

Request for Sub-collection Under the  
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Minority HIV/AIDS Research Initiative (MARI) Project:

Sexual risk-taking among young black men who have sex with men: exploring  
the social and situational contexts of HIV risk, prevention, and treatment  
(BROTHERS CONNECT STUDY)

**Attachment 1d. In-depth Interview Protocol**

**“Sexual risk-taking among young black men who have sex with men: exploring the social and situational contexts of HIV risk, prevention, and treatment (BROTHERS CONNECT STUDY)”**

**In-depth Interview Protocol**

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## In-depth Interview Protocol - Brothers Connect Study

Thanks for participating in the interview. First I would like to ask you some question about your childhood and experiences you had when growing up. Next I'll ask you about your sexual behavior. After that I will ask you questions about your perceptions of family members and friends. Lastly, I'll ask questions about your healthcare experiences.

### Distal Risk Factors

1. Generally, how would you describe your childhood?
  - Where did you grow up?
  - Describe your family situation. Who was/were your primary caregiver(s) when you were growing up?
  - Describe the neighborhood that you grew up in.
  - Do you have any memorable experiences from your childhood?
  - Would you say that overall you had a good, bad, or average childhood? Why?
  
2. Describe any situation that you consider to be a negative experience you had when growing up.
  
3. I'd like to ask you some personal questions about things that may or may not have happened to you when you were growing up.
  - Did your family have trouble paying for necessities (such as housing costs, food, utility bills) when you were growing up? If so, please tell me about this?
    - Describe the financial problems your family faced?
    - How long did you experience financial hardship?
    - Do you feel that it affected you as a child? How so?
    - Do you feel that it affects you now? How so?
  
  - Do you think that you are financially better off, worse off, or the same as when you were growing up? Why? What has or has not changed?
  
  - Were you ever exposed to alcohol or drug abuse when you were growing? If so, please tell me about this.
    - When did this happen?
    - Who was involved?
    - Do you feel that it affected you as a child? How so?
    - Do you feel that it affects you now? How so?
  
  - Were you or any of your close members ever the victim of a violent crime? If so, please tell me about this.
    - When did this happen?
    - Who was involved?
    - Do you feel that it affected you as a child? How so?
    - Do you feel that it affects you now? How so?

- Did you ever receive unwanted sexual advances when you were growing up?
  - When did this happen?
  - Who was involved?
  - What specifically took place?
  - How long did this go on for?
  - Do you feel that it affected you as a child? How so?
  - Do you feel that it affects you now? How so?

### **Proximal Risk Factors**

1. How do you normally meet sex partners?

- Is there a specific venue where you meet men? What is it about that venue that makes it an ideal place to meet men?

2. Describe your ideal partner to me. Tell me about what he/she looks like, how old they are, what they do, etc. What makes him/her ideal?

- What is/would be your relationship with this person?
- What kinds of feelings do you/would you have toward this person?
- If this person refused to wear a condom when having sex with you, what would you do? How would you react?
- If the person used drugs, would that be OK? Why or why not?
  - What would you do if the person wanted to use drugs when having sex with you? Would that be OK? Why or why not?
  - What would you do if the person wanted you to use drugs too? Would that be OK? Why or why not?
- If the person was not the same HIV status as you, would that be OK? Why or why not?

3. Tell me about your sexual behavior.

- How often do you have sex?
- How many sexual partners have you had in the past few months?
- Describe a recent sexual encounter.
  - What happened?
  - Who you were with? How did you know this person? How did you feel about him/her?
  - Where were you?
  - What sexual behaviors did you engage in?
  - What were you overall feelings before, during, and after the sexual encounter?

4. Drugs and alcohol are commonly used by some Black men who have sex with other men. Do you ever drink alcohol or use drugs? If so, please describe scenarios when you have used drugs and/or alcohol?

- When did you first start drinking and/or using drugs? Who was the first person you drank/used drugs with?
- When do you normally drink alcohol or use drugs? In what circumstances/situations?
- Do you ever use alcohol or drugs during sex? If so, why? What does using alcohol or drugs during sex do for you?
- Do you think that you are more likely to not use condoms or be risky when you use drugs or drink alcohol? Why or why not?

5. When you have sex, do you find it easy to talk with your sex partners about your feelings?
  - Do you talk to your sex partners about HIV?
  - Do you talk to your sex partners about using condoms?
  - How important is it for you to know your partner's HIV status?

### **Resilience**

1. Tell me about the community in which you were raised.
  - How open can a person be about his/her sexuality in that community?
2. Tell me about your family.
  - Who do you consider as your family? How close are you to them?
  - Do you feel like you get support from your family? Please describe how you do or do not get support from family.
3. How open are you about your sexuality around your family?
  - Does your family know that you have sex with men?
  - How does your family perceive homosexuality?
  - Does your family's perception of homosexuality affect you? How so?
4. Tell me about your friends.
  - Who do you consider as your friends? How do you know them?
  - Do you feel like you get support from your friend? Please describe how you do or do not get support from friends.
5. How open are you about your sexuality around your friends?
  - Do your friends know that you have sex with men?
  - How do your friends perceive homosexuality?
  - Do your friends' perceptions of homosexuality affect you? How so?

### **Barriers & Facilitators to HIV Prevention, Testing, and Treatment**

1. Compared to all of the things that you deal with on a day-to-day basis, how important would you say your health is to you?
  - How frequently do you go to the doctor for regular check-ups?
  - What do you do if you're sick and need medical attention?
  - How easy is it for you to get medical care if you need it?
2. What are the ways that you make sure that you are in good health?
  - Do you go to the doctor on a regular basis?
  - Do you engage in healthy activities (like going to the gym, eating well, etc.) on a frequent basis? Why or why not?
3. Some individuals are apprehensive about getting tested for HIV. How important is it for you to get tested?
  - Have you been tested for HIV? If yes, what was the result of your HIV test? If no, why not?

- How easy or difficult is it for you to get tested for HIV?
  - [If HIV-negative] Do you get tested frequently? Why or why not?
  - [If HIV-positive] Are you currently in treatment (i.e., have a doctor who treats your infection, take prescription medications, etc.)?
4. What are your perceptions of doctors and healthcare providers?
5. What are your perceptions of HIV prevention and testing programs targeting men who have sex with men?
- Would you ever participate in one of these programs? Why or why not?
  - Do you think your friends would participate in these programs? Why or why not?
  - Would you participate in HIV prevention or treatment programs targeting men who have sex with men? Targeting Black men generally? Targeting Black men who have sex with men? Why or why not?