

Tips for Talking with Your Teens



Take advantage of “teachable moments” — everyday opportunities to talk about sex.

For example

- + watching TV
- + listening to music
- + walking, driving, or riding the subway
- + reading magazines and newspapers
- + eating dinner

Wondering how to deal with tough questions? Try these suggestions:

1. Ask, “How come you’re asking that today?” This gives you a sense of what caused your child to ask that question (Did he or she see or hear something? Who was involved?).
2. Ask, “What do you think?” This gives you an idea of how much your child already knows and what sort of language he or she uses to express it.
3. Answer the question honestly based on the child’s response and your values. Take advantage of the opportunity to introduce your views and values at the same time you give your child accurate information.
4. Ask, “Do you understand?” and “Do you have any more questions?” This allows you to make sure that your child understood what you told her/him.

Remember, your tone matters, too. Be calm and warm.

For more tips and resources, visit www.plannedparenthood.org/parents.