

The Sex Drive

2017

Using Time in The Car to Talk to Your Kids about Sex



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The Finger Lakes Sexual Health Coalition

Vision

Promoting informed sexual decision making in the Finger Lakes community.

Mission

To engage the public and community partners in raising awareness about sexual health through identifying needs and providing education and expertise.

Value Statement

The Finger Lakes Sexual Health Coalition promotes informed sexual decision making in the Finger Lakes community through collaboration. It respects the individuality of community members and exercises cultural competence. The coalition is service-focused. It embraces creativity and inclusivity as it provides positive sexual health messages, education, and interventions in the community.

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Year 2 of The Sex Drive ran for ten weeks in the spring of 2017. The initiative's intent was to encourage parents to use short teachable moments, like car rides, to talk to their children about body image, relationships and sexuality. Topics and conversation starters provided are summed up in this booklet. To request an electronic version, with active links, email kate.ott@co.ontario.ny.us.

Rules of the Road for The Sex Drive



BE CAREFUL

If roads are icy or unfamiliar, postpone The Sex Drive.



GO SLOW

Pick short, nonthreatening topics.



ONE WAY STREETS

Avoid these. Yours should not be the only voice in the car.



DEAD ENDS

Prevent these. Use open-ended statements rather than yes or no questions.



PARK

Park your ego. Be honest. Share your own experiences and feelings.



USE CAUTION

Avoid prying, preaching, badgering or judging.



PRIVATE ROADS

Respect your child's privacy. If he tells you he isn't ready to talk about a particular subject, pick a different one.



FOG

If you hit a foggy area (one you need to brush up on) tell your child you will get back to him. Make sure you do.



LOOK

Look for subjects from everyday life (TV, movies, school, Facebook, etc.) to discuss.



STOP

Stop talking when you reach your destination unless it is obvious your child wants to continue.



TAKE U TURNS

Ask for clarification. Be sure you are hearing what your child is saying.



RESPECT DETOURS

If your child changes the focus of the discussion, follow his lead.

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Week #1



Bring up a situation with sexual content you and your child have seen on TV or in a movie.

Think of your child's favorite show. Is there a child going through puberty? Is someone pregnant? Are characters kissing? Is there implied or explicit sex?

American media is awash in sexual content. TV shows, movies, even commercials provide plenty of material to use as conversation-starters. Learn how your child is processing the things he sees. Address misperceptions and clarify your expectations and hopes for your child. Try to remain calm and matter-of-fact. Stick to the facts, but speak from your heart. Your opinions matter to your children, even though it may not seem like it all the time.

Start the Conversation

Ask you 8-9 year old, "Have you ever noticed that people on TV or in the movies are (pretty/handsome/thin/muscular/tall etc.)? Why do you think that is?" "How important is the size, shape, color, etc. of your body?"



Ask your teen, "What do you think about the way teens are portrayed in *Pretty Little Liars*? What parts do you think are true?" "Are there any movies/shows that do a good job portraying relationships?"

Ask your older adolescent, "What do you think about the way teens are portrayed in *Pretty Little Liars*? Are there positive messages; negative ones?" "What are possible outcomes of poor or inexperienced sexual decision-making you usually don't see on TV?"

Every family and every child are different. What works for one, may not work for another. Google an article or two from the list below for more specific information from a variety of sources. Be sure to read **The Rules of the Road** before getting started.

Article	Source
Sex: Talking to Your Child	American Academy of Child/Adolescent Psych
Talking to Your Child about Sex	American Academy of Pediatrics
Media and Children	American Academy of Pediatrics
Talking about Sex and Puberty	Focus on the Family (Faith-based)
Talking to Kids about Sex and Sexuality	Planned Parenthood
Age by Age Guide-Talking to Kids about Sex	Today's Parent

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Week #2



Talk about cell phone and computer use and "sexting."

Sexting (or "sex texting") is the sending or receiving of sexually explicit or sexually suggestive images, messages, or video via a cellphone or the Internet.

Examples of sexting include sending:

- Nude or nearly nude photos or "selfies"
- Videos that show nudity, sex acts, or simulated sex
- Text messages that propose sex or refer to sex acts

Any sort of photo, video, or message that shows someone doing or saying something embarrassing or offensive can be damaging to a reputation. This is especially true if there's nudity, sex, or sexually suggestive content involved. This type of sharing, known as "sexting," has the potential to haunt a teen for the rest of his or her life. This week, make sure your child knows the risks associated with sexting.

