

Teaching Your Child Healthy Sexuality Discussion Guide

A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE WHY, WHAT, AND HOW OF TEACHING YOUR KIDS ABOUT HEALTHY SEXUALITY.

At Saprea, we believe that empowering communities with knowledge is one of the best ways to prevent child sexual abuse. Thank you for your willingness to facilitate learning in your circle of influence. You are an essential part of everything that we do. Here are some best practices to consider before, during, and after the presentation.

Before:

- ♦ **Communicate clearly** when and where the presentation is taking place. Let participants know what topic will be discussed.
- ♦ **Prepare teaching materials:**
 - ◇ Download the presentation materials onto your computer and review them thoroughly.
 - ◇ Read through the entire discussion guide and review the accompanying worksheet and Little Talks resources online.
 - ◇ Print worksheets ahead of time. If teaching virtually, send a copy of the worksheet ahead and display it on the screen during Part 2.
- ♦ **Arrive early and set up:**
 - ◇ Ensure AV equipment is present, plugged in, and functioning properly, or that your video conferencing platform is set up, sound is working, and you can share your screen.
 - ◇ If in person, arrange seating to encourage discussion and have pens available for participants to take notes.
 - ◇ Start the presentation on the first slide in "presentation mode."

During:

- ♦ **Add energy to the room.** Be friendly, positive, and enthusiastic.
- ♦ **Trust the material and your intuition.** Follow the organization and activities outlined in the research-based discussion guides while being yourself and considering the needs of your group. Share personal experiences that enrich and illustrate critical principles.

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- ◆ **When in person, sit with the group if possible.** Larger groups may require you to stand.
- ◆ **Encourage discussion:**
 - ◇ Create a safe environment where participants can be honest and candid.
 - ◇ Thank participants for their comments.
 - ◇ Help as many people as possible participate.
 - ◇ Don't allow one person to dominate the conversation.
 - ◇ Manage time. This discussion is designed to take around 60 minutes.
 - ◇ Prompt each participant to take action on what they learned.
- ◆ **Post local and regional resources in a visible place.**
Share abuse hotlines or community counseling centers that participants can contact for support.

After:

- ◆ Make sure participants have a chance to take the exit survey.
- ◆ Review what went well and what can be improved for your next presentation.
- ◆ Follow up with any participants who may have been overwhelmed by the gravity of the topic.
- ◆ Congratulate yourself for the efforts you've made to improve your community!

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Part I: Why Teach Your Child About Healthy Sexuality?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to identify why teaching healthy sexuality can reduce the risk of childhood sexual abuse.



Vocal Instructions



Facilitator notes



Explain: We're going to discuss the why, what, and how of teaching your kids about healthy sexuality. Let's start with the why. Research shows that children who don't know about sexuality "are more vulnerable to sexual abuse."¹



Explain: Here's a video to get us thinking about the topic. As you watch, look for one benefit that comes from teaching healthy sexuality.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the *Everyday Conversations* video (3:41).



Paired Discussion: (3–5 min.)

- ◆ How does teaching healthy sexuality help reduce the risk of sexual abuse?



Large Group Discussion: (3–5 min.)

- ♦ What is one idea you talked about that you could share with the group?



Take Action: Have a conversation this week with a partner, coparent, or someone else close to your child about the importance of teaching healthy sexuality to deter sexual abuse.

1. Wurtele, S. K., Kenny, M. (2011). Normative Sexuality development in childhood; Implications for developmental guidance and prevention of childhood sexual abuse. *Counseling and Human Development*, 43(9), p. 2.

Part 2: What Are Your Views on Healthy Sexuality?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

The most effective way to prepare to teach healthy sexuality to your kids is to first clarify your own views and then decide what you will teach them.



Explain: Before you can teach your kids about healthy sexuality, you need to spend some time thinking about what your own views are based on your experiences and values. Let's watch parents talk about some of these topics. As you listen, consider your views.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the *From Parents for Parents* video (4:46).



Explain: You just heard parents share experiences and talk about some of their views on sexuality and how these things helped them teach their kids. Now I want you to consider some of the same topics.



Write: (5–7 min.) *Distribute a copy of the “What Are Your Views on Healthy Sexuality?” worksheet to each participant and have them fill it out. After a few minutes, remind your group about the individual reflection at the end of the worksheet. If presenting virtually, share slides with questions, and ask participants to take notes.*



Explain: Based on research, Saprea has developed guidelines about what to discuss at every age throughout your child's development.



Facilitator Notes: *Display the slides that show what the Connect to Prevent resource looks like. You can click through a few examples of the guidelines for different ages included in the slide deck. Next Display the QR code for attendees to scan.*



Take Action: Scan this QR code with your phone, or visit saprea.org, to access the Connect to Prevent resource.

Part 3: How Should You Teach Healthy Sexuality?

20–25 MIN.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Now is the time to have frequent, little, age-appropriate conversations about healthy sexuality with your child.



Explain: You can start the conversation about healthy sexuality before your child can even talk. For example, you can start talking and teaching about body parts when your child is a baby. And if you haven't started the conversation, now is the time! Let's watch an example of a parent recognizing an opportunity to have a conversation.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the *Embrace the Awkward* video (1:29).



Explain: Let's practice how you might respond if you were in the situation we just saw in the video. You can also use your own age-appropriate scenario to practice how to respond. You might want to think about your child (or a child in your life).



Paired Practice: (5–6 min.) *Have participants turn to their neighbor and take turns practicing being the parent. After a few minutes, prompt them to switch.*



Large Group Discussion: (5–6 min.)

- ◆ Who would like to share what they said as a parent?
- ◆ What challenges did you find having this discussion? How could you overcome them?



Take Action: Pick a small moment this week to have a conversation with your child about healthy sexuality. You may be reacting to something you heard or proactively bringing something up. Remember these conversations can be any length, anytime, anywhere.



Review: (Briefly review the three focuses and desired outcomes from this presentation.)

- ◆ Teaching healthy sexuality at any age can reduce the risk of childhood sexual abuse. Have a conversation about this with your partner or someone else.
- ◆ The most effective way to prepare to teach healthy sexuality to your kids is to first clarify your own views and then decide what you will teach. The researched-based infographics from Saprea can help.
- ◆ Now is the time to have frequent, little, age-appropriate conversations about healthy sexuality with your child. Have more conversations starting today.



Note: *Allow participants enough time to take the exit survey before the Q&A.*