

Talking to Your Teen About Sex and Sexuality

For many parents, talking to their teen about sexuality and sexual health can be challenging and sometimes uncomfortable. There are several reasons why parents may feel this way. Some parents aren't confident in their knowledge of sexual health, some are unsure about what is appropriate to discuss with their teen, and some simply don't know how to start the conversation.

Alberta Health Services understands these challenges and has created the website teachingsexualhealth.ca to help you find the information you need to keep the conversation going with your teen. The Parent portal of the website offers the following:

- Tips on how to discuss relationships, sexuality and sexual health with your child.
- Explanations of why and how to talk to your teen about topics like sexual diversity and bullying.
- Outlines of the sexual health curriculum from grade 4 to grade 12.
- Webisodes (videos) that give examples of how to answer your teen's questions about sex and sexuality.
- Links to reliable resources and community agencies in your area of Alberta.



In school, your teen will learn about a wide range of topics; including the human reproductive process the elements of a healthy relationship, the different types of birth control, and much more. Research on sexual health education has shown that teens with more knowledge about sexual health make more informed decisions, are less likely to take part in risky sexual behaviour, are at less risk of sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy, and often delay sexual intercourse.

Bring the conversation of sexual health into your home for the benefit of your teen's health and development. We encourage you to check out what teachingsexualhealth.ca has to offer!

Tips for a Safe Graduation Celebration

High school graduation is just around the corner. Graduation celebrations can be full of joy and excitement; however, they can also bring your teen face to face with risky situations such as underage drinking, impaired driving or riding with an impaired driver. In order to help your teen stay safe during grad, communication is crucial. Have an honest and supportive discussion with your teen about the risks. Clearly explain to them that it is illegal for teens younger than 18 to purchase, possess or consume alcohol. The following smart risk strategies can help your teen manage the risks during grad season, especially on the evening of grad celebrations.

- **Look First.** If your teen has their licence and is planning to drive, they should ensure that they are seated safely in their vehicle and can see the road clearly before driving. If they are allowed to drive at night, urge them to pay extra attention as the risk for crash increases after dark.
- **Buckle Up.** Your teen must always use their seatbelt and ensure that there are enough seatbelts for all passengers in the car. People who don't use seatbelts are three times more likely to be injured than people who use seatbelts.
- **Drive Sober.** Your teen must always be completely in control of their mind and body when driving. This means driving without any alcohol or drugs in their system, not being tired and not being distracted by their cell phones or passengers.
- **Seek Help.** Encourage and support your teen to seek help from trusted adults like you, when they feel that they are in an unsafe situation. Encourage them to call you at any time if they need a safe ride home or for any other reason. Always respond to you teens call for help.

For more information about teenage injury prevention visit: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/InjuryPrevention/hi-ip-pipt-smart-risk-ahs-approach-teen-risk-mgmt.pdf>