Start the Conversation

Ask you 8-9 year old, "Do any of your friends have cell phones?" "Do they text?" "If you had a cell phone, who would you text?" "Are there any things you should not text?"



Ask your teen, "Do people ever flirt with you by text?" "What sort of things should not be shared in a text?" "Have you ever received an embarrassing or picture by text?" "What did you do?" "Why is it not a good idea to talk about sex online or in a text?"

Ask your older adolescent, "What could go wrong if a boyfriend and girlfriend send sexy pictures to each other?" "Who owns the picture after they break up?" "Has anyone you know been hurt because of something that was texted or seen online?"

Check out some of these links for more info about cell phone safety.

Article	Source
What Parents Need to Know about Sexting	Kids Health
Ten Top Tips for Cell Phone Safety	Scholastic.com
How to Monitor Your Child's Phone	Teen Safe
Is Your Child Ready for a Cell Phone?	Web MD

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Week #3



This week, talk to your kids about slang.

Teens often use “secret languages” or code words when referring to sexual topics, particularly on social media. Feel like you and your kids don’t speak the same language? Get some clarification. This week while you’re in the car ask, “What’s ASL or GYPO? Or if you’re feeling adventurous, tell them “talking about sex in the car is lit, and you’ll try to keep it 100.” They might laugh at you, but that’s not a bad thing.

- ASL: Age/Sex/Location
- GYPO: Get your pants off
- HMU: Hit Me Up
- AF: “As F***”
- SMH: Shaking my head
- ADL: All day long
- AITR: “Adult in the room”

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, “When you talk to your friends, do you use abbreviated sayings like LOL or JK?” Or do you say things like “I can’t even.” “What other sayings do you use?” “What might happen if you say something you don’t mean?”



Ask your teen, “What do HMU, SMH, ADL, Bae, or AITR mean?” “What does it mean when you are talking to someone you have a crush on or are flirting with and they use some of these abbreviated sayings?” Make sure you talk to your teen about the importance of being clear about their boundaries.

Ask your older adolescent, “How do you communicate with your boyfriend/girlfriend over text or chat? What would you think if he/she said “you’re on fleek”, “you’re lit” or “you’re cute AF”? Talk to them about how it’s important to set the tone for how you want your partner to treat you.

Create a strategy for monitoring your kids’ social media use and be sure you follow through. Make sure your kids know your expectations. Some families check once a week and others more sporadically.

Article	Source
Teen Text Abbreviations-What Kids are Saying	No Bullying.com
116 Teen Text Terms Decoded	Time
The Secret Language of Teens	About Parenting
Talking to Tweens and Teens about Social Media	Amer. Academy of Pediatrics
The Urban Dictionary	Urban Dictionary

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Week #4



This week talk to your kids about consent.

Consent is a hot topic and it's important for children to understand the concept long before they encounter sexual situations. Helping kids recognize they have power in relationships regarding intimacy will protect them and give them confidence as they navigate adolescence and young adulthood.

Equally important (for boys and girls) is that consent goes both ways. They need the consent of their partner before and during intimate situations. If you have an older adolescent, heading off to college make sure he/she is familiar with the college's policy on consent.

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "Is it ok for someone to touch your body when you don't want them to?" "What should you do if you want to hug a friend and they tell you 'no'?" "How would you tell someone 'no' when they want to touch you and you don't want them to?"



Ask your teen, "How do people who are dating know when it's okay to hug or kiss?" "Do boyfriends/girlfriends have certain rights when it comes to the other person's body?" "Are there times when you have to allow someone to touch you even though you don't want them to?" "How can you tell when someone doesn't want to be touched?"

Ask your older adolescent, "How do you tell someone 'no' when they want to be intimate and you don't?" "Once you you've said yes to something, can you change your mind?" "If someone tells you 'no' but you think they're kidding, what should you do?" "If you saw someone else being touched against their will, how might you respond?"

Watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU> with your teen or older adolescent. It is a comical analogy that makes understanding consent simple!

Check out these on-line resources!

Article	Source
5 Everyday Ways to Teach Your Child About Consent	Upworthy
5 Children's Books that Teach the Importance of Consent	Romper
How to Talk to Your Kids About Consent	Romper
We Can Teach Kids About Consent Without Bringing Sex into the Conversation	Rewire

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Week #5



This week, talk to your kids about condoms.

