



Tips for Parents

“Communicating with Children about the Facts of Life”

Date: January 9, 2007

Time: 5:30 pm

Location: CASA

Facilitator: Dorthea Lewis, Project HOPE Program Coordinator
733-5449

Agenda Outline

Objectives:

1. To explore basic concepts of effective communication which enhance relationships between parents and children.
2. To increase knowledge of resources for parents.

- Welcome/Introductions/Review of Agenda
- Project HOPE overview
- Ice Breaker Activity
- Tips for Talking to your kids about the Facts of Life
- How Well Do You Know Your Son or Daughter? (complete handout)
- Resources
- Evaluation/Conclusion

Thank You!

Sources: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and Advocates for Youth websites

How Well Do You Know Your Son or Daughter?

As parents, we sometimes are so busy taking care of our children that we lose track of some of the details of their lives. This activity will help to make us aware of how much – or how little – we know about our sons or daughters.

Directions: With pen in hand, see how many of the following questions you can answer. Don't be surprised if you get stumped along the way. Ask your son or daughter at the same time to fill out the worksheet, "[How Well Do You Know Your Parents?](#)" When you're both finished, exchange and discuss the answers with each other.

1. What is your daughter's/son's favorite game or sport?
2. What is your son's/daughter's height (within one inch)?
3. Who is your daughter's/son's closest friend?
4. If your son/daughter could do anything he/she chose for a day, what would it be?
5. What is your daughter's/son's favorite TV show? Favorite character?
6. What was the last movie your son/daughter saw?
7. What is your daughter's/son's favorite food?
8. What is your son's/daughter's favorite thing to do after school?
9. Would your daughter/son rather ride a bike, ride a horse, or drive a car?
10. Who is your son's/daughter's favorite singer or musical group?
11. If your daughter/son had a choice to have a pet, what would it be?
12. Which would your son/daughter rather do: wash dishes, mow the lawn, clean his/her room, or vacuum the house?
13. Do your daughter's/son's friends call her/him by a nickname? If so, what is it?
14. In the evening, would your son/daughter rather play a game with the family, go to visit a relative, or read in his/her room?
15. What was the last problem your daughter/son brought to you for help?
16. What gift would your son/daughter most like to receive?
17. What does your daughter/son do that she/he is proud of?

Summary: If you get more than 15 right, congratulations ... you really know your daughter/son! From 11 to 15? Not bad, but try to pay a little more attention. Fewer than 11? Better spend a little time catching up on what's new with her or him.

Adapted with permission from Family Health Council, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA.

*Compiled by Barbara Huberman, RN, MEd, Director of Education and Outreach
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Ten Tips for Talking about the Facts of Life

When parents talk to and affirm the value of their children, young people are more likely to develop positive, healthy attitudes about themselves. This is also true when the subject is sex. Research shows that positive communication between parents and their children can help young people establish individual values and make healthy decisions.

Parents who act on the belief that young people have the right to accurate sexuality information are parents whose teens will delay the initiation of intimacy and use contraceptives when they choose to become sexually active.

Initiating conversations about the facts of life may be difficult for some parents because they did not grow up in an environment where the subject was discussed. Some parents may be afraid they do not know the right answers or feel confused about the proper amount of information to offer. To help, here are 10 tips from the experts at Advocates for Youth.

Ten Tips

1. First, encourage communication by reassuring kids that they can talk to you about anything.
2. Take advantage of teachable moments. A friend's pregnancy, news article, or a TV show can help start a conversation.
3. Listen more than you talk. Think about what you're being asked. Confirm with your child that what you heard is in fact what he or she meant to ask.
4. Don't jump to conclusions. The fact that a teen asks about sex does not mean they are having or thinking about having sex.
5. Answer questions simply and directly. Give factual, honest, short, and simple answers.
6. Respect your child's views. Share your thoughts and values and help your child express theirs.
7. Reassure young people that they are normal—as are their questions and thoughts.
8. Teach your children ways to make good decisions about sex and coach them on how to get out of risky situations.
9. Admit when you don't know the answer to a question. Suggest the two of you find the answer together on the Internet or in the library.
10. Discuss that at times your teen may feel more comfortable talking with someone other than you. Together, think of other trusted adults with whom they can talk.

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Project HOPE (*Healthy Options-Positive Effects*) Fact Sheet **The Eau Claire Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative**

Did You Know?

- 152 pregnancies for ages 10-19 were reported in the 29203 zip code.

Source: Richland County Epidemiological Profile handout prepared by the SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy 2006

What is Project HOPE?

Project HOPE is an adolescent pregnancy prevention initiative. Funding for the program was awarded to Richland Community Health Partners by the New Morning Foundation.

What is the mission of Project HOPE?

The mission of Project HOPE is to reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy and promote healthy behaviors for youth in the Eau Claire Community in Columbia, South Carolina through implementation of a multifaceted faith/school/community initiative.

How can Project HOPE help families in the Eau Claire Community?

- Conduct workshops, trainings and other events designed to facilitate a message of healthier lifestyles for youth.
- Assist schools, community and faith-based organizations in the development of programs for teens, adults and parents.
- Organize community-wide events for youth and youth advocates.

What has Project HOPE done in the Eau Claire community?

- Opened a Teen Health Center.
- Conducted a series of Parent and Family Education Workshops.
- Organized Community Action Team advisory committee.
- Implemented teen pregnancy prevention programs in schools and community settings.
- Organized school-based and community-wide activities.
- Assisted community leaders with coordinating programs for youth.
- Provided sexuality education information through the use of bulletin boards for students, school personnel and families.

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