

Explanatory Notes – Teacher Background**A Bigger Risk**

- **Sharing needles to inject drugs:** Blood transmission is the easiest way to spread HIV and Hepatitis B and C.
- **Breastfeeding from a mother with HIV:** A mother can use HIV medication to lower her viral load and formula to feed her baby.
- **Having vaginal or anal sex without a condom:** Anal sex is riskier than vaginal sex and in both cases, the receptive partner is at more risk than the insertive partner.
- **Receiving a blood transfusion before 1985 in the U.S.:** This is when the US started routinely testing blood for HIV. Blood transfusions are *still* risky in parts of the world where donors and donated blood are not as carefully screened, due to the cost of screening.

A Risk

- **Dating someone who is a lot older:** Older partners are more likely to try to convince younger partners that they should not use condoms,¹² and it could be harder to assert yourself with someone older whose opinion might seem more valid than your own or whose respect for you might be low.
- **Drinking beer or doing drugs at a party:** Alcohol and drugs alter judgment and have been shown to decrease condom use.¹³
- **Having oral sex without a condom or dental dam:** The risk of oral sex is less than unprotected vaginal or anal sex. The risk depends on the disease, but in most cases, the receptive partner is at greater risk of acquiring an STD than the insertive partner. If a person already has an STD, it's easier for him or her to get HIV from an infected partner. Chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, herpes, HPV, and HIV can all be transmitted during unprotected oral sex. HPV and herpes may not be stopped by using a condom or dental dam because they are spread by skin to skin contact. Oral-anal contact is definitely a risk for Hepatitis B with an infected partner.^{14,15}
- **Spending time with a boyfriend or girlfriend at home when no adults are there:** "Two-thirds (68%) of 16 to 18-year olds who reported a first sexual experience in [one study] said that they first had sexual intercourse in their family home, their partner's family home, or a friend's house."¹⁶
- **Using a razor or a piercing or tattooing needle someone else already used:** Because razors can have blood on them, they should not be shared, since both Hepatitis and HIV are blood borne. "A risk of HIV transmission does exist if instruments contaminated with blood are either not sterilized or disinfected or are used inappropriately between clients. CDC recommends that single-use instruments intended to penetrate the skin be used once, then disposed of. Reusable instruments or devices that penetrate the skin and/or contact a client's blood should be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized between clients."¹⁷

A Smaller Risk

- **Having vaginal or anal sex with a condom:** "Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are highly effective in preventing the sexual transmission of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. In addition, consistent and correct use of latex condoms reduces the risk of other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including diseases transmitted by genital secretions, and to a lesser degree, genital ulcer diseases. Condom use may

reduce the risk for genital human papillomavirus (HPV) infection and HPV-associated diseases, e.g., genital warts and cervical cancer.”¹⁸

- **Having sex with a monogamous partner:** Both people must test negative for STDs first and then trust each other that neither has had sex with anyone else in the months before they were tested and that neither is having sex with other people outside the relationship. This is placed in a risk category, because sometimes people lie about their histories, their test results, or sex with other people outside the relationship. How *much* risk that entails is a judgment call – it would be OK to call it “a risk” rather than “a smaller risk.”
- **Giving first aid and CPR:** Current CPR recommendations stress the chest compressions over to mouth to mouth resuscitation, but barriers are available to prevent mouth to mouth contact if the victim is bleeding. When providing first aid wound care, universal precautions should be followed by wearing latex gloves.

No Risk

- **Abstaining from sex and drugs:** The only 100% sure way to avoid STDs.
- **Being with someone who is crying, coughing, or sneezing:** These can spread coughs and colds, not STDs.
- **Donating blood:** There is no risk whatsoever.
- **Receiving a blood transfusion after 1985 in the U.S.:** All blood is tested thoroughly in the US and most other nations.
- **Kissing (closed mouth):** There is no risk from this kind of kissing.
- **Getting a mosquito bite:** Mosquitoes transmit many diseases but not HIV or other STDs.
- **Touching doorknobs, toilet seats, dishes, glasses:** STDs and HIV do not survive for long on surfaces. “CDC studies have shown that drying of high concentrations of HIV [in blood] reduces the amount of infectious virus by 90 to 99 percent within several hours. Since the HIV concentrations used in laboratory studies are much higher than those actually found in blood or other specimens, drying of HIV-infected human blood or other body fluids reduces the theoretical risk of environmental transmission to that which has been observed—essentially zero.”¹⁹
- **Going to school with a person who has an STD or HIV:** Casual contact like what people have in a classroom, on a basketball court, or in the lunchroom will *not* spread STDs or HIV.
- **Being in water with people who have HIV such as pools, hot tubs or showers:** Plantar warts (a kind of HPV) and athlete’s foot do transmit from locker room floors and shared shower floors, so wearing sandals is recommended. But there are *no* known STD infections spread by these environments.

