

# Advice and Tips on Speaking to Your Children About Sex Education

From Jo Leever and Brenton Smith

We recommend the talk happening in a form of “side by side” (like on a walk together or on a car ride or doing something together) because it can take out some of the intensity of eye contact. Similarly, we suggest an opening line that fits your taste. We thought something along the lines of “since you are having a professional come to talk to you at school, I thought it would be good for us to talk beforehand.”

Prompting Questions:

1. “What do you think our culture’s view of sex is?” (If they need prompting ask, what do you think science or anatomy’s view of sex is? What do you think the media’s view of sex is?) Verbally agree with their suggestions.
2. “What would you say are some of our family values?” “With that in mind, what do you think our family’s view is on sex?” (Beyond your unique family values, emphasize how the family values the emotional health of the child.)
3. “We have talked about the worldview, our family view but I want to know what your view is of sex.” (Respect what they have to say.)
4. “What do you think God’s view is of sex?” (There is potential for a negative answer here. Affirm their way of thinking and dig into what caused them to come to that conclusion, but reply with: sex was designed by God.)

“God designed humankind to be in relationship with their creator. Also, God designed humans to be in relationship with one another. His perfect plan is for relationships to be love filled. This is true for all the relationships in your life like friendship, family and dating. Today, we are focused on sex, but I don’t want you to think that this is reserved for one type of relationship.”

Specifically, God designed sex to be loving and respectful. There is an emotional aspect of sex which is why it is designed to be with someone who loves you. Let’s look at what God says about love since that word is used to describe a lot of different things. (Have your Bible with 1 Corinthians 13:4-8) Walk through each part of the verse defining what love looks like. You can say: “This is God’s perfect vision for what love is. We can use this as a compass to see if we are being treated with love.” God also designed this type of intimacy to be between adults, for marriage because of the potential of emotional pain that sex can cause out of God’s intended design.

The world and our culture (like we talked about earlier) offers us false, counterfeit versions of love through:

1. False promises of “Relationships”: (friends with benefits, one night stands or hook up culture)
2. False promises of “sex”: (pornography) These will not be life-giving. How do we know this? Let’s go back to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. We were designed for this type

of love so a knock off version will inherently be unfulfilling. Focus on how love is not self seeking. How is a one night stand self seeking? How is pornography self seeking? (Porn turns inward rather than relationships.) What impact do you think these false versions of relationships or sex could have on a person? (Focus on the emotions and circle back to the emotional health of the child). (It can damage how you understand sex and it's original design. You can think of examples in the media or other applicable examples to emphasize this.)

End with opening a door for these conversations to continue. Say something along the lines of: "I want you to know there is nothing you could come to me and say that would shock me. I want to open this line of communication about topics that can be uncomfortable because of how much I love you and care about your future relationships."

Some final tips:

1. Only answer questions that are asked. As adults, sometimes we can presume what a child is asking when a question could have many meanings. Make sure you have clarity on exactly what your child is asking before giving them more information than they requested.
2. If you feel a conversation topic is perhaps too in-depth for the moment, the age, or the time you have, feel free to tell your child that you would love to share that with them at a different time.
3. Lastly, don't be afraid to say you don't know either the answer or how to answer a question, in the moment, and will think about it and let your child know. It is good for children to see that we want to give thoughtful responses and provides them with a non-judgmental response to questions we might be puzzled on how to answer.