

How to Talk to Your Kids about Sexuality

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Key Points for Communicating God's Plan:

1. Ongoing Dialogue vs "The Talk"
2. Special vs Scary; Frank & Reverent vs Ambiguous & Shameful
3. Gift to be Embraced vs Evil to be Repressed
4. Intentional, Full Presence vs Fragmented, Disjointed Discussion
5. Context of Marriage = Love & Life w/ God's Plan of Fidelity vs Abstract Idea
6. Context of Community vs Radical Individualism
7. 'Why' Behind the 'What': Following God's plan brings freedom, love, no regrets
8. The Full Picture: Theology, Morality, Biology, Sociology = Faith & Reason
9. Chastity says YES to love & all its demands; self-control & sacrifice bring joy
10. Offer "Why" behind the "What" & Repeat Often: "Love People, Use Things"

Some Pastoral Application Ideas:

1. Moms & Dads Set the Standard: Invite Kids to Check Back with Us
2. Vigilance for "Teachable Moments" - Keep Purity *Positive & in Context*
3. Proper Affection vs Fear of the Body
4. Special Dates; Be Intentional; Engage Now vs Procrastinating until Crisis
5. Intentional Family Tech. Plan: What, why, & how do we do what we do?
6. Leading by Example & Open Door Policy vs Hands-Off Approach
7. Message of Mercy & Love vs Legalistic, Impersonal Moral Code Following
8. Pray for Purity & Encourage Kids to Pray, Too
9. Trinity of Holy Family "Words": I am Sorry, I Forgive You, I Love You
10. The "Catholic ER": Family Eucharist & Reconciliation (JPII: PEP Talk)

*Above lists adapted from "*TOB for Teens: Middle School Edition - Parent Guide* (M. Ashour, B. Butler, J. Evert, C. MacIver & A. MacIver, Ascension Press, 2011)

Resources:

1. **"The Truth & Meaning of Human Sexuality" (1995)** Guidelines for education on sexuality within the family. (Pontifical Council for the Family, *Free & Available online.*)
2. **DumbOxMinistries.com** : Retreats (ECHO) & resources for teens, YA's & families.
3. **CovenantEyes.com**: Filtering and accountability - invaluable for the digital family!
4. **ProtectYoungEyes.com**: Quick, up-to-date help on hundreds of apps + sites
5. **EdenInvitation.com**: support for Catholics w/ same sex desires & gender discordance
6. **AscensionPress.com** : Theology of the Body resources & pre-teen/teen programs
7. **FighttheNewDrug.org** : Interactive, research-based, scientific resource regarding porn
8. **Chastity.com** : Holistic resource for chastity resources, videos, blogs, etc. (*Everts*)
9. **GARDEN Meditations**: Brief stories & reflections on TOB (*Butler/Martineck*)
10. **Theology of the Body Institute**: intensive courses for deeper formation in the TOB



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Parents + Pre-Teens/Teens

1. What struck you most about that last talk/video/session? What made sense?
2. How do you view your own body? (Do you see it as a gift... something very good?)
3. Do you understand the gift of your sexuality, as a young man or woman, is a sacred gift that God gave to you? And that this gift anchors you, through your baptism, in the truth of your identity as a beloved son or daughter of God?
4. Do you agree your sex, as a male or female, is a gift God created and gave us?
5. What do you think about the idea that the male body only makes sense in light of a woman's body, and vice-versa?
6. What do most of your friends think that love is? What do you think love is?
7. How did St. Thomas Aquinas & St. John Paul II define love? (To love is to "*will the good of the other.*") What do you think of the definitions?
8. How do your friends view the virtue of chastity? Why? How do you view the virtue of chastity? Does the idea of living a chaste life challenge you, scare you, interest you?
9. How does the way a girl dresses affect the way that guys tend to treat her, and vice versa? What does dressing immodestly say about what a girl believes about herself? About the guys? If girls want to find a guy who treats them respectfully, why do you think so many girls dress immodestly? (Are you tempted to dress that way?)
10. If God made us and gave us the gift of our sexuality, how can trusting and following his plan for love bring you what your heart longs for? Why do you think it is hard for us to choose chastity, living our sexuality as God intended? What about those who experience homosexual desires? Why is holding truth & love together important?
11. If you hope to get married one day, would you want your future spouse to have sexual intimacy with someone other than you?
12. How can those who experience same sex desires and gender discordance find freedom and intimacy through chaste friendships?
13. Do you understand why God made sexual act marital (just for marriage)? Why do you think God would make the gift of intercourse for *babies* and *bonding*? Does it make sense to you that the marital act "speaks a language" communicating more than physical activity? Do you see it shows love that is *free, total, faithful, & fruitful*?
14. If people want real love, why do you think so many people settle for less-than-loving relationships—even staying in relationships where they know they are being used?
15. Do you believe God forgives and wants to redeem those who repent after making mistakes and sinning through sexual activity outside of marriage?
16. Many struggle with pornography today. Why do you think it is difficult to stay away from porn? What are good things you can do to grow strong against porn?
17. I want to help you and our family to overcome difficult temptations. Is there anything you think we can do to better protect our family and/or help our family heal?
18. Any question is a good question if it is seeking the truth. Are there any questions that you have that you would like to ask about love, relationships, or sexuality?
19. (If appropriate) I know we have not talked enough about the gifts of love and sexuality and the challenge of living a pure life. Will you please forgive me for ____?
20. Scriptures for Discussion: Genesis 1:24-31 ("*male and female he created them*" + "*be fruitful and multiply*"); Psalm 139:13-18 ("*wonderfully made*"), Genesis 2:18-25 ("*two shall become one flesh*"); Exodus 20:14 ("*you shall not commit adultery*"); 2 Samuel 13:1-14 ("*Do not violate me*"); 1 Corinthians 6:16-20 ("*your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit*" + "*purchased at a price*" + "*glorify God in your body*")