6. Conclude the lesson by summarizing critical points.

Ask students to write one thing that they learned from today’s lesson in their notebook.

Wrap up the lesson by restating these key points:

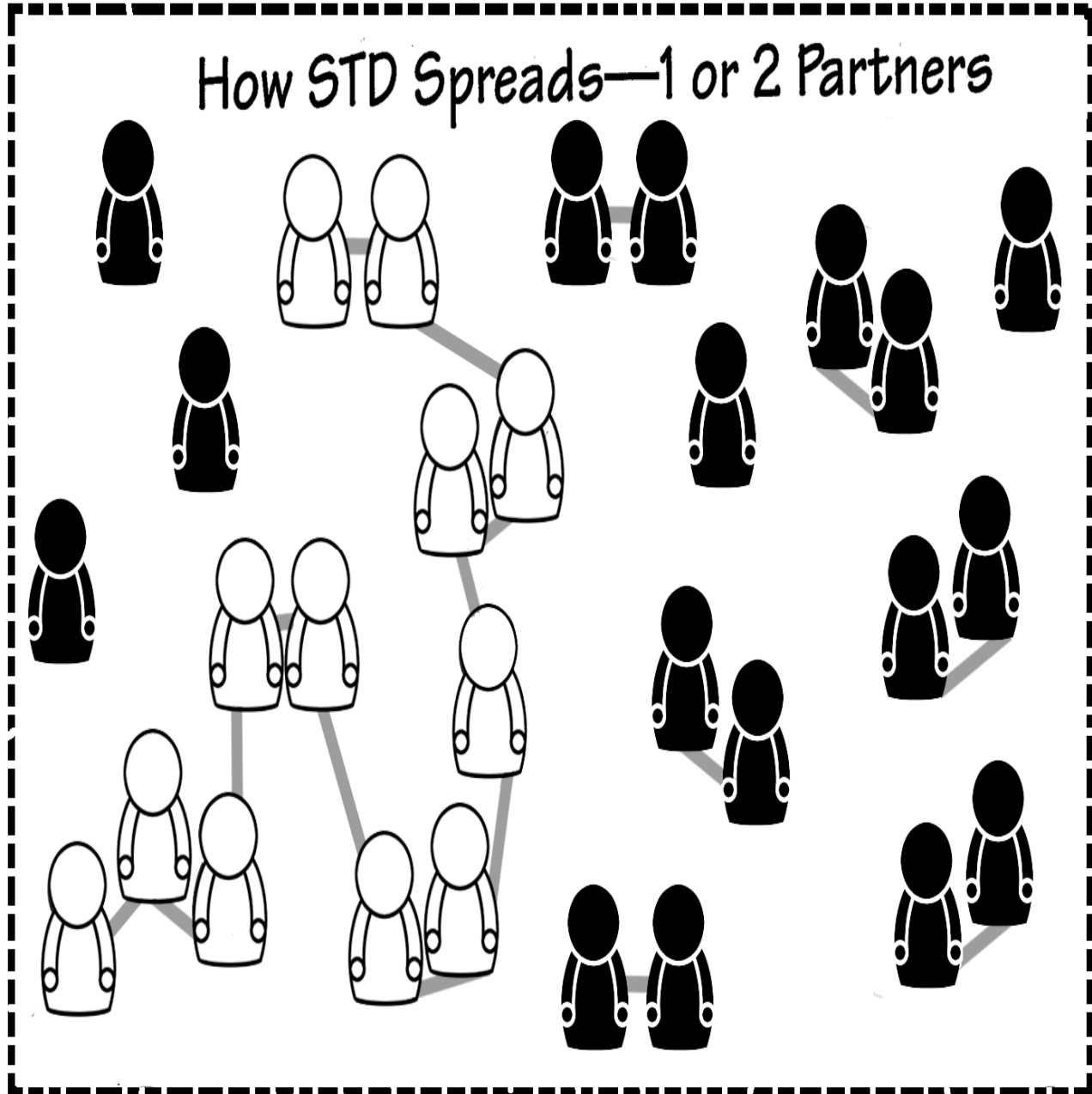
- Anyone who has unprotected sex is at risk of contracting an STD or HIV.
- Not having sex is the only 100% sure way not to get an STD or HIV.
- STDs do not get passed by casual contact. But when people get too casual about protecting themselves, like drinking or using drugs, not using condoms, or having sex with concurrent partners, then STDs can spread.

There is no recommended homework for this lesson.

STD Risk and Vulnerability Visual 1



STD Risk and Vulnerability Visual 2



STD Risk and Vulnerability Visual 3

