

How to Talk with Your Kids about Puberty, Sexuality and Healthy Relationships



Welcome!



Our intentions for this workshop



1. Identify **the PARENT'S ROLE** as their child's primary sexuality educator
2. Review **developmentally appropriate** topics
3. Teach **tools for INITIATING CONVERSATIONS**
4. Practice **ANSWERING SENSITIVE QUESTIONS**
5. Briefly review the California Education Code and Saratoga USD Working Group Process
6. Go home with **ACTION STEPS** for conversations with your children

Agreements



- ▶ Assume good intentions
- ▶ Sharing challenges helps build new strengths
- ▶ We are all experts on our own families
- ▶ Confidentiality
- ▶ Right to pass
- ▶ Respectful use of devices
- ▶ All questions welcome



Research tell us...



- ▶ Parents are their children's primary sexuality educators
- ▶ It's important to be **ASKABLE**
- ▶ It's crucial to be **ACCEPTING**

Education is NOT encouragement!



4 out of 5 of teens believe it would be much easier for teens to **delay sexual activity** and **avoid teen pregnancy** if they were able to have **more open, honest conversation with their parents** about these topics.

(With One Voice, 2010)



Youth health outcomes IMPROVE through effective communication with their parents



- ▶ Improved condom and contraceptive use
- ▶ Fewer sexual risk behaviors
- ▶ More likely to talk with their own partners about HIV/AIDS
- ▶ More likely to be able to recognize healthy relationships and red flags for dating violence

(See Future of Sex Ed “White Paper” and [Advocates for Youth Parent Sex Ed Center](#) for references)

Warm-Up!

“When I was in School...”



What do I want my child to know...



...about puberty, relationships, and sexuality?

WHAT should YOU know about puberty and sexuality?

- ▶ Sexuality begins at birth
- ▶ Puberty = emotional and physical changes that happen to ALL people to prepare us for adulthood
- ▶ **Normal and healthy** development at puberty includes increased interest in sexual behavior and risk taking

WHERE do our kids learn about puberty, relationships and sex?



WHERE do parents have some control over what our kids learn about sex?



What does *my child* want (or need) to know?



All children need to know...



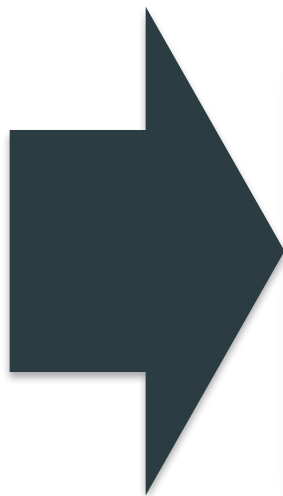
- ▶ Am I normal? Will you love me if...
- ▶ What are the facts? What's real?
- ▶ What should I believe?
- ▶ Am I safe? What's OK for me?
- ▶ How do I figure this out?



HOW do I know what is developmentally appropriate?



Take Home Tips



frequent,
honest,
ongoing
conversations

Ok, so how do I do this?

Initiating conversations: HOW do I bring it up?

- ▶ Use “teachable moments”
 - ▶ Songs/music
 - ▶ TV shows and movies
 - ▶ News
 - ▶ Lifecycle events
 - ▶ New sex ed curriculum!

HOW else can I bring it up?

- ▶ Ask for “advice”
- ▶ Use a direct approach
- ▶ Acknowledge awkwardness!
- ▶ Have resources available
- ▶ “Do overs” are ok

Each conversation is a potential
building block for future
conversations

Let's practice!

- ▶ You're listening to the radio with your kid and the lyrics are overly sexually explicit
- ▶ You had a conversation last night that caught you off guard
- ▶ You walk into your child's room and catch him/her looking at pictures you consider to be pornography



HOW to answer difficult questions



- ▶ **BREATHE!** ...be present and think
- ▶ **AFFIRM** your child & your unconditional love
- ▶ **CLARIFY** what your child knows, and why s/he is asking
- ▶ **HEAR** what your child is saying and **listen** before you talk
- ▶ **EXPLAIN** the **facts**, offer **values**, set **limits** and **answer the question**
- ▶ **ENCOURAGE** on-going communication and critical thinking, while **EMPOWERING** your child to find resources

Additional questions for practice...



- ▶ How come I don't have my period yet? OR How come I'm the shortest boy in the class?
- ▶ If two girls kiss, does it mean they are lesbians?
- ▶ How does the penis actually get in the vagina when the penis hangs down and is floppy?
- ▶ Sometimes it's wet in my undies but I don't have my period yet. Is that pee?
- ▶ How old were you when you first....

How are you feeling now?



What should my child be learning about sexual health in school?



The CA Healthy Youth Act requires that sexual health education be:

- ▶ Age appropriate, medically accurate
- ▶ Appropriate for: all races, genders, sexual orientations, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, abilities
- ▶ Accessible to for English learners
- ▶ Not reflect or promote bias (any category in Section 220)
- ▶ Affirmatively recognize people have different orientations
- ▶ Teach about gender, gender expression, gender identity
- ▶ Encourage communication with parents/trusted adults
- ▶ Healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships
- ▶ Decision making, negotiation and refusal skills
- ▶ Shall not teach or promote religious doctrine

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What should my child be learning about sexual health in school?



- ▶ California State Health Education Standards K-12. These standards include ALL health issues, not only sexual health.
- ▶ Future of Sex Ed National Sexuality Education Standards.
- ▶ SIECUS Guidelines for Sexuality Education

Conversation Commitment



In the next month:

- ▶ What do you want to talk about with your child?
- ▶ How can you support your child's learning and development in this area?



BACHE supports parents and CSE



What can parents do to ensure that schools are implementing a high quality Sex Ed program?

- ▶ Visit [BACHE website](#)
- ▶ Join our [Facebook page](#), post questions or successes/challenges
- ▶ Contact us and we'll meet with you!

You can make a difference for
your child and your community!



Thank you! Feedback is welcome!

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