

PEZ DISPENSER

Spring/Summer Newsletter

2010

Special points of interest:

- Renew or discover interest in PEZ Projects with seasonal newsletters.
- Reflect with Dr. Sondra Solomon.
- Read about research results.
- Receive updates on PEZ team members and activities.
- Read about and support our new project

Inside this issue:

- Research Snapshot: Is the Stigma of HIV 'Contagious'? 2
- PEZ Profile: Who is.... Jenn Zangl? 3
- Spring/Summer Trivia! 3
- Become a Participant: Coping with HIV/AIDS 4
- Coping with HIV/AIDS: Recruitment Form 4

PEZ Greeting and Reflections from Dr. Sondra

Hello again to our family of participants, supporters, colleagues and friends. It is warm and summer breezes are not too far behind. The PEZ team has been very busy since we last communicated. Our new research study is well underway! Dr. Miller and I continue to examine the clinical and community aspects of HIV/AIDS stigma. This time around we are capturing your experiences in a number of ways: a computerized protocol, a brief interview, and a telephone voice diary.

Active enrollment of new participants with HIV/AIDS continues, so please pass the word along. If you participated in our former study and have yet to be a part of this effort, please contact us. If you have heard about this study and have yet to participate please contact us too – even if you did not participate in the first study. During the month of June, many of you may see a brief spot on WCAX – the CBS television station. We hope to recruit additional participants through this effort. We have the funding to continue to gather data, stories and experiences with an eye towards contributing authentic and accurate knowledge about the complexities of HIV/AIDS stigma.

Our Person Environment Zone team continues to evolve. Dr. Susan Varni Richardson obtained her Ph.D. and Dr. Carol Miller attended the 2010 University of Vermont graduation ceremony to present Dr. Varni Richardson with her doctoral hood and a newly minted silver dollar. Congratulations Susan!

By now, many of you have met our fantastic research staff of Tara McCuin, Andy Knapp, Jennifer Zangl, and Brittney Brooker. James Hodge will be joining our team in August. James is a doctoral student in social psychology and will work with Dr. Miller. Tara McCuin is beginning her dissertation and will be applying for her pre-doctoral internship this fall. Everyone in the PEZ family offers new insight and perspective to our work. Above all, your comments about our work help enhance what we are able to do. You are always there to assist us along the way.

The Warm Weather Haiku may seem a bit lighthearted during these impermanent, curious and volatile times. Globally and locally, circumstances might seem troubling and at times overwhelming. If we remember to breathe and stay in the present moment it may be possible to sidestep the sideshow and find some answers for ourselves and our community. As always, the entire PEZ team is grateful that you continue to work with us. It is your expertise and experience that sustains us.



