Hey, man... Be safe!
A LETTER TO OUR READERS

In the best of all possible worlds, you would not have to live with the fear of nuclear holocaust, deadly diseases, poverty, hatred or injustice. In the best of all possible worlds, there would always be bread on the table, love in our homes, and difference would be cause for celebration.

But we do not live in such a world. We are faced with many problems and the solutions are never easy nor simple.

AIDS affects all of our lives and will continue to do so into the next decade, either because we know someone who has it, or because we fear getting it ourselves. We have few weapons against the disease, but those we have are mighty: compassion, information, and education.

This comic book is designed for you and your friends to get information about AIDS, to use in educating each other and the adults in your lives. It is crucial that you have the facts. Only you can decide for yourself what to do. We all need the ability to respond to this disease without hysteria and blaming, to work together to care for people with AIDS, and to protect ourselves and our loved ones from this fatal disease. We hope this book will help.

Be safe —

People of Color Against AIDS Network
Leadership Tomorrow

Many thanks are due:

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-to Leonard Rivas, the cartoonist, without whom this book never would have happened.
I don't know how you can stand to think about it.

About what?

This is Mort! Hear me wheel nights with the best dance music, from 7 to 10!

OK. Turn off the radios. Today's lesson is ready to start.

You can't get AIDS from a hug or a handshake.

I've got AIDS. That's terrible.

You can't get AIDS from coughs and sneezes and spit.

I know I can't get AIDS this way, but would you cover your mouth anyway?

Now listen up, class. We're talking about a disease that can kill you.

Do we have to hear this again?

But we already studied AIDS.

The rising rates of teen STD's show that teens are not practicing "safe sex."

All right. I'll give you a chance to show me what you know.

Answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How do people get AIDS?

2. How can you tell if someone has AIDS?

How can we stop AIDS?

Soon...

These questions are rough!

That's right.

Now let's study this video.

I'll be asking you some more questions after it's over.

You can't get AIDS by eating food prepared by someone with AIDS.

You can't get AIDS just by living with or taking care of someone with AIDS.

You can't get AIDS by being bitten by mosquitoes.

You can't get AIDS by kissing mosquitoes, either.

The answer is still no.
You can get AIDS by having sex with someone who has the AIDS virus.

I'll never forget you, baby.

What will you remember about me?

Using latex condoms reduces the risk of catching AIDS.

Oh no! Here I am, an AIDS virus trapped in a rubber.

GOOD.

Another way you can get AIDS is by sharing needles to shoot drugs.

This is the safest way to shoot drugs.

Don't share needles!

Some babies are born with AIDS (if their parents have AIDS.)

WAH! NO FAIR!

It's not fair for us either, honey.

Some people get AIDS from blood transfusions. Now all blood is tested to be sure. It's safe.

The safest way is not have sex and not shoot drugs.

When you do have sex, protect yourself with a condom, and a foam, cream or jelly with nonoxynol-9 in it. This chemical may kill the AIDS virus before it can infect you.

You can not get AIDS by donating blood.

Symptoms to watch out for include...

A fever that lasts for weeks.

Sudden, unexplained weight loss.

Not weight-LESS, you Goofus!

Diarrhea that lasts for a month.

You too?

Swollen glands.

Drenching night sweats.

Location of lymph nodes.

These symptoms COULD be a sign of AIDS, or they could be something else.

If you think you have AIDS, see a doctor.

You can't always tell. REMEMBER: Most people carrying the AIDS virus have NO symptoms.
Grandma! I'm home.

Rosalba? Come in here a minute. We should talk.

What is it?

You've got a date with the Ramirez boy tonight, ¿Claro?

Yeah.

I want you to have this...

10:30 PM...

Well, here we are.

Yes...

Man! Rosalba sure is fine! Lucky thing I got a condom with me.... I might get to use it, heh....

A nail file?

Keep it with you at all times.... Make sure he sees you have it.

If he tries anything, use it.

O-Okay, Grandma.

Chuy is really cute.... What if he wants to go all the way? I could give him that condom Mom gave me....

But, if I take my condom out, she'll freak out!

But if he sees I have a condom, he'll think I'm a slut.

Ma, look what Grandma gave me.

For your date tonight? PSHH. She gave me one the first time I dated your father.

But I think you should take this instead.

A condom?

She'll think I expect her to do it! And she'll tell everybody!

He'll tell his friends that I wanted to do it.

Then no girls will go out with me!

I'll get a reputation as a bad girl?

B-but, Mom...

I'm not saying it's all right. But I was young once myself, and I remember what it was like...

Your father was so handsome that night, I couldn't stab him.

Okay. Thanks, Mom.

Can I call you sometimes?

Sure.
11 P.M... Kenji's folks are out for the evening.

Ken-Bunny, I don't want to.

What's wrong?

Why do you hang around with... VJ?

I know VJ is gay. So what? He's my friend.

Is that what's bothering you?

You're always worrying about catching AIDS from me, but you never worry about me. What if I do have the virus?

Don't try to make me feel guilty. I am worried.

I can only do sex when I know it's safe.

But what about AIDS?

You can't say that gay sex is the same thing as unsafe sex. It's not.

You weren't being very safe just now when I said stop.

I don't want to fight about it anymore.

Then don't call me 'paranoid' for caring about our health.

OK.

I hope VJ doesn't get it.

Come on! I don't have AIDS. You're being paranoid.

Most people carrying the AIDS virus don't know they've got it.

Look, I'm not gay. I don't shoot up. There's not a big risk that I've got AIDS.

