



SEXUAL INTEGRITY

PRESCHOOL CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Wait a minute. A conversation guide about sexual integrity for toddlers and preschoolers? Do parents really need this? Actually, there are many reasons to help a child feel comfortable talking with you about their body. That's why it's important that you start the conversation early.

As your child grows, so will the conversation. But right now while your child is in the preschool phase, your role is simple.

INTRODUCE THEM TO THEIR BODY.

As you introduce your child to their body, there are probably some things you should say, and some things you shouldn't. Here are just a few.

WHAT TO SAY

- "God made you. God made your elbows. God made your vagina/penis. God made your toes." (Use correct names of body parts as you change and bathe your child.)
- "Private parts are meant to be private." And also, "Sometimes Mama needs privacy when she's going to the potty." (Help your child understand privacy.)
- "You are getting so tall. I love watching you grow!" (Point out things that are changing about your child.)
- "Boys grow up to be men like Daddy, or like Uncle Frank. Girls grow up to be women like Mommy, or like Ms. Linda." (Answer questions about basic differences between boys and girls as the questions arise.)

WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "Look at your tiny little wee-wee."
- "Why do you keep touching your privates!?"
- "Don't ask those questions; we don't talk about that."
- Nothing.

(To be fair, you should probably avoid saying these at any phase.)

Make sure to involve professional counselors, as needed, as well as your ministry leader and parents, if you're not the parent.



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ELEMENTARY CONVERSATION GUIDE **FOR PARENTS**

Your kid is growing fast and learning new information every day. They have questions about things you've forgotten—like fractions. They have questions about things you don't remember ever knowing—like the state capitols. But the hardest questions they ask may be questions about the thing that put them on this planet to begin with.

Don't panic. The conversations will get more complicated as they get older, so for now, your role is simple (even if it does feel awkward at times).

INFORM ABOUT HOW THINGS WORK.

As you answer your child's increasingly complicated questions, there are probably some things you should say, and some things you shouldn't. Here are just a few.

WHAT TO SAY

- "I'm so glad you asked me."
- "Thank you for telling me. You will never get in trouble for talking to me about that." (Encourage conversation through your words, tone and body language.)
- "Sex is . . ." (Check out resources that will help you talk to your child about where babies come from and what sex is.)
- "Sex is meant to be private. It's not something that we should watch." (Lay a foundation for conversations regarding pornography and digital content.)
- Depending on the child, you may begin around 3rd grade covering topics such as: body odor, growth spurts, breast/testicular development, growth of hair, menstruation/vaginal discharge and wet dreams. (Surprises can be scary.)

WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "The stork delivers babies."
- "We'll talk about that when you're older."
- "Don't talk about that."
- "Sex is kind of like when a butterfly lands on a flower in the early spring." (If you want them to understand, you need to just say what you mean.)
- Nothing.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL CONVERSATION GUIDE **FOR PARENTS**

Your middle schooler is changing fast. Changing their friends, changing their style, changing their interests, and yes—even changing physically. As with any change, you have three options. You can resist it, and inevitably fail. You can ignore it, and become increasingly disconnected. Or you can talk about it, and probably suffer a fair amount of eye rolls.

When it comes to guiding your kid toward healthy sexuality in these turbulent years, your role is simple.

INTERPRET WHAT IS CHANGING.

Even when your middle schooler pushes you away, lean in. They need you to stay present and connected in order to interpret their changing reality. As you interpret the changes, there are probably some things you should say, and some things you shouldn't. Here are just a few.

WHAT TO SAY

- If you haven't yet, inform your child about how both boys' and girls' bodies will change as they get older and mature. (Consider covering these topics: body odor, growth spurt, breast/testicular development, growth of hair, menstruation/vaginal discharge and wet dreams.)
- "I'm so glad you asked me."
- "Thank you for telling me. You will never get in trouble for talking to me about that." (Encourage conversation through your words, tone and body language.)
- "I think it would be good for us to talk about this again sometime. Is that okay?" (Keep the lines of communication open.)
- Start to discuss relationship values by using phrases like these:
 - "Honor God with your body."
 - "Think about things that are good."
 - "Don't let anything or anyone control you."
 - "Don't sexualize a relationship."
 - "Guard your heart."
- "You are beautiful/handsome." (Give authentic, positive affirmation and affection to the point of embarrassment.)

WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "We don't need to talk about that."
- "You're not supposed to be thinking about things like that."
- "Don't worry, right now you're just in an awkward phase."
- "Remember, kissing a boy will make you get pregnant."
- "Why aren't you dating anyone?"
- Nothing.

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HIGH SCHOOL CONVERSATION GUIDE **FOR PARENTS**

Your high schooler has only a few short years until they're out of the house—and don't you both know it. They're becoming increasingly independent, and you're shifting as a parent from authority to influence. In the push and pull, just remember you still have a critical role to play when it comes to helping them grow with sexual integrity. Don't disconnect.

Now more than ever, you need to be available for them. Even though the conversations may be challenging, they need for you to show up to do one thing.

COACH THEM TOWARD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS.

As their coach, there are probably some things you should say, and some things you shouldn't. Here are just a few.

WHAT TO SAY

- "I'm so glad you asked me."
 - "Thank you for telling me. You will never get in trouble for talking to me about that." (Encourage conversation through your words, tone and body language.)
 - "I think it would be good for us to talk about this again sometime. Is that okay?" (Encourage conversation through your words, tone and body language.)
 - "What are some of your favorite things about (name of person they are interested in)? Do you feel like (name of person) respects you when you're with other people?" (Stay curious. Ask questions to help them clarify boundaries.)
 - "Have you talked to someone else about this? (Prioritize their relationship with other adult leaders or mentors you both trust.)
 - "You are beautiful/handsome." (Give authentic, positive affirmation and affection to the point of embarrassment.)
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WHAT NOT TO SAY

- "I don't think we need to talk about that."
 - "You will forget about this relationship in a year." (Be careful of overly minimizing what is significant.)
 - "We should invite your boyfriend/girlfriend on the family vacation! You guys are so good together." (Be careful of overly emphasizing what may not be permanent.)
 - "You've already messed up so there's no need to talk about it"
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