

THE NATIONAL DAY TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY

PARENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

INSTRUCTIONS

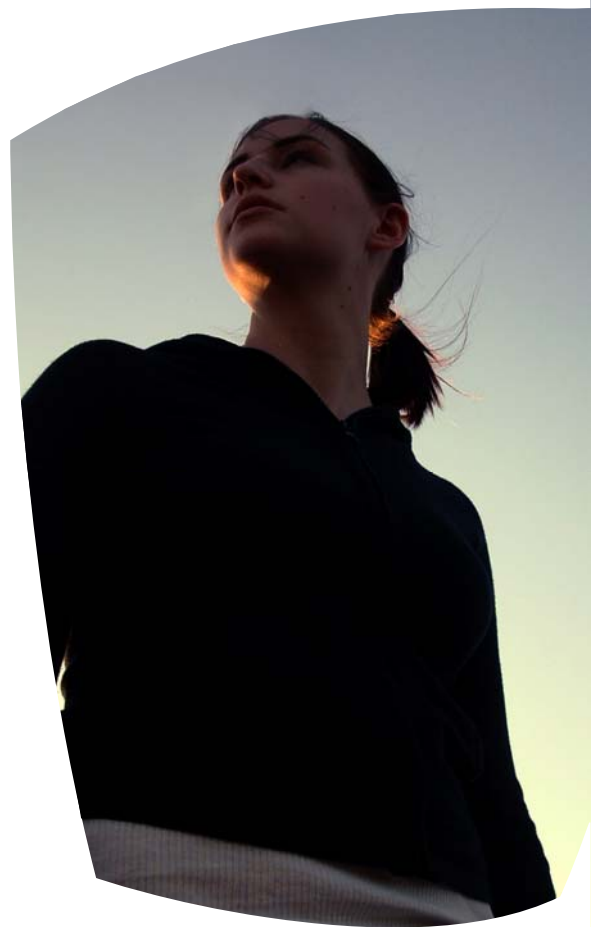
Talking to your children about sex can seem like one of the hardest conversations to have—until the day your teenager tells you that she's pregnant or that he got someone else pregnant. Suddenly, you'll wish you had taken the time to discuss sex, love, and relationships with your kids. In hopes of getting that two-way discussion started, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy offers the National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Quiz and this companion discussion guide.

Visit **StayTeen.org** to take the National Day Quiz yourself and encourage your teens to take it, too. Then use this discussion guide to help get the conversation started.

QUIZ THEMES

The National Day Quiz presents the following types of messages to teens:

- Sex has consequences – both *physical* and *emotional*.
- Have a plan: think about what you'll do in the moment.
- Not having sex is the best and safest choice to prevent pregnancy, but if you are having sex, you must use contraception carefully each and every time.
- Not everyone is “doing it” – and if more teens knew that, they'd feel supported in waiting.
- To use birth control every time, you need to think about it beforehand.
- If you can't talk to your partner about sex and contraception, you're not ready to have sex.
- You can always say “no,” even if you've said “yes” before.
- Drinking and drugs can lead to unintended risks and consequences when it comes to sex.
- Have questions? Ask a parent or other trusted adult.
- Big differences in age between partners can lead to unwanted and unprotected sex.
- Having sex at a young age is very risky and places you at great risk for pregnancy and STDs.



QUESTIONS FOR TEENS FROM PARENTS

PARENTS: Ask your teens to take the National Day Quiz and then answer these questions:

1. Talk about some general questions first.

- Is teen pregnancy a problem in our community? How so? Who should be solving it?
- Do you agree that most teens just don't think teen pregnancy could happen to them? Why or why not?

2. Take the National Day Quiz yourself, then ask some general questions about it.

- Did you learn anything new from this quiz? What?
- Are the scenarios realistic? Do you know anyone who has been in a similar situation?
- Do you think your friends and kids in your school think about these situations before they actually happen? Do they make plans about what to do?
- Was there anything missing from the quiz? What would have made it better or more informative?

