

# MY

By Carrie Ann Aims

# STORY

I was diagnosed with HIV in 1994, while pregnant. At the time I was 18 years old. I wasn't even going to take the HIV test because I had to sign a consent form. I thought it must be something serious for older people to deal with. Then I agreed because I knew I couldn't have HIV since I wasn't skinny or on drugs.


When I went to get the results, I knew nothing about the virus except that crack heads and prostitutes get it. Now I know that anyone can get it. But I couldn't believe that it could happen to someone like me. When the counselor told me, I was *panicked, shocked and confused*.

I went home and told my mother immediately. She cried and seemed disappointed in me. I spoke to my boyfriend who was supportive. He agreed to get tested. (He was negative.) He said that no matter what the results were, he would never leave me. I realized I should not have wasted my time with other boyfriends.

Later on that horrible day, we went to my sister's house to break the news to her. She was also supportive, but told me recently how she disinfected all the cups and dishes that day. I'm okay with that because I know that she loves me and isn't that way anymore.

I still worry about how people will react, so I don't disclose my status. One close friend said that HIV+ people belong on a secluded island. That made me realize I could never tell her.

I am now a 26-year-old young lady with a healthy 7-year-old daughter and fiancé. We live with my mother. I work for an AIDS organization that I am proud to be a part of. At times, I get depressed. I feel I am not ready to die. It is still hard to bring all this up. I feel so hurt inside. My wish is to be with my family, especially my daughter, for years to come.

Find support and resources at [www.youthHIV.org](http://www.youthHIV.org). 

*Carrie Ann Aims lives with her family in New York City, NY. She tested positive in 1994 and now works for an AIDS service organization.*

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