Quick Condom Facts

- Used correctly every time, male condoms are 98% effective at preventing pregnancy. The problem is, not everyone uses them correctly, every time.
- 18% of couples using condoms for birth control get pregnant because they don't use them every time, don't use them the whole time, or use them incorrectly.
- Condoms protect well against gonorrhea, chlamydia & HIV. They are effective against HPV (wart virus) & herpes if the condom covers the infected area.
- Anyone, including teens can purchase condoms.
- Health departments & community clinics often have free condoms available.
- Condoms come in different materials, sizes, colors, textures and flavors.
- Female condoms are also effective at preventing STI's and pregnancies.

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "Have you ever heard other kids talking about condoms?" "What have they been saying about them?" "What are they for?"



Ask your teen, "What have you heard about condoms?" "Why are they important?" "Why don't you ever see condoms in movies or on TV?" "What do condoms protect against?"

Ask your older adolescent, "How would you go about getting condoms if you needed some or just wanted to see what they were like?" "Who gets to decide if a couple uses condoms?" "How would you go about getting a boyfriend/girlfriend to use one?"

Check out the sources below for more information about condoms.

Article	Source
Facts about Condoms	Condomology
Male Condoms	National Institutes of Health
Female Condoms	National Institutes of Health
How to Use a Male Condom (tasteful video)	Planned Parenthood
Condom Do's and Dont' s	It's Your Sex Life

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Week #6



This week talk to your kids about relationships.

Encourage your teens to set boundaries in their relationships. Some examples:

- Having time for family activities
- Being able to see and socialize with other friends
- Participating in usual hobbies and activities
- Not having to share passwords to email, social media or phone

Relationship warning signs-A partner who:

- Constantly puts you down
- Is extremely jealous
- Has a quick temper
- Tells you what to do
- Physically hurts you
- Checks your cell phone or email without permission
- Is possessive
- Makes false accusations
- Has mood swings
- Pressures or forcing you to hug, kiss or have sex
- Isolates you from family or friends

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "I know you and (insert name) are good friends; Why do you think the two of you get along so well?" "What makes a good friend?" "Is there a difference between teasing and bullying?"

Ask your teen, "What makes a good boyfriend/girlfriend?" "Who has the final say about decisions in a relationship?" "Is it ever okay to hit, push or hurt a boyfriend/girlfriend?"

Ask your older adolescent, "How are decisions made in relationships? Do both partners always get what they want?" "Why do you think so many couples break up?" "If you felt scared, unsafe or depressed in a relationship, what would you do?"



Article	Source
Healthy Relationships	Loveisrespect.org
Power and Control Wheel	Loveisrespect.org
Talking to Teens	National Healthy Marriage Resource Center
Teen Dating Violence	Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes
Coming Out: Common Questions for Parents	The Coming Out Project

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Week #7

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Talk to your kids about infections that can be spread during sex.

There is a lot of stigma associated with STIs, which can make the topic hard to discuss for both parents and children. Adolescents often think of STIs as a problem for “dirty” people when in reality, anyone who is sexually active can get an STI. Approaching STIs in a nonjudgmental way is important to help your child understand the importance of protecting themselves and getting tested.

STIs are most common in people between the ages of 15 and 24, making this discussion a very important one to have during your child’s teen years.

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, “How do people get sick?” “How can you keep from getting someone else’s cold?” “What do you think people do together when they date?”



Ask your teen, “Other than actually having sex, how do people get STIs?” “What do you consider sex to be?” “How can you tell if someone has an STI?” “How would you know if you have an STI?”

Ask your older adolescent, “When a person gets an STI, how do you think they feel? Why might it be difficult to tell their boyfriend or girlfriend about it?” “Do you know where to find reliable STI information?” “Do you know where you can get condoms?” “Do you know the difference between condoms and birth control?”

Check out an article or two from the list below for more specific information about the STI’s.

Article	Source
STDs	Kids Health
College Students and STIs	Columbia University
STDs are Normal: Reducing the Stigma of STDS	Psychology Today
Tips for Talking to Your Children about STDs	Peer to Peer
What Parents Need to Know about STDs	Talking 2 Teens
The Stigma STDs Have in Society	Very Well

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Talk to your kids about birth control and family planning.

Having a sexually active teenager may seem less than ideal, but a pregnancy during adolescence can be devastating. Teen moms and dads achieve less education, have more difficulty remaining employed and earn less money than older parents earn.

