

**HEALTHY SEXUALITY  
AFTER A POSITIVE DIAGNOSIS:  
MY RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS**

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# The Importance of Social Support

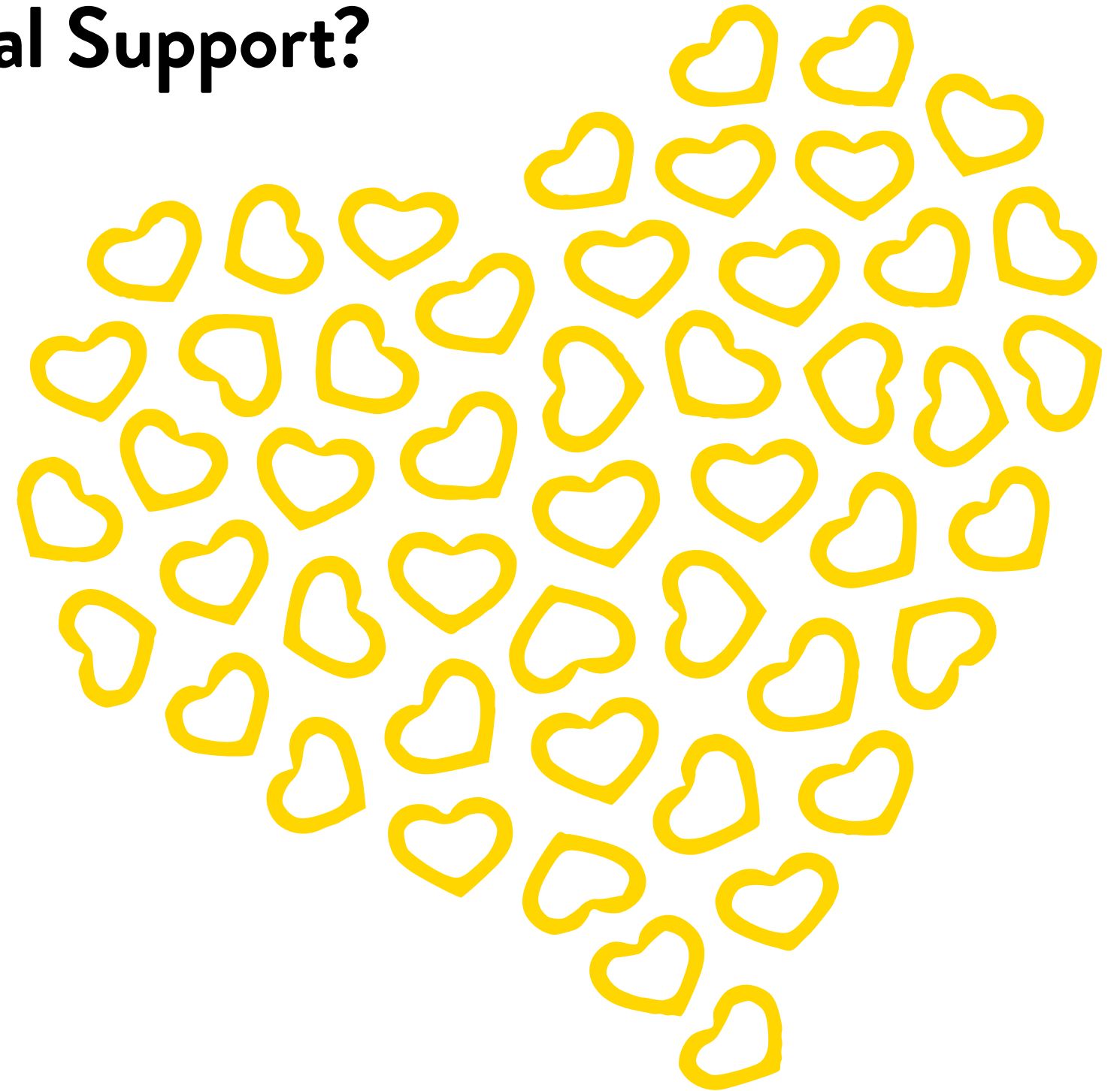


[www.youtube.com/watch?v=YI9dlkeKZso](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YI9dlkeKZso)

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# Why Is It Important to Have Social Support?

- Alleviates stress
- Great for mental health
- Increases self confidence and feelings of value
- Decreases feelings of loneliness and isolation



