

# Keep your kids safe and healthy — Talk with them about sex!

**A**s a parent, you want to protect your kids' health and safety. You want your kids to learn about sex in a healthy way. All kids learn about sex somehow. But it makes a difference that they hear it from you. You can help them learn how to prevent pregnancy and the diseases people can get from having sex. The power to keep your kids safe is in your hands. **Talk with your kids about sex.**



Here are the basics, with real-life tips from parents like you:

- **START NOW.** The earlier you start, the easier it is. But it's never too late. You don't have to be an expert. Just relax and learn with your child.

*"When I was a kid, I couldn't talk to my parents about these things. That made it hard for me to talk to my daughter. She and I went to the library for a book on the subject. It was great!"*

—Marian, mother of Leticia, 10

- **BUILD YOUR CHILD'S TRUST IN YOU.** When you listen to your children and answer their questions honestly, you show them that you can be trusted.

*"My kids and I watch TV together. We talk about everything that comes up — like love, marriage, dating, and feelings."*

—Javier, father of Jesse, 11 and Christina, 14

- **TALK ABOUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU.** When you and your children talk about your family's values, your children will think about those values when they make choices in life.

*"We let our son know that we think waiting to have sex is the best idea. We asked him what kinds of things might happen if he had sex while he was still in high school."*

—Judy, mother of Zach, 15

- **HELP YOUR CHILDREN FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES.** Let them know you love them no matter what. Young people who feel loved and supported by their parents make better choices for themselves.



*"How do I help my kids feel good about themselves? I spend time with them. And I listen! I listen at least three times as much as I talk. My kids know I'm somebody they can turn to."*

—Mark, stepfather of three

**Find out more about it at [www.talkwithyourkids.org](http://www.talkwithyourkids.org)** — a website about parent-child connectedness sponsored by California Family Health Council.