Children of teens more often:

- Drop out of school or become incarcerated during adolescence
- Get pregnant during their teen years
- Suffer unemployment as young adults
- Experience health problems

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "What do you think it will be like to have kids someday?" "How do you think people decide how many kids to have?"

Ask your teen, "Why do girls in middle or high school sometimes get pregnant?" "Is it someone's fault?" "Who is responsible for the baby?" "What sort of information are you getting at school about birth control?" "Where can you get more information when you need it?"



Ask your older adolescent, "Do teen couples who have a baby usually end up together?" "How does having a baby affect a mom's or dad's education and career plans?" "What birth control method do you think would be best for you now or in the future?"

Pick a link or two from the list below for more specific information from a variety of sources.

Article	Source
About Birth Control: What Parents Need to Know	Kids Health
Birth Control Methods	Medline Plus
Birth Control Methods	Planned Parenthood
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy	The National Campaign
Birth Control Methods	It's Your Sex Life
Long Acting Birth Control	Web MD

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Week #9



Talk to your kids about the importance of HPV Vaccine.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common infection that both girls and boys can get. HPV can cause certain types of cancer. Thankfully, there is a safe and effective vaccine series to protect your child from getting HPV! HPV can be easily spread from one to another through intimate contact. The HPV vaccine series is recommended for both girls and boys around age 11 to 12. The vaccine works the best when given before exposure to the virus, which is why a young age is recommended.

Having your child get the HPV vaccine series does not encourage sexual activity. When talking with your child about the vaccine explain that the vaccine protects against a virus that can cause cancer that they may be exposed to later in life.

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "Why do you think we get shots?" "If getting a shot can prevent you from getting sick would you want it?" "How can you avoid getting someone else's germs?"



Ask your teen, "Did you know what Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is?" "Do you know how you can get HPV?" "How can you protect yourself from viruses like HPV?"

Ask your older adolescent, "Did you know that HPV can cause cancer?" "What ways can you protect yourself from getting HPV?" "How can you get screened for cancers caused by HPV?"

Your child's pediatrician can be a great resource for information about the HPV vaccine. Google an article or two from the list below for additional information.

Article	Source
How to Talk to Your Preteen About the HPV Vaccine	HealthyChildren
HPV Vaccines	TalkWithYourKids
HPV Vaccine	KidsHealth
HPV and Cancer	American Cancer Society
The Link Between HPV and Cancer	CDC

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Week #10



Ask your kids what they want to know about sex.

Congratulations, you have made it through The Sex Drive! Hopefully, you and your kids have had some good conversations in the car. This week, check in with them to see what topics you may have missed.

When sixth graders were asked what they wanted to know about sex, they responded:

- *How come moms are so hard to talk to about sex?*
- *What were their feelings during puberty?*
- *Just tell them that we are uncomfortable too and that the more we talk about it, the easier it gets.*
- *Kids need to know a lot of stuff about sex because a lot of sixth graders are going to think the wrong stuff.*

Start the Conversation

Ask your 8-9 year old, "You've grown a lot lately; do you have any questions about how your body will change as you get older?" "Are you worried about how you might look or feel?"



Ask your teen, "Are you getting enough information about sex in health class? Are there things you want to know more about?" "What concerns do you have about being in a relationship someday?"

Ask your older adolescent, "I wish Grandma or Grandpa had given me a little more information about sex when I was your age. Do you have the information you need?" "Are you hearing things about sex from your friends that don't seem to add up? Want to run them by me?"

Every family & every child are different. What works for one, may not work for another. Check out an article or two from the list below for more information.

Article	Source
What Teens Really Want to Know about Sex	IDEAS.TED.COM (Al Vernacchio)
Teen Sex	PARENTS, On-line Resources
Questions and Answers about Sex	Kids Health
Talking to Your Parents	I Wanna Know

And remember, your kids are learning about sex, let it be from you!

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About the Finger Lakes Sexual Health Coalition

The FLSHC promotes informed sexual decision making in the Finger Lakes Community. Members come from health departments and community agencies in Yates, Seneca, Wayne and Ontario Counties. The group engages the public and community partners in raising awareness about sexual health through identifying needs and providing education and expertise. Meetings are open to the public. If you are interested in attending, contact Kate Ott at 585-396-4343 or kate.ott@co.ontario.ny.us. Check us out on Facebook at FLXSHC.