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# Types of Social Support

**EMOTIONAL** Someone who will listen to you and who you can talk to about feelings

**MORAL** Someone who will encourage you

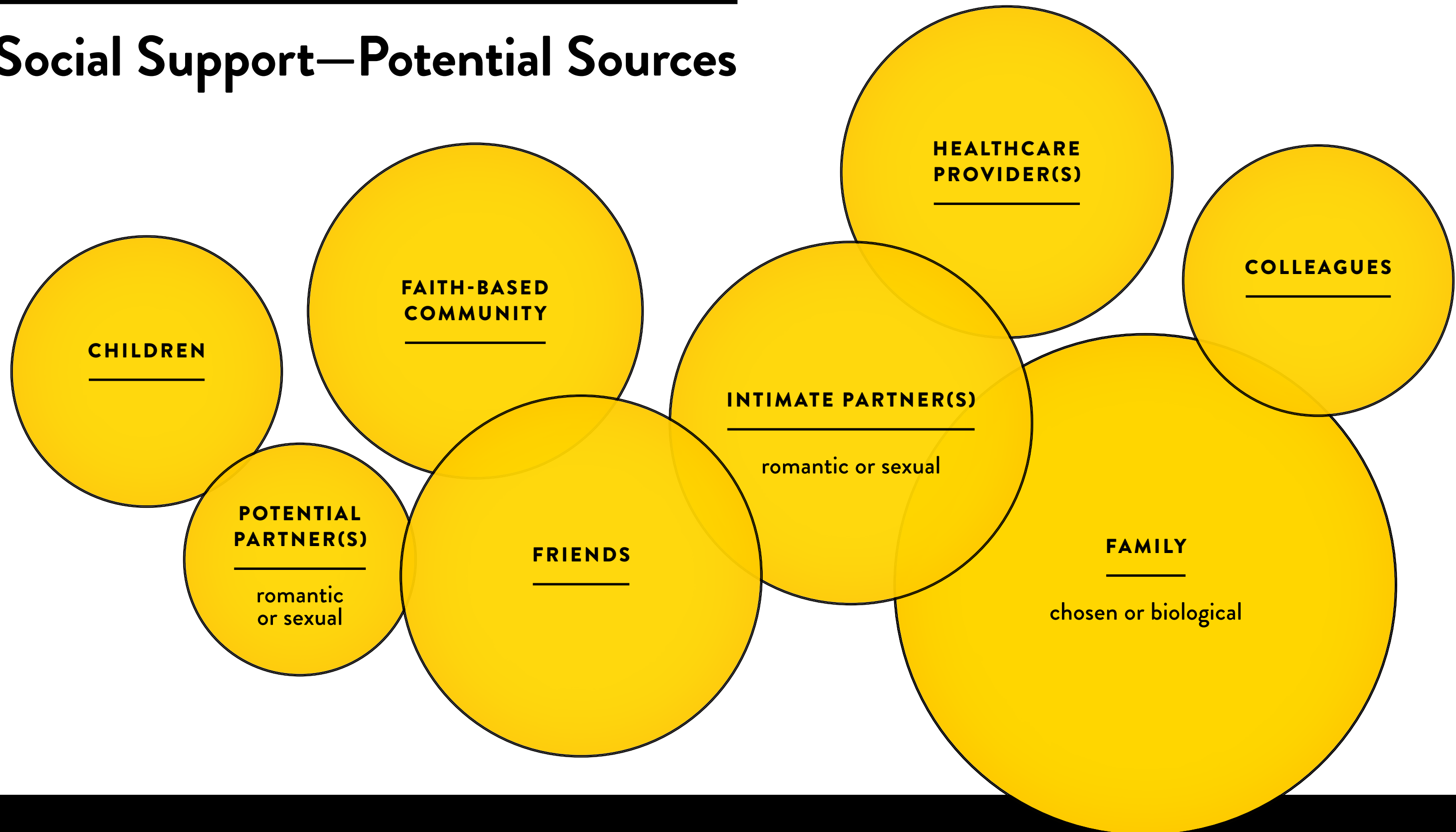
**PRACTICAL** Someone you can ask for help with everyday tasks such as transportation

**MENTORSHIP** Someone you can look to for guidance and instruction

**RECREATIONAL** Someone you can have fun with

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# Social Support—Potential Sources



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# Finding Support When You Have HIV



<https://youtu.be/U3ip6WvhfDw>

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# HIV in Real Life - Sharing Your Status



[https://youtu.be/Ya8vaD\\_aOi4?t=47](https://youtu.be/Ya8vaD_aOi4?t=47)

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# Considerations When Disclosing Your Status to Sexual Partners

## AN EXISTING PARTNER

A number of questions may arise for them:

- They might wonder if they are at risk for contracting HIV.
- They wonder why you didn't tell them earlier.
- They might be concerned about how this may affect the sex you both are having.

