# How to Talk with Your Children and Teens about Healthy Relationships

- Talk to your children and teens about friendship, dating, and love ***before*** they start to ask questions about these important issues.
- Listen to your children and teens and try to understand their point of view.
- If you can't answer a question, help your children talk to other trusted adults.
- Use daily experiences like watching TV, to talk with your children and teens. It is a chance to share your values and messages with them.
- Find out what schools are teaching your children and teens about these topics.
- Stay active in the lives of your children and teens and help them plan for the future.

**Know and practice the messages that you want to share with your children and teens.**

***Use the information below to make your messages clear.***

## Message Information For Ages 12-15:

- Friends can influence each other in positive and negative ways.
- People can be friends without being sexual.
- People are ready to start dating at different times.
- When couples spend a lot of time together alone, they are more likely to become sexually involved.
- If someone pays for a date or gives gifts, it does not mean that they are owed sexual activity.
- In a love relationship, people help each other to grow as individuals.
- People may mix up love with other strong emotions like jealousy and control.

## Message Information For Ages 15-18:

- Dating can be a way to learn about other people and what it is like to be in a love relationship. It is also a way to learn about romantic and sexual feelings.
- Being honest and open can make a relationship better.
- Both people in the relationship are responsible for it.
- A dating partner cannot meet all of the needs of another person.
- A lot of time, love changes during a long term relationship.

Keep these talks going! When you talk about relationships with your teen, you can hear about what is going on in your teen's life. You can also teach your teen about your family's values and beliefs.

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