But what about that time you told me about when you...

I'm Mort A. Credit, your late night man, playing side two of the album of the night.

Hey! Stop reminding me. I was high, OK?

But being high doesn't prevent you from getting AIDS. It just makes you more likely to risk getting it.

I've got a reason to worry, and a right to demand that things be safe.

At Mort's studio...
Well, boys and girls, it's 12 midnight. I'm going home.

But you keep doing what you have to do to stay healthy... Use a condom if you need to...

Don't share needles, and don't change that radio dial. I'm Mort A. Credit, your late night main man. G'night.

In your spare time, you could learn to play guitar! Start a band with friends!

Or build up an old car!

Or teach your cat to catch a frisbee™!

Hey, c'mon! It's fun! Wheee!

You're crazy.

Good show tonight, Mort.

Yeah, I wish I had better advice to give, though.

Like, what do I say to the kids? I'm a disc jockey, not Dr. Ruth.

You could say, "Go live your lives a little." Find something to get involved in.

Like what? Sports?

Well, you can have a long romance... Spend time getting to know each other... Your happiness will live longer

...and so will you...

You don't have to run off to the bedroom to have a good time!

Well, yes! If you like sports---

If you don't, you can hike, swim, or weightlift---

Do aerobics, or just plain dancing---

---And if it doesn't work out? You'll still be alive.

Sadder but wiser.

Sadder but wiser.

Exercise will keep your immune system strong.

Yeah, I know that.

I hope so, pal.
Hey! What's happening?
I'm supposed to meet my brother V.J. here. He's late.

Same news everyday! They should put everybody with AIDS on a little island somewhere, so the rest of us would be safe.

It says here, up to ten million people may already be carrying the AIDS virus.

But that island idea makes no sense!

AIDS is hard to get, unless you share needles or have sex without protection.

Even hugging people with AIDS is safe.

OK. A big island.

Well, you won't catch me hugging anybody with AIDS!

Let me tell you something that may sound strange...

The more we push people with AIDS out of our lives, the more danger we create of AIDS spreading.

That's not only "strange." That's...

Let me explain...
Let's say I've been doing unsafe sex or sharing needles...

I'm leaving.

This is just an example.

Now, if I know that telling people I have AIDS could cost me my job, my apartment, my friends...

...you'd keep your mouth shut, right?
Hiding and lying and being afraid to talk allows AIDS and other STD's to spread around faster.

On the other hand, if we remember that people with AIDS are our brothers and sisters and that there is no danger in having them live among us, then AIDS prevention programs will work better.

It's more dangerous.

Hey, is that your brother?

Yeah! Later.

I got to talk with you.

Man! You look totally wrecked. What's wrong?

We've always been tight, right?

Hey! You're my brother.

I went and had one of those tests downtown. I've got the AIDS virus.

for more information

call . . .

PEOPLE OF COLOR AGAINST AIDS NETWORK
1200 S. Jackson, Suite 25
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 322-7061

CENTRAL AREA MOTIVATION PROGRAM
722 18th
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 329-4111

CENTRAL YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
1730 Bradner Place S.
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 322-7676

SOUTHEAST YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU
5511 Rainier Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98118
(206) 721-5542

EL CENTRO DE LA RAZA
2524 16th Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98144
(206) 329-7960

SEATTLE URBAN LEAGUE
105 14th
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 461-3792

PLANNED PARENTHOOD
2211 E. Madison
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 328-7700

THE ORION MULTI-SERVICE CENTER
1820 Terry Ave.
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 223-1303

THE SHELTER
6201 46th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98118
(206) 723-8888

FILIPINO YOUTH ACTIVITIES, INC.
810 18th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 461-4870

ASSOCIATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH ADVOCATES
P.O. Box 25551
Seattle, WA 98155
(206) 467-4168

GAY AND LESBIAN TEEN DISCUSSION GROUP
(206) 328-5996

GAY/LESBIAN ADOLESCENT DROP-IN GROUP
16150 NE 8th
Bellevue, WA 98008
(206) 747-4937

NORTHWEST AIDS FOUNDATION
1818 E. Madison
Seattle, WA 98122
(206) 329-6923
(206) 323-2685*

WASHINGTON STATE AIDS HOTLINE
1-800-272-AIDS

NATIONAL AIDS HOTLINE
1-800-342-AIDS

After getting that test back, I'm gonna turn my life around so I won't have to stay cool and learn more about the disease.

SEATTLE/KING COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AIDS PREVENTION PROJECT
1116 Summit
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 296-4999, (206) 296-4843*

* TTY/V
REMEMBER:
You can get the AIDS virus by:
- Having unprotected sex (without a latex condom) with someone who has the virus.
- Sharing needles to shoot drugs.

The virus can also be passed by a mother who's infected to her unborn child.
You can have the virus and not have symptoms (signs of the disease). There is no special kind of person who gets AIDS. If you have unprotected sex, multiple sex partners, and/or share needles, you could be at risk for AIDS.

AIDS is not casually transmitted:
- You cannot get AIDS from sitting on a toilet seat.
- You cannot get AIDS from eating food prepared by someone who has AIDS.
- You cannot get AIDS from holding, hugging, or touching a person with AIDS.

You can be safer:
- The best protection from AIDS is not having sex and not shooting drugs.
- If you are sexually active, use a latex condom for all types of sex. Also use foam, cream or jelly with nonoxynol-9 in it.
- Don't share needles

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AIDS NEWS Comic Books cost 25¢ each plus shipping. (U.S. Dollars only)
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