

Parent/Trusted Adult at Home Materials

Human Reproduction & Embryology

Greetings from Candor Health Education! We are happy to partner with you in keeping kids healthy, happy and safe!

Your child will soon take or has recently taken the Candor Health *Human Reproduction and Embryology* Program. (See the [Candor website](#) for more on this class). This program teaches reproductive science, beginning with puberty and the development of the reproductive organs and continues through fertilization, implantation, gestation and delivery. In this letter, we will briefly cover the topics addressed in our program and provide you with resources and ideas for talking about human reproduction with your child.

This program begins with a short review of puberty concepts. If your child is experiencing puberty changes and still has questions, please feel free to access our [Puberty I booklet](#). This booklet provides information on the physical and emotional changes that young people experience during puberty.

Additional *Human Reproduction and Embryology* program content includes: a focus on the homologous nature of the female and male anatomy, a scientific explanation of fertilization and what is needed to create new life, a basic overview of genetics and cell division, prenatal development, and an opportunity to address commonly asked questions regarding multiples, miscarriage and delivery. We now have an [on-line booklet for Human Reproduction and Embryology](#) that reviews the content of this class for you and your child to use at home.

Young people at this age are naturally curious about their bodies and their burgeoning sexuality. It is not uncommon for them to try to look up information on the topic. In addition, many young people this age are exposed to sexually explicit media for the first time, often accidentally. For these reasons and more, it is important that they have a trusted adult in their lives to provide accurate answers to their questions about sex.

General tips for talking to your child about sex

- Remain calm and comfortable
- Doing some research can help conversations feel more natural. The parent resources on the [Candor website](#) is a good place to start.
- Remember that you do not have to have all the answers. Feel free to look up answers together with your child.
- Look for teachable moments when watching TV, news stories, or someone you know is having a baby.
- Talk in a private, comfortable place. The car is often a good place because you and your child do not need to make eye contact.
- Avoid overreacting or knee-jerk reactions. That will tend to discourage your child from coming to you.
- Have resources (i.e., books) available for them.
- Keep lines of communication open before and after the discussions.
- Remember if they don't hear it from you, they will from someone else.
- Leave the conversation with both parties knowing that the conversation will continue.

Conversation Starters/Scenarios

- Following the Candor Health Education program, ask your child how they are feeling about what they learned or the changes that they are going through. Ask them if they have any questions and open the door for them to come to you whenever they are ready.

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- When teachable moments arise, offer an open-ended question. (i.e., What do you know about how pregnancy happens? Or What would you do if someone you were dating started acting like the character in the TV show? Or, do you know anyone that this happened to?)
- To get at issues such as sexting, you might ask, “What do you think it means to be respectful on social media or when texting?”
- To talk about consent, try analogies or scenarios – If your cat does not want you to pet it, do you? If you want to have a few of someone else’s French fries, do you just take them off their plate or do you ask? If they say yes, does that mean that you can just take the fries anytime or do you also need to ask the next time?
- Empower your child to be able to evaluate risks and make good decisions. Help your child to understand that they have a gut feeling, an inner voice, and they can and should listen to it.

If you are interested in staying up-to-date on health topics impacting youth and young adults, [register here](#) to receive the monthly Candor Health Education community newsletter. We have several [resources for parents](#) to approach difficult topics with their child. We look forward to partnering with you and encourage you to keep talking with your child...they are listening.

Sincerely,
The Candor Health Education Team