



HEALTHY DECISIONS ABOUT SEX *you get to decide*

FAST FACTS

- Thinking about physical intimacy and sex is a normal part of adolescence. It's good to decide on your personal boundaries.
- People consider different things when deciding about sex: physical and emotional readiness, personal and family values, religious views, and potential impact on health.
- Most high school students have not had sex. The research shows that most sexually active teens used a condom the last time they had sex.
- You get to decide what you are ready for and when. You *always* have the right to say no to anything that makes you uncomfortable.

TEENS: LET'S TALK

Have you thought about your personal boundaries around sex and your body? We can talk about your comfort level with physical intimacy and ways to talk about your boundaries with a partner.

How would you say “no” to something you don’t want to do? “No” by itself is always enough. Some teens might say “I don’t want to do that,” others might say, “I have to leave now.”

If you have questions about relationships or making sexual decisions, who are the trusted adults you can talk to? Some teens talk to a parent or a friend’s parent. You can also call the clinic and talk confidentially with a doctor or nurse.

If you have had sex or are thinking about it, do you have questions or concerns? What is your plan to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections? We can talk about your options and make sure you have good information.

PARENTS: KEEP TALKING

Most parents want to pass on their values and keep their teens safe. It can be hard to balance this with the knowledge that teens tend to make their own choices. One way to protect your teen as they practice making adult decisions is **to talk often and be their best source of information:**

Use teachable moments and open-ended questions: a dating scene on TV could prompt you to ask a younger teen: “Are any of your friends dating? What do you

think about it?” If your teen is dating, ask, “How do you talk about boundaries with your partner? What would you say or do if they were not being respected?”

Your teen cares what you think. Clearly share your values and expectations: “I prefer that you wait until [love, marriage, 21, etc.] before having sex.”

You can build trust between the two of you by acknowledging that it’s up to them: “I hope we agree on this. But

whenever you make that decision, I love you and want you to be safe. How would you prevent pregnancy and STIs? Where would you find accurate information about prevention methods?”

Help your teen gets the facts about sex, healthy relationships, preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and consent. Having this information does not make teens more likely to have sex. It does make them more likely to become healthy adults.

GREAT RESOURCES

 Great resource and supportive talking tips for parents and teens: [amaze.org](https://www.amaze.org)

 Great resource on healthy and safe relationships: loveisrespect.org

 If a relationship feels unsafe, get anonymous and confidential help: 1-866-331-9474 or text [LOVEIS](https://www.loveis22522.org) to 22522