

# Early, Consistent Sex Education Can Help Prevent Teen Pregnancy

When it comes to teen sex education, the worst mistake parents can make is delaying the “Big Talk.”

“Be clear about your own sexual values and attitudes. Talk with your children early and often about sex, and be specific,” are the first among the top 10 tips for parents offered by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

The Washington, D.C., non-profit uses panels of scientists, educators, parents and teens to back the resources offered at [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org).

Research shows that children often prefer to turn to their parents for answers. Parents, therefore, should set the stage for frank and relaxed conversations with their offspring, according to the site.

It has been proven that talking with children about sex does not encourage them to be sexually active, the site reported.

Establishing rules and standards of expected behavior helps parents trust their children more when they are not together. However, “supervising and monitoring your kids’ whereabouts doesn’t make you a nag, it makes you a parent,” according to the site.

Parents are also advised to get to know their children’s friends and their families. Some parents meet to arrange common rules and expectations for their children.

“Help your teenagers to have options for the future that are more attractive than early pregnancy and parenthood,” according to the site. “Let your kids know that you value education highly.”

Of course, the tips may not work if a parent fails to maintain a close, loving relationship with a child. Scientists confirm that time spent together as a family in

**<https://ethicsdaily.com/early-consistent-sex-education-can-help-prevent-teen-pregnancy-cms-343/> February 14, 2002 Alex Smirnov**

conversation, not confrontation, is the best way to build trust and respect between children and parents.

It's crucial never to underestimate the need children have for their parent's guidance, love and support, the site concludes.

Among other material on the Web site are tips for parents from teens, advice for teens from their peers, resources for faith communities and more.

Several of the resources are geared towards adults helping teens, including one titled "Hands-On Help for Youth Leaders: Addressing Sexuality—and Sexual Abstinence" provided by American Baptist Churches USA.

*Alex Smirnov is BCE's research associate.*

[Click here to view the resources guide for faith communities!](#)