

# Let's Talk

## Let's Talk: Tips for Talking With Your Parents about Sex and Relationships

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Talking about sex can be uncomfortable, especially when it comes to talking about it with your parents. You might worry they'll react negatively or make assumptions about what's going on in your life. But you might be surprised at how willing your parents are to talk with you. It might be awkward, but they care about you and might actually be able to help you figure all this stuff out! This doesn't mean starting the conversation is always easy, so here are some tips:

- It's OK to feel nervous about talking with your parents about sex — in fact, your parents might feel nervous about it too. Keep in mind that **a lot of parents say they are relieved when their teens start this conversation.**
- **Try a magazine article or TV show to get the conversation started.** Then you can work your way up to the more personal stuff. If you'd rather email, text, or IM – go for it. It doesn't matter how you talk, just talk.
- It might make it easier if you **give your parents a heads-up that you want to talk.** Just say something like, "Can we have a private talk tonight?"
- **Break the ice** with something like, "This feels weird for me to talk about, and it may be for you, too, but I want to ask about ..."
- **Think of questions you want to ask,** and maybe even write them down first. Here are some questions you *could* ask:
  - ✓ What was it like for you growing up as a teen – what did your parents teach you about sex?
  - ✓ How do you know when you're in love?
  - ✓ How do you know when it's the right time to have sex?
  - ✓ How can I protect myself from getting pregnant or getting someone pregnant?
  - ✓ How can I protect myself against STDs?
- Often **parents want to feel needed and involved in their kid's lives.** Make sure to tell them what role you want them to play in the decisions you make.
- **Your parents are great people to talk to about sex and relationships.** But if they're not around, you can also talk to other adults you trust – like older brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, teachers, school counselors, and clergy.
- Keep the conversation going. It's not about having just one big talk. **Once you start, it gets easier and easier to keep talking with your parents about sexual health.**