3. Now ask some specific questions about the National Day Quiz.

Scenario 1

- Do teens feel pressure to have sex on prom night? Is sex on prom night considered an important rite of passage or is it not that big a deal?
- Before you took the quiz, if a friend told you she was relying on the pill to protect herself from getting pregnant, what would you have said to her? Would you say anything different now?

Scenario 2

- Do you think girls feel pressure to act and look older than they are? Do you think 14 is too young to be sexually active?
- What do you think about younger girls dating older guys? Why do so many girls want to date older guys? How old is too old?

Scenario 3

- About half of high school-age teens have had sex and about half have not. Does that surprise you?
- In your group of friends, how does everyone feel about waiting until marriage to have sex? What about waiting until after high school?
- Is it embarrassing for teens to admit to being a virgin?

Scenario 4

- Do you think underage drinking is a problem in this community?
- Do you think alcohol or drugs make teens do things they wouldn't do if they were sober?

Scenario 5

- Do you think teens think sex just isn't a very big deal?
- Do you think it's more common today than in previous generations for teens to become sexually involved with someone they aren't seriously dating? Why or why not?

Scenario 6

- How does sex change a relationship?
- Would you be less likely to date someone if you knew he or she was more sexually experienced than you?



QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS FROM TEENS

TEENS: Ask your parents to take the National Day Quiz and then answer these questions:

1. Talk about some *general* questions first.

- Why do so many parents find it difficult to talk to their kids about sex? Is it hard to talk to me about sex? Why or why not?
- Were you surprised about any of the scenarios in the quiz? Which one surprised you the most? Do you worry about me running into any of these situations?
- Are the scenarios in the quiz similar to anything you experienced when you were my age? Has your thinking about sex and relationships changed since you were younger?
- Does it surprise you to learn that most teens say their parents are the biggest influence on their decisions about sex? What else do you think influences teens' decisions about sex?

2. Ask some *specific* questions about the National Day Quiz

Scenario 1

- Would you be worried or relieved if I came to you first about protection? What would you say?
- What are your own values about sex, relationships, pregnancy, and marriage? When do you think the "right" time is for someone to start having sex?

Scenario 2

- Would you allow your daughter to date an older guy? Would you allow your son to date an older girl? Would you place more restrictions on them because of the age difference?
- If your son were dating a younger girl would you be more concerned than if he dated a girl his own age? What if your daughter were dating a younger guy? Why?

Scenario 3

- Do you think there is more pressure for today's teens to have sex versus when you were a teenager?
- What was it like when you were my age? Did you feel pressured to have sex?

Scenario 4

- Were drugs and underage drinking common when you were my age? Was it a problem?
- Do you worry that I'll say yes to drugs or alcohol and do something I'll regret? What advice do you have for handling that situation?

Scenario 5

- Do you know what a "friend with benefits" is? Do you think teens have a more casual attitude about sex than your generation did?
- What is your definition of a healthy relationship? What kind of relationship would you like to see me involved in? Be specific.

Scenario 6

- Do you worry about me getting pregnant or getting someone else pregnant? What is the one piece of advice you think is most important when it comes to avoiding pregnancy?



QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS ONLY

PARENTS: There are tons of ways adults can help teens reduce their risk of getting pregnant. One way is to get to know the parents of your child's friends and bring everyone together to discuss issues facing your children. Here are some questions to get the discussion going:

- Is teen pregnancy a problem in our area? How big of a problem? What can we do to get it under control?
- How much do we know about what our kids are watching on TV or the Internet? How is this influencing their views on sex?
- Do we know how our kids spend their spare time? Who do they spend it with? What are they doing? What might we do as parents to try to provide safe, supervised, and fun activities for our teens and their friends?
- How can we talk to our teens about sex, love, and relationships without sounding preachy or making them feel weird? Is it something that should be done as a family or one on one?
- What are some of the things we remember about "the sex talk" with our own parents? What would we do similarly with our kids? What would we do differently?

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Want to know more? The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy's website is your resources for the latest news, research, and other information on teen pregnancy and related issues. For more information and tips on how to help the teen in your life avoid pregnancy, visit us online at:

WWW.THENATIONALCAMPAIGN.ORG

or

WWW.STAYTEEN.ORG

