

## Where can I learn more?

### Resources for Parents:

#### Websites:

##### Families are Talking

Information for teens and parents on sexuality issues in English and Spanish.

[www.familiesaretalking.org](http://www.familiesaretalking.org)

[www.lafamiliahabla.org](http://www.lafamiliahabla.org)

##### Advocates for Youth

Resources and information regarding numerous health and well-being topics, such as sexuality, body image and relationships for teens and parents.

[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

#### Books:

**Beyond the Big Talk: Every Parent's Guide to Raising Sexually Healthy Teens-From Middle School and Beyond.**

Haffner, Debra W. New York: Newmarket Press, 2001.

**How to Talk with Teens About Love, Relationships and S-E-X: A Guide for Parents**

Miron, Amy G. and Charles D. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 2002.

**It's So Amazing! (ages 7 to 10) and It's Perfectly Normal (ages 10 and up).**

Harris + Emberley, Candlewick Press, 2004

Illustrated sexual health books for younger audiences.

#### DVD:

**The Talk: An Intercourse on Coming of Age**

For ages 12 to adult. [www.youthperformanceco.com](http://www.youthperformanceco.com) or 612-623-9180

#### Citations:

1. Resnick MD, et al. Protecting adolescents from harm: findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. JAMA 1997; 278: 823-32. Advocates for Youth.
2. Miller KS et al. Patterns of condom use among adolescents: the impact of mother-adolescent communication. Am J Public Health 1998; 88: 1542-44.
3. Shoop DM, Davidson PM. AIDS and adolescents: the relation of parent and partner communication to adolescent condom use. J Adolescent 1994; 17: 137-48.
4. Jaccard J, Jaccard P, Dittus, "Parent-Adolescent Communication about Premarital Pregnancy: Families in Society" vol 74, pp. 329-43
5. Advocates for Youth, Parents Sex Ed Center. [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)
6. Hacker KA et al. Listening to youth: Teen perspectives on pregnancy prevention. Adolescent Health 2000; 26:279-88.
7. MOAAPP; Communicating with Children about Sex. <http://moapp.org/Documents/communications>.



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## Why Is It Important to Talk About Sex with My Kids?

Teens report that they would prefer to get information about sex from their parents rather than any other source.

- Young people who feel connected and supported at home develop healthy attitudes and behaviors, and are more likely than other teens to delay sexual intercourse. <sup>1</sup>
- When mothers discuss condom use with their teen before they become sexually active, they are three times more likely to use condoms than teens whose mothers never discussed condom use or who discussed condom usage after they became sexually active. <sup>2</sup>
- Teens who had previous discussions of sexuality with their parents were seven times more likely to feel able to communicate with a partner about HIV/AIDS than those who had not had such discussions with their parents.<sup>3</sup>

## When Should I Talk About Sex?

- It is never too early, or too late, to talk with your child about sex. These conversations help lay the foundation for healthy behavior throughout a lifetime.
- Kids ask questions about sexuality at the most awkward times. Tell them you are glad they asked, give them a short answer and tell them you can talk more about it later and follow through with an age appropriate, but accurate explanation.

## Age-Appropriate Sexuality Education is Important at Every Age and Stage of Development.

At ages 9 to 12 most young people will:

- **Enter puberty:** a time of increased production of hormones. Skin becomes oily and might develop pimples; sweating increases and youth may have body odor and pubic hair begins to grow.
- **Masturbate:** (both males and females) and have fantasies about sex.
- **Experience body changes** such as:  
Males: genitals mature, scrotum darkens, voice deepens, sperm is produced and erections, ejaculation and wet dreams are more frequent.  
Females: genitals mature, breasts develop, ovulation and menstrual cycle begins.

## At ages 13 to 17 most young people will:

- Complete puberty and the physical transition from childhood to adulthood.
- Continue to be influenced to engage in sexual behaviors by peers and the media.
- Build skills to become self-sufficient, develop mature relationships and seek increased power over their own lives.

Have a Question?

Contact The Birds & Bees Project at  
[pcr@birdsandbees.org](mailto:pcr@birdsandbees.org)

## Tips for Talking with Your Teen

- 1) **You are the Primary Sexuality Educator for Your Kids.**  
They want to talk to you about sexuality and hear your values.
- 2) **Find “Teachable Moments”**  
Talking about sex does not have to be a formal conversation. Books, TV shows and news articles can be wonderful discussion starters.
- 3) **Talk Early, Talk Often**  
It is never too early, and it is never too much. Don’t wait for your child to ask because many never will.
- 4) **Be “Ask-able”**  
Reward questions with answers such as, “I’m glad you came to me.” This will teach your children to come to you when they have other questions.
- 5) **Make It Normal**  
Throughout your child’s life, encourage openness about anatomy and body function.
- 6) **Use Specific and Correct Terminology**  
Use a common vocabulary so you and your child can understand each other.
- 7) **Listen More Than You Talk**  
Ask them what they want to know. Don’t judge, just listen.
- 8) **Talk with Other Parents**  
They are a great source for support and information.
- 9) **Know What is Taught in Your Schools**  
Many schools do not teach sexual health or focus only on abstinence. You are your