

Ask BYFS

Parent Question: When is a good time to talk to your kids about sex?

While we may frequently dread the first question about issues of sexuality our children ask because it means they are growing up, we should also feel good that they ask us! Above all parents want to remain approachable to kids throughout all their developmental changes. We want our children to be able to come to us with their serious questions and concerns at any age, especially as they get to be adolescents and start naturally separating. We want to be positive about their curiosity and treat their questions seriously, asking what has prompted the concerns. Be guided by your child, his or her level of comfort with different types of information, as well as your own value system. Separate fact from belief so that your child understands where a choice is made and why. If you don't know something, let them know and maybe you can spend some time together trying to find out. A classic book that was designed to help parents talk about sexuality with children is called *"Where Did I Come From?"* and its counterpart for Puberty is called *"What's Happening to Me?"* both are written by **Peter Mayle**.

It is important to find a way to convey to your child that you are "askable" or approachable for questions about sexuality. The following are some tips for answering those really tough questions.

- **Validate the question.** Let them know their questions are valid and you are glad that they asked.
- **Make sure you understand the question.** Question exactly what they are asking if you are not sure.
- **Admit when you don't know the answer.**
- **Admit when you are uncomfortable.**
- **Define slang before answering a question.**

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