

Youth and Sexuality Resources

How to have Comfortable Sexuality Conversations with Youth

Educate Yourself

The more current your information is, the more help you'll be able to offer the youth in your life and the better you'll be able to answer any questions they have. Explore the latest information on birth control, STIs, sexual decision making, and sexuality and technology. Source out local resources for youth

Talk Often

The more often we talk honestly and openly about sexuality, the more natural and comfortable these conversations become. Talking often also allows humour to enter the conversation and ease any awkward moments. Youth report that sexuality conversations often feel awkward because they happen so infrequently—there's not enough time to develop a comfort like we do with other life topics.

Listen Without Judgment

Listen to what youth are saying and asking without rushing them. Communicate your values and beliefs openly and work to accept their values and beliefs even if they differ from yours. Explain your perspective and ask them to explain theirs.

Use Pop Culture

Pop culture, especially the media, has a large effect on our sexual attitudes and values. TV, music, social media posts, and movies provide great points of discussion with youth. Talking about the issues through the media can be an excellent way to keep conversations more closely linked to realities of youth.

Alternate Communication

Consider other ways to communicate with youth who may be uncomfortable with or resistant to face-to-face communication. Introduce an alternative to real time talking such as having a question journal – a journal in which the youth leaves a question to be answered by the adult. Texting can be a more casual but effective way to communicate. You can also supplement with links to appropriate websites so youth can use them in their own time.

Essential Content for Sexuality Conversations:

- **Sexual Decision Making and Healthy Relationships**

- 6 Rs of being ready for sex (Respect, Responsibility, Relationship, Resources, Results, Right)

- Check in with the HHGG equation to make decisions: **Head (logic/reason); Heart (emotions/values& beliefs); Gut (instinct) and Groin (sexual attraction)**

- Consent (Enthusiastic/Clear/Coherent/Ongoing)

- **Realistic and Positive Sexuality**

- Media's influence (portrayal of sex in media must include talk of pornography)

- Pleasure (emotional and physical)

- Diversity (Orientation, Gender, and Expression)

- **Current and Accurate Information**

- Sexual Health (STIs, Birth Control, Safer Sex)

- Resources (sexual health/youth clinics, sexual assault centres, youth lines, access to safer sex methods)



19% of BC students

indicated ever having sex with similar rates for males and females. This percentage reflected a **DECREASE** from a decade earlier for both genders (24% in 2003).

Source: Smith, A., Stewart, D., Poon, C., Peled, M., Saewyc, E., & McCreary Centre Society (2014). From Hastings Street to

Haida Gwaii: Provincial results of the 2013 BC Adolescent Health Survey. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society

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Reasons to be an Approachable Adult

1. Wellness and Health Literacy

Youth need to know about the straightforward science of their bodies to feel more confident, stay healthy, to make positive choices, and how to ask for help.

2. Prevent Exploitation

Research shows that youth who have been educated about sexuality are less likely to be sexually abused or exploited (i.e. that sex is a consensual activity only, how to set boundaries, etc.)

3. Knowledge is Power

Sexually educated youth have lower rates of STIs and unintended pregnancies. They experience more positive sexual experiences than their less educated peers.

4. Sex Education Does Not Mean Sex Experimentation.

Research shows that sexually educated youth **delay** sex experimentation by **4 years or longer** as compared to their uneducated peers.

5. Build a Relationship with youth for discussing all sensitive Issues.

Youth want to feel that their parents are APPROACHABLE and ASKABLE about all of the big issues in their lives. When we can talk comfortably about one issue, the others become easier to discuss.

Books We Like: *(current faves)

For Parents

- **Talk Sex Today* By Saleema Noon and Meg Hickling.
- *Sex & Sensibility.* By Deborah Roffman.
- **For Goodness Sex.* By Al Vernacchio
- *Talk to Me First.* By Deborah Roffman.
- *Beyond the Bird and the Bees: Fostering Your Child's Healthy Sexual Development in Today's World.* By Beverly Engel.
- *My Teen has Had Sex.* By Maureen E. Lyon and Christina Brenda Antonaides
- **The Transgender Child: A handbook for Families and Professionals.* By Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper
- **got teens?* By Logan Levkoff and Jennifer Wider

For Older Youth

- **S.E.X.* 2nd Edition By Heather Corrina
- 100 QUESTIONS you'd never ask your parents. By Elisabeth Henderson & Nancy Armstrong
- **doing it right* By Bronwen Pardes
- *The Little Black Book for Girlz.* St. Stephen's Community House
- *The Little Black Book for Boyz.* St. Stephen's Community House
- **Queer – The Ultimate LGBT Guide for Teens.* By Kathy Belge and Marke Bieschke
- *What if?* Answers to Questions about what it means to be Gay and Lesbian. By Eric Marcus
- **Not Your Mother's Meatloaf: A Sex Education Comic Book:* Saiya Miller & Liza Riley, editors.

ISHS encourages each family to review materials for appropriateness for their own family's values, beliefs, and situation.

Online Resources:

islandsexualhealth.org
beyondthetack.ca
sexualityandu.ca
smartsexresource.com
nativeyouthsexualhealth.com
scarleteen.org
outproud.com
talkingwithkids.org
amaze.org
Teaching Resources:
amaze.org
teachingsexualhealth.org



Confidential Sexual
health
Q & A Text Line
For youth
250-812-9374

©Island Sexual Health 250-592-3479 islandsexualhealth.org

Sexual Health Clinics: Royal Bay High School (students in sd62)
3960 Quadra St./ Camosun College/ QOM, QEM at Tsawout First Nation