. Was it acceptable not to be a virgin, you know?

INTERVIEWEE: Whilst the girls were at school not being a virgin do you mean?

INTERVIEWER: Well yes. Were most people not, as you say, by the time you are leaving school at sixteen?

INTERVIEWEE: I knew a few that wasn't.

INTERVIEWER: But most girls were?

INTERVIEWEE: I think most girls were, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Was it seen to be a good thing to be a virgin?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: It was. Because it's quite different up where I went to school, it's like a real, if you're a virgin, you have to hide the fact, may be because it wasn't a Catholic school that might make a difference, but it was seen as a really embarrassing problem that you had, you know, to be a virgin. You had to lose it as quick as you could.

INTERVIEWEE: No it was more like you felt, I don't know, respect off people, like, you know like.

INTERVIEWER: Were you planning, when you were that age, to get married and not to sleep with anyone until you got married?

INTERVIEWEE: No I didn't. I would have liked to stay a virgin until after I got married, but it never happens like that does it.

INTERVIEWER: Very few people.

INTERVIEWEE: Even people who don't get caught pregnant, you know.

INTERVIEWER: I mean did you, you said you had plans to get pregnant first off, were there other things that you intended to do. You know, did it change your ambitions in a way?

INTERVIEWEE: Not really. Well we planned that we would get married but not that early. I think DALE would have left it until he was about twenty-five. Like we are in a council house now, but we are buying

that now, but it would have gone on and we would have like saved up and bought a house first. But we do all right now.

INTERVIEWER: So it wasn't like a disaster in terms of..?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I suppose I was lucky in a way really. .... to have a family early on.

INTERVIEWER: Yes and a good bloke as well that stuck by you. The other thing I wanted to ask - when you were at school did they talk to you about, I mean they didn't probably talk to you about AIDS because nobody knew about it then, but did they talk to you about any sexually transmitted diseases and things like that?

INTERVIEWEE: No they didn't. I knew about VD and that sort of thing.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find out about that?

INTERVIEWEE: Like friends and the youth club and things like that.

INTERVIEWER: Did they tell you, did you go to the..

INTERVIEWEE: We used to come to this one. No, it was just like friends, you know, talk and spread things around.

INTERVIEWER: So did you know how to protect yourself against that? Or did you know there was a possibility that you could catch it?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I just knew there was a possibility, I don't know how to protect myself.

INTERVIEWER: Well I mean using a condom as well would protect people against you know anything like AIDS, gonorrhoea, or nasty things like that. Did anyone talk to you about cervical cancer?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes. You have a screen. I have already had one after each of the babies.

INTERVIEWER: And did they tell you how to protect yourself against that?

INTERVIEWEE: Well smoking can cause it and I don't know what else.

INTERVIEWER: I mean, using condoms or using the cap is supposed to protect you against that as well.

INTERVIEWEE: What about the coil?

INTERVIEWER: Have you got a coil at the moment?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Did you choose to have that, or did they suggest it?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, the doctor advised me to have that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you go to family planning or do you go to your own G.P?

INTERVIEWEE: No, my own doctor.

INTERVIEWER: And did you get on alright with him?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That's good. But he didn't suggest any other form of contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I think he might have said the cap, but he said the coil would be more suitable.

INTERVIEWER: So you were on the pill for a while?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: No wonder you got pregnant.

INTERVIEWEE: I was quite lucky actually.

INTERVIEWER: Are you a practicing Catholic still? You went to Catholic school?

INTERVIEWEE: No I don't go to church. Well I don't go now, but I'm going to bring the children up, like when they are old enough, I couldn't take them to church now but when they start going to school I will start taking them to church and then when they get old enough they can decide what they want to do.

INTERVIEWER: But you are not against, you don't have any qualms about contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: No. ....

INTERVIEWER: What about the ideas of the Catholic church on contraception?

INTERVIEWEE: Well no I don't, you don't want a baby really. I don't agree with that in a way.

INTERVIEWER: So you wouldn't trust the rhythm method to protect you?

INTERVIEWEE: No. That's not why I didn't. I mean, well if the doctor had prescribed me the pill I would have had it. I didn't have it because of like the heart disease in the family.

INTERVIEWER: Did you go to see him then before?

INTERVIEWEE: Not before I got pregnant. It was like after the first one, I did and he told me to come back and have the coil fitted. But I didn't.

INTERVIEWER: So you left it for a while. But you wouldn't have anything against using contraceptives anyway?

INTERVIEWEE: No.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think most Catholics ignore..?

INTERVIEWEE: Well they do that.

INTERVIEWER: It's a bit unrealistic isn't it. Is that why you reckon your Mum didn't talk to you about contraception. Could that have been the reason?

INTERVIEWEE: I don't know. Probably, I don't know. She might not have had time to have it.

INTERVIEWER: How many did she have?

INTERVIEWEE: Eight.

INTERVIEWER: Oh right.

INTERVIEWEE: So she mustn't have had any contraceptives, you know.

INTERVIEWER: No, I don't think so. Working it out it's quite a few years.

INTERVIEWEE: I think she had ten altogether. Two were still born.

INTERVIEWER: That's ten years to start with. No she probably didn't have time. So you wouldn't want a big family then?

INTERVIEWEE: No. I would like, when they get older I would. It's nice to have a lot, but I don't know, I couldn't make it ten.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find it difficult then?

INTERVIEWEE: Two is enough. That's about, I mean. When they go in school then maybe. After I had the second one I wanted to be sterilized and the doctor talked me out of that saying no, let them get to school and that and see. I can't see it now, I don't think I will ever want to start again once they go to school, but you never know do you.

INTERVIEWER: Are you planning to something when they go to school?

INTERVIEWEE: I want to go out to work again.

INTERVIEWER: What, go back to [DEPARTMENT STORE] again?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes, I enjoyed working there. And the money is good.

INTERVIEWER: Yes it is. Good conditions as well. So would you be able to go back there, would they keep it open for you?

INTERVIEWEE: Well not now because they only keep it open for about six months after you've had the baby. but I think they are pretty good like, you know, if you've worked there before, it's a lot easy to get back. When they go to school I'll go and see the Department Manager who I used to work for.

INTERVIEWER: So you will work there and get your own house?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: That sounds like a pretty good idea.

INTERVIEWEE: Well we put in for our house, you know, the house we are in, a council house, we have put in to buy that now. But we have got to wait 12 months on the waiting list.

INTERVIEWER: Is that just to buy?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What do you do, would you get a mortgage on it or would you buy it straight off the council?

INTERVIEWEE: Get a mortgage on it.

INTERVIEWER: .....

INTERVIEWEE: Well I don't know really. We are paying £32.50 a week for the house to rent so and my Aunty has got hers down the road and she is paying, she got a lot of discount than what I got, like they get 32% discount on the value of the house, and she pays less now than what I do paying rent and she's buying hers so it works out cheaper.

END OF RECORDING