



Supporting the Village: Helping Parents and Caregivers to Support Youths' Healthy Sexual Development

**Middlesex County
Department of Public Safety and Health
Office of Health Services**

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Sensitivity and Self-Care



We will be talking about sensitive topics,
let's take care of ourselves.



1-877-665-7273

Middlesex L.E.A.D.S.



A Collaboration between
Middlesex County Center for Empowerment
Alliance Center for Independence

 **MIDDLESEX**

C O U N T Y • N J

CENTER FOR EMPOWERMENT

SEXUAL VIOLENCE COUNSELING, ADVOCACY,
AND PREVENTION EDUCATION

1-877-665-7273



ALLIANCE

CENTER

for **INDEPENDENCE**

The Center for Empowerment



- The Center for Empowerment is the New Jersey State-designated Sexual Violence Program for Middlesex County
- We strive to support and empower survivors and significant others affected by sexual violence, and to help eliminate all forms of sexual violence through community awareness and education



The Center for Empowerment

- 24-hour hotline (1-877-665-7273)
- 24-hour in-person advocacy
- Individual counseling for survivors & loved ones
- Case Management and Referral
- Support groups
 - Male survivor group
 - Adult survivors of sexual assault or child sexual abuse
 - Art & alternative therapy groups
- Informative client workshops
- Prevention Education and Coalition
- Volunteer program



What we will talk about today:



- Healthy sexual development as a protective factor against sexual violence.
- Fostering trust and open communication between caregiver and care receiver.
- Talking to teens about puberty and sexuality.
- Support and resources for caregivers
- Support and resources for young people



Section 1:

As a Parent or Caregiver



What is Sexual Development?



- Sexual development, or sexuality, is more than sex assigned at birth or sexual intercourse.
- It is the entirety of gender identity and expression.
- How we learn to interact with other people and have relationships.
- How we have a relationship with our own bodies.



Poll Questions

In regards to your child's sexual development:

- What are your hopes and dreams for your child?
- What words have you used with your child to describe body parts?
- What are your fears as a parent?
- What do you want to know the most?
- What do you expect of your teen?



Four Guidelines for Parents

1. Know Yourself.
2. It's Not About You.
3. Stop Talking.
4. Start Listening.

Breaking the Hush Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex, Dr. Karen Rayne 2015



Sexuality and Disability

- What messages did you receive from a parent/guardian/instructor about female sexuality?
- About male sexuality?
- How comfortable are you talking about sexuality?
- What messages have you received about people with disabilities and their sexuality?

Healthy Sexuality



- Expressing your sexuality in a way that **respects the rights of others as well as your own needs and boundaries.**
- It is not only about sex; it is about thoughts, feelings, and interactions with other.
- **It is always free from violence and coercion; it is consensual and respectful.**



Tips for Being a Positive Decision-Making Mentor

- Use teachable moments.
- Be approachable.
- It's okay to feel embarrassed.
- It's okay not to know the answer.
- You may choose to address a situation later.
- Recognize your limits.



Tips for Being a Positive Decision-Making Mentor, Continued

- Avoid making assumptions.
- Combat myths or misinformation without belittling.
- Avoid preaching or lecturing.
- Look at the experience from the lens of your child, not yourself.
- Be realistic regarding success.
- Be patient.
- Apologize.



Keys to Supporting People

- **Listen** without judgment
- **Believe** them
- **Support** unconditionally





Section 2:

Talking to Teens



Age and Developmental Appropriateness



- Age appropriate information is relevant to what someone at a specific age might experience.
- Developmentally appropriate information is accessible and understandable to the individual.
- What is individually appropriate or important?
- What is contextually appropriate or important?



Considerations

- Most children have had a conversation about sex with a peer by age eight.
- Most children have viewed porn by age fourteen.
- Most children do not ask their parents about the information they get from their peers or pornography.
- There is a set of high-quality National Sexuality Education Standards; you can find them and read them online at: <http://www.FutureOfSexEd.org/fosestandards.html>



Puberty

- Enlargement/growth of breasts
- Appearance of pubic, underarm, and facial hair
- Growth of internal/external genitalia (testes/penis)
- Masturbation
- Sexual interest may occur
- Romantic interest may occur
- Sense of gender identity further develops
- Sense of sexual orientation further develops



Do I Need to Talk to my Kid about Puberty?

- You might have to initiate the conversation.
- Do create space for them to talk to you.
- Answer the questions they ask.
- Have resources for them to go to, if that makes them feel more comfortable or if you do not know the answer. You are not expected to know all the answers.

Why Talk about Sex and Sexuality with my Teen?



- Teens are already talking about sex.
- Teens may already be having sex.
- Getting judgment-free, comprehensive sex education delays the first time they may have sex.
- If they know they can talk to you, and something “bad” happens, instead of “my parents are going to kill me,” they will think “I need to talk to my parents.”



Preparing to Talk to Your Teen

- Know yourself.
- Remember that it's not about you.
- Stop talking.
- Start listening.

Works Cited

Karen Rayne, P. (2015). *Breaking the Hush Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex*. Austin: Impetus Books.



When You and Your Teen Talk

- One Question.
- Do something else.
- Pleasure and pain.

Works Cited

Karen Rayne, P. (2015). *Breaking the Hush Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex*. Austin: Impetus Books.



The Voice Inside

- Be cool as a cucumber.
- Bring it on.
- Never surrender.

Works Cited

Karen Rayne, P. (2015). *Breaking the Hush Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex*. Austin: Impetus Books.



Understanding Consent

- Communication is the basis of consent.
- It helps create and understand boundaries.
- You respecting your teen will help set the standard of their relationships, friends, family, romantic, and sexual.
- Talking about how to talk to your teen, and actually doing it that way, helps set the tone for how they have interpersonal relationships.



Why Do We Fight? Why Won't They Listen?

- Emotions are valid.
- Are we making it about ourselves, or about our children?
- Some psychology:
 - Parent Ego State
 - Adult Ego State
 - Child Ego State
- The way in which we communicate determines the outcome.



When Answering Questions

- Answer the question that is being asked.
- Ask the child for more information about what they're asking.
- Less is more.



Section 3:

Resources





For Parents

- Breaking the Hush Factor: 10 Rules for Talking with Teens, Dr. Karen Rayne
- Talk to Me First: Everything You Need to Know to Become Your Kids' "Go-To" Person about Sex, Deborah Roffman
- You're in the Wrong Bathroom, Laura Erickson-Schroth, MD, and Laura A. Jacobs, LSCW-R
- <http://www.findingyourindividuality.com/>
 - Individual & group counseling services
 - Client & family centered educational workshops



For Young People

- It's Perfectly Normal, Robie Harris (10+, dense reading)
- Sex, Etc. <http://answer.rutgers.edu/page/sexetc>
- <http://www.findingyourindividuality.com/>
 - Individual & group counseling services
 - Client & family centered educational workshops



Questions?



References



1. Karen Rayne, P. (2015). Breaking the Hush Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex. Austin: Impetus Books.
2. The Center for Family Life Education. (1989). Bodies, Birth, & Babies. Morristown, New Jersey: The Center for Family Life Education.
3. The Center for Sex Education. (2014). Changes, Changes, Changes. (S. Mitelman, Ed.) Morristown, New Jersey: The Center for Sex Education.
4. The Center for Sex Education. (2016). Great Mentoring - Positive Conversations with Young People About Sexual Decisions. (P. Karen Rayne, Ed.) Morristown, New Jersey: The Center for Sex Education.

Thank you!



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