

# TRANSMISSION PUZZLE REVIEW

This handout is a review of the Transmission Puzzle.

The Transmission Puzzle helps us to understand how the transmission of STDs and HIV depends on three factors—GERM, EXPOSURE, and RESISTANCE.

## GERM:

- ▶ GERM refers to the amount of GERM (STD or HIV) your sexual partner has and how much gets into your body.
- ▶ The amount of GERM also depends on which fluid you are exposed to (semen, vaginal secretions, or blood).
- ▶ What would reduce how much GERM you come into contact with?

## EXPOSURE:

- ▶ EXPOSURE depends on how long the GERM is in your body.
- ▶ For a black gay man, this depends mainly on what kind of sex you have and who is left “holding the semen.”
- ▶ What would reduce how long the GERM stays in your body?
- ▶ EXPOSURE also depends on how many times you were exposed to the GERM.
- ▶ EXPOSURE depends on the chance your partner has the GERM.
- ▶ What would reduce the chance your partner has STD or HIV?

## RESISTANCE:

- ▶ RESISTANCE depends on how healthy your pink parts (tissue inside your penis, rectum, and mouth) are.
- ▶ What would keep your PINK PARTS healthy?