

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



Your son 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 son about using condoms and spermicide to prevent STDs. This is also a good time to remind your son that abstinence is the only sure way to prevent STDs.

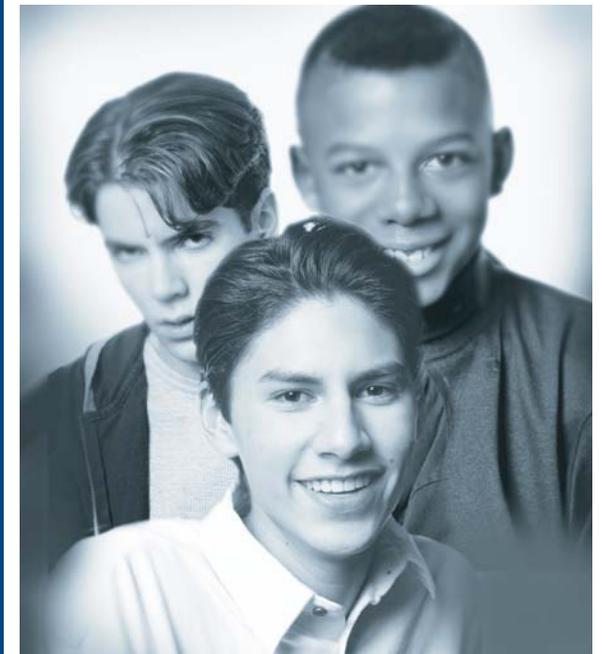
Now what?

- **Talk to your son 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 son's questions.** He may feel awkward, too. If you need to find out an answer, let him know that you will find out for him. 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 son says.** Ask your son how he feels. Try to see his questions and concerns from his viewpoint. Allow time to listen so he knows that you care about how he 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 Son about Birth Control



Why talk with your son?

When it comes to sex, boys feel they should know everything about it. They may say they know about sex when they really don't. The truth is that most teenage boys do not know much about a girl's monthly cycle or how a pregnancy starts. Most boys 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 son about sex, you may not have talked about birth control. You may hope that your son already knows what he needs to know. You may feel that talking about birth control is the same as saying it is okay to have sex. And your son may have been afraid to ask.

The truth is that by talking to your son about sex and birth control, you will be able to tell him what your family's values are and why. This also provides you with the knowledge that he is getting the facts and not rumors. This also provides you with an opportunity to stress the benefits of abstinence, the best choice for school-age children.

You may not feel you can talk with your son about birth control. That's OK! If you do not feel you can talk to your son yourself, make sure that he gets the facts somewhere else. An older brother, uncle or family friend may be able to talk with your son. Another way to share this information is to give your son books or other things to read on his own.

Talking with your son

To get started, find out what your son already knows. He may think he knows everything about sex. When it comes to birth control, most teens want to prevent pregnancy. It is important that your son 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 he needs to know:

- **He has the right to decide when and if he becomes a parent.** Using birth control or not having sex means he cares about himself and his future as well as his 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 tell 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. Men should know about all birth control methods, even those that are used only by the woman. Remind your son that it is important to talk with his 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" girlfriend
- 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