

How to Help Your Sons Answer Their Questions About Sex

Suggestion: Have your sons read this article and then discuss it with them.

Did your dad give you “the talk?” If you’re like most of us, then probably not.

I asked the men at *The Man in the Mirror* Bible study, “How many of your dads gave you ‘the talk’?” Out of more than 100 men, only five raised their hands.

My “talk” was my mother silently sliding a pamphlet across the front seat one day as we were driving home from school. That was it! Dad never said a word.

That won’t cut it today. In fact, giving the talk is out. What’s in? It’s an ongoing conversation about sex.

So, here’s an article that can help you answer questions your sons have about sex. I know these are their questions, because I spent a half day with 15 high school boys one Saturday and had them anonymously write down their questions on 3 x 5 cards.

An Overview For An Ongoing Conversation

One young man asked, “What things should someone my age know about sex?” Another wants to know, “If sex is so good, why should we have to wait?” Good questions.

The Bible teaches that sex is an altogether good and beautiful thing. Sex is one of God’s greatest gifts to the human race when it is used according to His plan.

God created sex for two purposes: to make babies, and for a married couple to enjoy physical intimacy with each other.

Using sex for recreation—the way it's portrayed on TV and in movies—hijacks something God made for good. Saint Augustine wrote that everything bad is a corruption of something that was originally meant to be good. When sex is used outside of God's plan a lot of things can, and do, go wrong: sexually transmitted diseases (some of which are incurable—approximately 1 of every 3 adults has an incurable STD), infertility, cervical cancer, AIDS, loss of reputation, depression, discipline from God, and pregnancy outside of marriage.

Actually God does not put limits on sex. He puts limits on sexual immorality.

Since sex is for propagating the human race, women get pregnant—and they don't have to be married or over 21. Many families know the pain caused by teen pregnancy. God can redeem it, but I'm old enough to have seen it create a lot of sadness. Often, an unplanned pregnancy defines who people become—even in my own extended family.

The decisions raised by an unexpected teen pregnancy are overwhelming:

- Does the girl drop out of school?
- Does the girl go away for a while until she has the baby?
- What about abortion is murder in the eyes of many Christians?
- Do you put the baby up for adoption?
- If the child is kept, who will be the primary care givers?
- Will the grandparents alter their lifestyle to help?
- Where will the money come from?
- Will the father be involved or does he disappear?
- If the father is willing to be involved in parenting, is the mother willing to let him?

Unfortunately, these potential consequences never occur to many young people until they have to make real decisions about real pregnancy.

The number one reason God has guidelines for human sexuality is that sex works very well for its principal purpose—making babies.

Specific Questions Asked By Young Men

Since “the talk” is out, and having an ongoing conversation about sex is in, try discussing these questions over time—and reinforce. I’ve included my short answers, but also do some Google work, ask older dads how they handled these issues, and jot down some reasons to support the family values you want to promote.

1. Is it wrong to have premarital sex if you really love the person? Yes. Sex is intended by God to be monogamous—one man with one woman within marriage.

2. Is it wrong to have oral sex? Yes. The Bible teaches that our entire bodies and the bodies of young women are temples of God’s Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18-20 says, “The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ... Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

3. How far is too far? Touching her breasts or feeling below her waist is too far. Having her touch you below the waist is too far. Rubbing your bodies together, even if clothed (dry sex), is too far. Talking in a way intended to arouse sexual desire in a woman or anything a woman does to arouse sexual desire in you is too far.

4. If you have already gone too far, what can you do to correct it? If you have given your heart to a young woman and you have had intercourse, you will find it difficult to stop. The best thing to do would be to stop the relationship, repent, and submit to a confidential restoration process with a spiritual mentor like your youth pastor. Next best is to agree together that you want to honor God by abstaining, confess and repent together, and then do not allow yourselves to ever be in a place private enough that you could fall again. You should tell someone and ask them to hold you accountable. God forgives but also expects us to change by relying upon common sense and the power of His Holy Spirit within us.

5. Is it a sin to masturbate? Is masturbation wrong if I feel it can give me more strength when I go out with my girlfriend (strength to not sin with her)? The Bible does not specifically address masturbation, which is interesting because it easily could have. The Bible does say to avoid sexual immorality or impurity. To avoid sexual immorality, try to keep your mind pure about women and intercourse.

6. Are the swimsuit edition magazines and Victoria Secret catalogs pornographic? Should you be looking at them? They are not pornographic for heterosexual girls who look at them, but they are for the boys because the only reason a boy would look at those pictures is for sexual stimulation.

7. How do you defeat lust? How do you control your sexual thoughts and actions? How can I keep from getting in sexually tempting situations? Lust is sexual desire out of control. That desire is aroused in men mostly by sight. The best way to control yourself is to decide in advance what kind of a man you want to be. Then, don't put yourself in situations that you find tempting. For example, ask your mother to screen your mail for sexually explicit materials—like the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit edition. Another example would be don't sit on the beach and stare at girls.

8. No one asked this question in my research, but I know it's on your mind: Is there something wrong with you if you have an erection several times a day? It is normal to have an erection (hard penis) as many as several times a day. Erections can result from seeing a girl you find attractive, smelling perfume, a girl touching your arm, a girl's hair brushing against you, or even reading these words. This is normal, not lust. There is nothing wrong with you. On the other hand, having an erection because you are seeking sexual stimulation is lust. For example, seeking out pornography is lust (sexual desire out of control), whether it's underwear ads in the newspaper or an Internet site.

9. Why is it wrong to look at pornography? Because it arouses sexual desire based upon sexual fantasy. In 2012, Tru Research conducted 2,017 online interviews with teens, ages 13-17, and parents of teens. 32 percent of teens admit to intentionally accessing nude or pornographic content online. Of these, 43 percent do so on a weekly basis. Only 12 percent of parents knew their teens were accessing pornography.

10. How should you treat women if you don't have a male figure to show you? Treat them like you would want a young man to treat your sister. Watch how men you respect treat the women in their lives.

May the Lord be pleased with how we have "an ongoing conversation" between the generations.

Adapted from Patrick Morley's book, The Young Man in the Mirror. For the original article, visit .