## NEW SEXUAL PARTNER

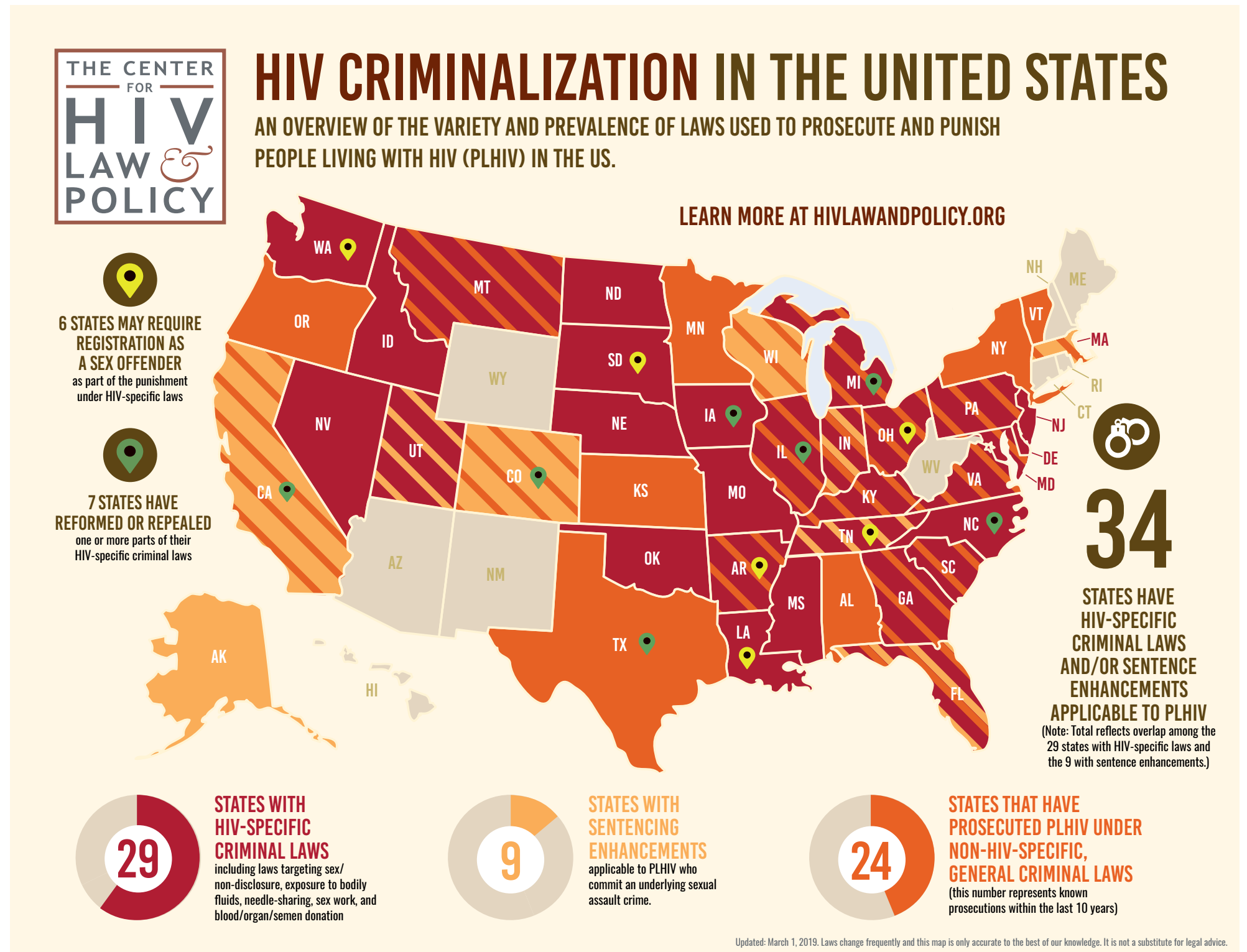
You may have several concerns with telling a new partner. You may wonder:

- Do I tell them my status right after we met?
- Do I tell them once things become more serious and are moving to a sexual level?
- Do I wait until we are in a committed relationship?



# HIV Criminalization in the United States

- Many states have laws that require you to tell your sexual partners if you're HIV-positive before you have sex. In some states, you can be charged with a crime if you don't tell your partner your HIV status, even if you used a condom or another type of protection, and the partner does not become infected.



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# Considerations When Disclosing Your Status to Family/Friends

- Family members (birth, chosen, children) can be a great source of support.
  - » Some people may have a hard time receiving this information and you may experience rejection.
  - » On the other hand, they might react positively and give you the support you need.
  - » Remember: Your attitude and confidence can also influence their reaction.
- Tips:
  - » Request that want this information to be kept in confidence.
  - » Tell them why you want them to know: to support you as needed.
  - » Offer to answer any questions they may have.

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# Considerations When Disclosing Your Status to Employers

- Your employer will not know your status unless you tell them.
  - » Even if you get insurance through your employer, the insurance company cannot legally tell your employer about your HIV status.
  - » All people living with HIV are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  - » Depending on your job, your employer does have the right to ask you if you have any health conditions that may affect your ability to do your job or pose a health risk to others.
- Tips:
  - » You can request reasonable adjustments under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  - » Many people chose to not disclose to their employers due to privacy concerns.

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# Considerations When Disclosing Your Status to Medical Providers

- All healthcare providers are bound by HIPAA.
  - » A healthcare provider may need to share your HIV information with another healthcare provider in order to provide you with medical resources and services.
  - » It's important for your health care provider to know your status so that they do not prescribe you medication that may be harmful when you take your HIV medications.
  - » Your HIV status will become part of your medical records and cannot be released without your permission.
- Tips:
  - » Is this provider LGBTQ friendly?
  - » Do they have an HIV-care specialty?

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# The “Five W’s” of Disclosure

## WHO

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Who do you want to tell? Do you trust this person?

## WHAT

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What do you want to tell them?  
What might happen if you tell this person?  
How much am I ready to share?

## WHEN

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When should you tell them?

## WHERE

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Where is the best place to have this conversation?

## WHY

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Why do you want to tell this person?