

TIPS FOR PARENTS: RAISING A SEXUALLY HEALTHY SON OR DAUGHTER

The more information your teen has, the more sexually responsible he or she will be!



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- 1 Take the time to talk with your teen.** By starting early and making time for good communication, you can build trust and give them the information they need to be safe.
- 2 Know as much as you can!** Explore the resources available to you and your teen in the community, on the web and through your teen's health care provider.
- 3 Use accurate and mature language** when you talk to your teen about the body and sex. This will help teach your child that you are a good source of information, and that sex is a serious topic.
- 4 Know what you think about sexuality** and consider where your beliefs and information about sexuality came from. This will help you communicate your values to your teen.
- 5 Be open to questions** and to your teen's views. Remember, you may have different thoughts on certain issues, and that's ok.
- 6 Tell your teen when you do not have an answer.** You can learn together.

TEACH YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER...

- 1 That no one has the right to force sex** on him or her for any reason.
- 2 To communicate his sexual limits** by practicing ways to talk to a date about what he is comfortable with.
- 3 To listen to her partner's thoughts** and limits about dating and sex. Knowing is better than assuming.
- 4 To ask questions** if he is uncertain about situations and behaviors with his partner.
- 5 To say no**, loudly and in public if needed, and to respect that no means no.
- 6 To be especially careful** if a date is more than one or two years older than him or her. A big age difference might make him or her more vulnerable.
- 7 To plan ahead.** Discuss how he can get out of an uncomfortable situation, such as always having money for a taxi or pay phone.
- 8 To always let someone know** where she will be.
- 9 To stay sober.** Alcohol and drugs can change how your child makes decisions.
- 10 To trust his instincts.**
- 11 To avoid pressure** from friends about dating and sex.
- 12 That you trust her.** Your child will be less likely to make rash decisions if she knows you trust and support her.

IF YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED....

- 1 Believe your child!**
- 2 Do not blame him.** Victims of sexual assault did not do anything wrong.
- 3 Help her get immediate medical attention.**
- 4 Help him find local resources** for counseling and support.
- 5 Help her decide** whether or not to contact the police or other authorities.
- 6 Find someone to talk to**, so that your anger and fear are not directed towards your son or daughter.

For more resources about encouraging healthy attitudes and discussions with your teens:

- www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents/index.htm
- www.talkingwithkids.org
- www.familiesaretalking.org
- www.familycommunication.org
- www.familytalks.com