

# Sex, relationships and teenagers



**TOP TEN TIPS**  
for parents and families



# Parenting teenagers

Being a parent is not easy.

The teenage years can be particularly difficult, talking to your children about sex and relationships is far from easy, where do you start? Here are some **TIPS** which you may find helpful. Remember you are not alone, for contact details of our free helpline see the end of this booklet.

## Spend time with them

Spend more time doing everyday things with them. Research shows



that this will make them far less likely to take risks with drink, drugs and sex - this is

the biggest thing you can do to support your teenager in sex and relationship issues.

## Be truthful and honest

Don't try to hide any embarrassment or shock you may feel (they'll pick up on it anyway). Explain



how you feel and why. They may feel the same! If you don't know the answer to a question, say so - find out and let them know when you have, or perhaps you can find out together. Let your teenager know how you think and feel.

## Reassurance

Reassure your teenager that they can come to talk with you whenever they



want or need to, tell them that you are always happy for them to ask you any questions. Remember - young people need facts, and guidance to help them make decisions, but they also need to be able to share their feelings and worries.

## Your teenager's knowledge

Check out your teenager's knowledge and do ask them if they want to talk, for example, after a TV programme or film.

Talk to them about what they do and don't want in a relationship.

Reassure them



that sex should always be a choice and never a requirement.

## Your relationship



Your relationship

with your

partner

is really

important

to your

teenager's

emotional and behavioural

well-being. Even if you are

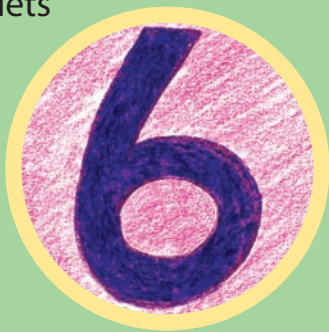
not together your relationship

is still significant to them. Try

not to argue in front of them.

## Information

An easy way to bring up the subject of sex is to leave appropriate books and leaflets about sexual health services around the house. You could use the leaflets as a way of raising the issue.



## Share stories

Sharing stories from your teenage years, may help them understand where you are coming from as well as taking some of the pressure off them - but remember, the world has moved on since you were a teenager and young people today face a range of new challenging issues that you may never have had to deal with.



## Teenage relationships

Peer pressure can lead young people to feel that they are the only person they know not having sex. Talk to your teenager and reassure them that this is not the case. Talk to them about the importance of waiting until they are in a positive, loving relationship.



## Differing views

If they ask your opinion, explain it to them but let them know that



other people may have a different opinion. Take the time to explain the reasons for

certain beliefs or traditional practices. Although you might want them to share your view you should encourage them to make up their own minds.

## **Treat all questions seriously**

Remember that how you answer questions will affect how comfortable they feel approaching you in the future to talk about sex - just because they ask a question about sex doesn't mean they are sexually active.



# OKtoAsk

If you need someone to talk to or require specific information on sex, relationships and teenagers, our free telephone helpline can help.

**0808 800 2222**

Lines open:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

9am to 5pm

Tuesday and Thursday

9am to 9pm

or visit **[www.oktoask.co.uk](http://www.oktoask.co.uk)**





supporting families to support children

Parenting across Scotland (PAS) is a partnership of adult relationship and children's charities working together to provide a focus for issues and concerns affecting parents and families in Scotland.

Tel: 0131 319 8071

E-mail: [alison.clancy@children1st.org.uk](mailto:alison.clancy@children1st.org.uk)

[www.parentingacrossscotland.org](http://www.parentingacrossscotland.org)

Funded by the Scottish Government  
Published February 09