Calais, Vermont

Warm Weather PEZ Haiku

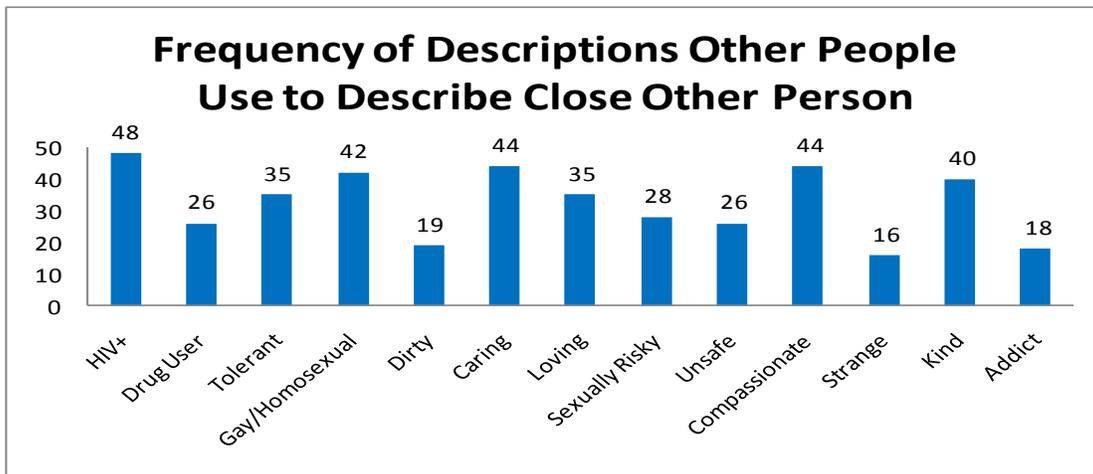
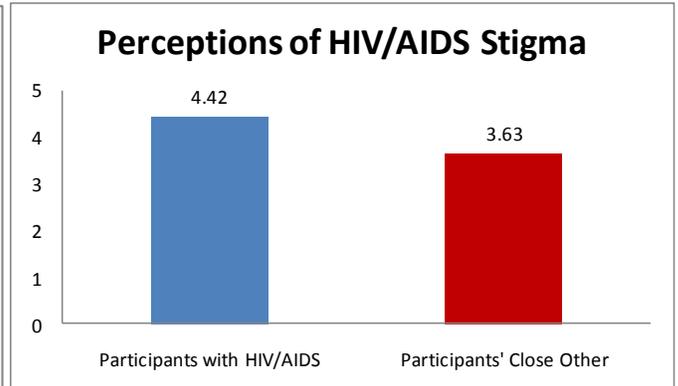
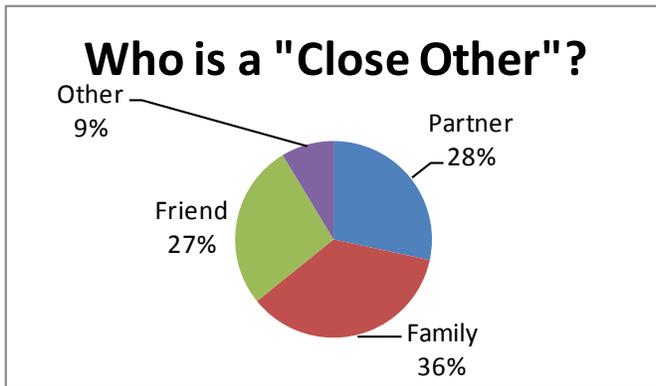
*This is the moment.
Breathe then breathe a second
time.
Witness the splendor!*

With gratitude,
Dr. Sondra



Research Snapshot: Is the Stigma of HIV/AIDS “Contagious”?

Approximately a year after the end of our first study, we sent out a “follow-up” survey to gauge changes that may occur in people’s perceptions of HIV/AIDS stigma, how people cope with that stigma, as well as other changes people may experience. During our first study, some of you expressed concerns about how HIV/AIDS stigma affected your friends, family, and children. As a part of that follow-up study, we asked people about what psychologists and sociologists call “contagion stigma” or stigma-by-association. This refers to the negative repercussions (like prejudice and discrimination) that people who are close to someone with HIV/AIDS, but who are not themselves HIV-positive, may experience. We were interested in knowing more about how you perceive the treatment of those who are close to you when it comes to HIV/AIDS stigma. Eighty-one people with HIV/AIDS completed measures of how they perceived themselves and a some one who is close to them (or close other) to be stigmatized by HIV.



Summary of Results

- ⌘ Most people thought of partners, friends, and immediate family when asked to think of someone close to them. A few (9%) thought of coworkers, non-immediate family, or of people from other kinds of relationships.
- ⌘ Overall, participants reported experiencing more HIV/AIDS stigma (a mean of 4.42 on a 5-point scale) than they believed the person close to them did (a mean of 3.63 on a 5-point scale).
- ⌘ The more HIV/AIDS stigma people reported experiencing, the more HIV/AIDS stigma-by-association they reported their close other person experiencing.
- ⌘ Compared to people with HIV/AIDS who thought about friends or other family members, people with HIV/AIDS who thought of their spouse or partner checked the descriptions “sexually risky” and “gay/homosexual” more often as words someone else might use to describe their close other person.
- ⌘ People with HIV/AIDS also checked many positive descriptions like “caring” and “compassionate” as words someone else might use to describe their close other person.

