



Talking With an Adult about Sex

Decisions about sex and birth control are some of the most important decisions you will have to make! They are also some of the hardest decisions. It is *VITAL* that you have correct information. Talking with your parent(s) or trusted adult is a good place to start and for some, it may not be easy.

Before you start . . .

- Remember that talking about sex doesn't mean you are having sex
- Consider which adult in your life would be easier to talk with
- Plan what you want to say
- Pick a good time of the day
 - Not when they are stressed or likely to be interrupted
 - Not after an argument with them
 - On the way home from a fun activity is often a good time or while watching a TV show where a sexual scene or a sexual decision is made
 - Be flexible about when to bring up the subject
- Be clear in your own mind, about what you believe and about what you want out of the conversation
- Remember, adults had to decide once too. Remind them of that if you need to

What to expect . . .

- Expect to feel uncomfortable about the topic, they may too. It will get easier as you go
- Expect to hear some things you don't want to hear
- Don't expect immediate approval and agreement
- Do expect to have more than this one talk with them

Hints for good communication . . .

- Use eye contact and body language that says, "I care"
- Keep a sense of humor
- Tell them when you agree with them
- Give them time to think about what you are saying
- Let them know that you care about them and their opinions

Where to go for help . . .

- What if it feels impossible for you to talk with a parent about sex, birth control & STD?
 - Find another adult that you respect and with whom you can talk
 - Maybe a grandparent, an aunt, uncle or older sibling
 - A teacher, a school counselor, nurse or at a family planning clinic like Allen Women's Health – 319.235.5090 – www.allenwomenshealth.org
 - Together For Youth – 319.274.6768 – www.togetherforyouth.net

Your decisions about sexuality and the use of birth control are important ones. You will feel best about your decisions and about yourself if you think through them carefully and seek out the guidance, help and support that we all need.