



Talking to your teens about sex is never easy. But these five tips from psychologist and friend of Mom•Logic Dr. Pamela Varady can help parents get the ball rolling.

- **Start early.**

The earlier you talk to your kids about sex, the more informed your child will be and the more comfortable they will feel about coming to you with questions. Plus, future conversations will be much, much easier if you start young.

- **Let them know your values.**

Teenagers want guidance from their parents, whether they admit it or not. Don't be afraid to tell them your own views on sex.

- **Teach teens about emotional intimacy, too.**

Sex talks tend to focus on the physical. But you can also tell your child that you feel sex should occur in the context of an intimate relationship, and why.

- **Don't lecture.**

A lecture instantly turns the conversation from two-way to one-way. Talking to your teen about sex effectively has to be a give-and-take. Remember to ask a lot of questions, and encourage your teen to do the same.

- **Relieve the pressure.**

If your child has difficulty opening up, try initiating the conversation while you're doing something else, such as taking a walk or shooting hoops. Being involved in an activity while you talk will take a lot of the pressure off.

Sample Questions

These questions, provided by Sabrina Weill, Mom•Logic editor-in-chief and author of *The Real Truth about Teens and Sex*, will help open the lines of communication.

- I saw a report online that said over 20 percent of teens say they've witnessed sex in schools. Have you ever seen something like that?
- I was reading that 4 percent of teens have actually had sex in school. What do you think about that?
- How do you think the girl feels the next day? How do you think the guy feels?

- The report said only 15 percent of teens tell their parents when they see sex in school. Just so you know, you could always tell me, and I would want to talk about it. Is there anything you want to tell me?
- If you saw this happening at your school, what do you think you should do?
- What would you tell a friend who told you he or she hooked up at school, or planned to?

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