PEZ Projects Profile: Who is... Jenn Zangl?



Jenn and Oliver at the beach.

Jenn was born and raised in the Lehigh Valley area of Pennsylvania. In 2008 Jenn earned a BS in psychology from Cedar Crest College, a small liberal arts women's college. During her time at Cedar Crest, she became interested in social psychology and how people relate to others. After finishing her undergraduate degree, Jenn moved to Vermont to attend UVM's experimental psychology program. Her primary research interests are romantic relationships and how people find love. Jenn is working on her Master's thesis which looks at the way stigma influences romantic relationships. So if you are in a romantic relationship, Jenn especially wants to encourage you to participate. She currently resides in Essex Junction with her partner, Nick, and 5 year old pug dog, Oliver. Jenn spends most of her time entertaining Oliver. Her

other hobbies include shopping, baking goodies, and reading books on philosophy. She is currently a teaching assistant for an introductory course in psychology. Jenn hopes to someday teach at the university level and help students develop their own research interests.

Carol Miller, one of the principal investigators for PEZ Projects, recently attended the Society for Experimental Social Psychology's (SESP) annual conference in Portland, Maine to share our work. There she talked about some findings from our last project. She, Sondra, Jan Bunn, and Kristie Weibust looked at the communities where our participants with HIV/AIDS lived, the thoughts and feelings of those participants, and their perceptions of different risk behaviors.



Carol talking about our research with another researcher, Keith Payne (far right), from the University of North Carolina.



Summer Trivia!

1. True or False? During the vernal equinox, or the first day of spring, the hours of daylight and of darkness are the same.
2. When was July 4th declared a National holiday?
3. How old was the person who invented the first popsicle, which was originally called the "Epsicle" after his name Frank Epperson?



1. True
2. 1941
3. Eleven

UNIVERSITY OF
VERMONT

PSYCHOLOGY
DEPARTMENT

**Not close to
Burlington, VT?
We currently
travel to the
following sites to
meet with people
interested in
participating:
St. Johnsbury, VT
Newport, VT
Rutland, VT
Brattleboro, VT
Greenfield, MA
Lebanon, NH
Manchester, NH
Live nearby one of
these locations?
Call us at
1-866-532-7183**

**Want to know more?
Look for us on
the web at
www.uvm.edu/pez**

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Toll Free: 1-866-532-7183
E-mail: pez@uvm.edu



Become a Participant! COPING WITH HIV/AIDS PROJECT

We are looking for people to participate in our research project
investigating how people cope with HIV/AIDS.

The Person Environment Zone is continuing its study on coping with HIV/AIDS. The study is supported by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. We are interested in finding out the ways in which individuals with HIV and AIDS cope with the stigma of HIV AIDS. We are currently recruiting adult (18 years old and older) men and women with HIV/AIDS to participate in the study.

To participate, you will:

- * Come to our research space at the University of Vermont 3 times over 6 months.
- * Complete a diary of day-to-day experiences living with HIV/AIDS using a telephone call-in system for 7 days.

You will be paid for each of your visits to our project site (\$40 for the first visit, \$50 for the second visit, and \$60 for the third visit). You will also receive \$12.50 for every 50 miles you travel, plus an additional compensation for mileage if you drive. Every day you complete the telephone diary study, you will earn \$10. Completing all seven days in a row will earn you a bonus \$15, for a total compensation of \$85.

In the event you are unable to travel to the UVM project site, arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

The confidentiality of all communications associated with the study will be maintained to the maximum extent allowable by law.

To learn more about the study or if you are interested in participating in the project please call

1-802-656-8029 or 1-866-532-7183 (toll free)

YES! I would like to be contacted to participate in your new project!

I would like to update my contact information

(Please return this form by mail, or visit our website www.uvm.edu/pez)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (C) _____

Is it OK to leave a message on your voicemail (circle)? YES NO

Email address _____