

Whether or not your daughter is having sex now, it is important to talk to her about birth control. Even if she does not need to use this information until later, she will have learned the facts from a source she trusts —  
**you**



## Your daughter needs to know about the dangers of STDs

Sexually transmitted disease (STD) includes AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes and chlamydia, among others. STDs are passed from person to person when they have sexual contact. Because young people tend to have a series of partners, it is important that you inform your daughter about using condoms and spermicide to prevent STDs. This is a good time to remind her that abstinence is the only sure way to prevent STDs.

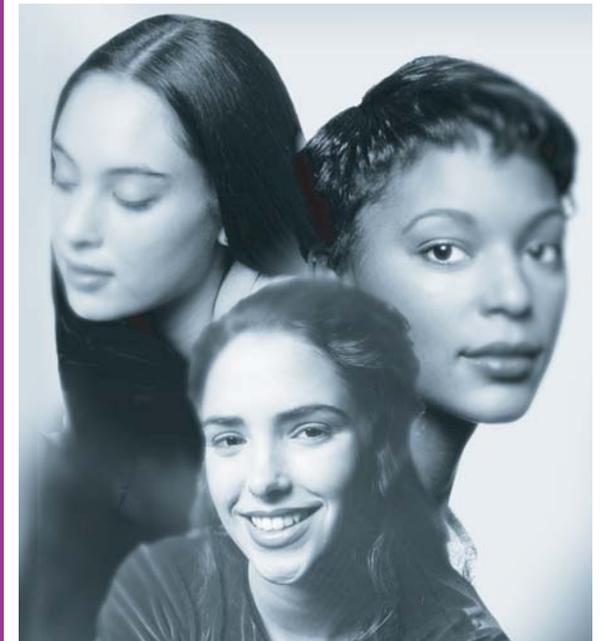
## Now what?

- **Talk to your daughter about everyday things all the time.** This will make it easier to talk about serious things.
- **Be honest if you are embarrassed or don't know the answer to your daughter's questions.** She may feel awkward, too. If you need to find out an answer, let her know that you will find out for her. If you need help, call the Info Connection at 1-800-545-1098 to talk in private with a nurse or social worker.
- **Listen to what your daughter says.** Ask your daughter how she feels. Try to see her questions and concerns from her viewpoint. Allow time to listen so she knows that you care about how she feels.



For help or more information, call your local health department or the **Info Connection** toll-free at **1-800-545-1098**

# Talking *with* Your Daughter *about* Birth Control



## Why talk with your daughter?

When it comes to sex, most teens feel they know everything about it. They may say they know about sex when they really don't. The truth is that most teenagers do not know much about how a pregnancy starts. A large number of teens do not realize that there is about a 85-90 percent chance that a girl can get pregnant if no birth control is used.

Even if you have talked to your daughter about sex, you may not have talked about birth control. You may hope that your daughter already knows what she needs to know. You may feel that talking about birth control is the same as saying it is okay to have sex. And your daughter may have been afraid to ask.

The truth is that by talking to your daughter about sex and birth control, you will be able to tell her what your family's values are and why. This also provides you with the knowledge that she is getting the facts and not rumors. This also provides you with an opportunity to tell her why abstinence is the best choice for school-aged teens.

If you do not feel you can talk to your daughter yourself, make sure that she gets the facts somewhere else. An older sister, aunt or family friend may be able to talk with your daughter. Another way to share this information is to give your daughter books or other things to read on her own.

## Talking with your daughter

To get started, find out what your daughter already knows. Even though most teenage girls know about a woman's monthly cycle, they are not aware about how to prevent a pregnancy. When it comes to birth control, most teens want to prevent pregnancy. It is important that your daughter knows that while birth control can reduce the risk of getting pregnant, birth control does not work 100 percent of the time. Abstinence is the only way to prevent pregnancy that works all the time.

### Other things she needs to know:

- **She has the right to decide when and if she becomes a parent.** Using birth control or not having sex means she cares about herself and her future as well as her partner.
- **A man is just as responsible for an unwanted pregnancy as the woman.** If a pregnancy results, a man will be required to help pay for and support that child.
- **Abstinence is the best choice for teenagers.** It is the only birth control method that works 100 percent of the time. It is the only way to avoid AIDS and other diseases you can get when you have sex.
- **There is no "safe" time or way to have sex.** Having sex on a certain day or in a certain way does not work. There is no easy way to know when a girl is releasing an egg that could be fertilized by the boy's sperm.
- **Being careless about using birth control – even one time – can result in a pregnancy.**

## Birth Control Choices

Deciding about birth control should be the decision of both partners. Birth control is not just a woman's decision. It is important to know about all birth control methods, even those that are used only by the woman or the man. Remind your daughter that it is important to talk with her partner.

### Those choices include:

- Abstinence (not having sex)
- Birth control pills (taken everyday by the woman)
- Condoms (worn by the man)
- Depo-Provera shots (taken four times per year by the woman)
- IUD placed in the woman's uterus or womb
- Diaphragm or cervical cap (used by the woman)
- Foams, creams, jelly or film which kill sperm

**While many of these methods work well, abstinence is the only 100 percent reliable birth control method.**

### It is also important to know what does not work:

- Having sex with a "special" boyfriend
- Having sex in a certain position or on a certain day
- Having the man pull out before he comes (withdrawal)
- Having sex right after having a baby
- Having the woman douche or wash right after sex
- Having sex the first time
- Having sex only once in a while