FOR PARENTS

TIPS FOR PARENTS: RAISING A SEXUALLY HEALTHY SON OR DAUGHTER

The more information your teen has, the more sexually responsible he or she will be!

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

1. Take the time to talk with your teen. By starting early and making time for good communication, you can build trust and give them the information they need to be safe.

2. Know as much as you can! Explore the resources available to you and your teen in the community, on the web and through your teen’s health care provider.

3. Use accurate and mature language when you talk to your teen about the body and sex. This will help teach your child that you are a good source of information, and that sex is a serious topic.

4. Know what you think about sexuality and consider where your beliefs and information about sexuality came from. This will help you communicate your values to your teen.

5. Be open to questions and to your teen’s views. Remember, you may have different thoughts on certain issues, and that’s ok.

6. Tell your teen when you do not have an answer. You can learn together.

TEACH YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER...

1. That no one has the right to force sex on him or her for any reason.

2. To communicate his sexual limits by practicing ways to talk to a date about what he is comfortable with.

3. To listen to her partner’s thoughts and limits about dating and sex. Knowing is better than assuming.

4. To ask questions if he is uncertain about situations and behaviors with his partner.

5. To say no, loudly and in public if needed, and to respect that no means no.

6. To be especially careful if a date is more than one or two years older than him or her. A big age difference might make him or her more vulnerable.

7. To plan ahead. Discuss how he can get out of an uncomfortable situation, such as always having money for a taxi or pay phone.

8. To always let someone know where she will be.

9. To stay sober. Alcohol and drugs can change how your child makes decisions.

10. To trust his instincts.

11. To avoid pressure from friends about dating and sex.

12. That you trust her. Your child will be less likely to make rash decisions if she knows you trust and support her.

IF YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED....

1. Believe your child!

2. Do not blame him. Victims of sexual assault did not do anything wrong.

3. Help her get immediate medical attention.

4. Help him find local resources for counseling and support.

5. Help her decide whether or not to contact the police or other authorities.

6. Find someone to talk to, so that your anger and fear are not directed towards your son or daughter.

For more resources about encouraging healthy attitudes and discussions with your teens:

- www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents/index.htm
- www.talkingwithkids.org
- www.familiesaretalking.org
- www.familytalks.com