

Parent/Trusted Adult at Home Materials

Sexual Health for Young People with Special Needs

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

Your child will soon take the Candor Health Sexual Health Program. This program focuses on the following topics: relationships, behaviors that are part of romantic relationships, forms of sexual contact - including sexual intercourse, potential consequences of sexual contact including sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy and ways to reduce or prevent these consequences, and lastly, strategies for staying safer online. Here is a link to an [online booklet](#) that explores content from the class.

We'd like to provide a few tips for continuing the conversation on these topics at home. Not all topics are addressed in one conversation. Conversations build over time. By having regular conversations, your child will feel more comfortable coming to you to talk about this sensitive topic.

Conversation starters:

- Look for teachable moments when watching TV, news stories, a family member becomes pregnant, etc.
- 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 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?
- 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?"

General tips for talking to your child about sex:

- Remain calm and comfortable.
- Have a conversation in the car. It can be more comfortable not having to look at each other and the conversation can be private.
- Avoid overreacting when your teen shares personal information with you.
- Doing some research can help conversations feel more natural.
- If you don't know something offer to look it up together.
- Check for understanding. "Does that answer make sense?" "What do you think about that?"
- Keep lines of communication open before and after the discussions.
- Remember if they don't hear it from you, they will from someone else.

Additional On-line Resources:

Parent/Trusted Adult at Home Materials

Sexual Health for Young People with Special Needs

<https://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/resources/healthdevelopment/>

<https://teachingsexualhealth.ca/app/uploads/sites/4/Sexual-and-Development-Disability-Guide-2016.pdf>

<https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/resources/fact-sheets/sexual-health-education-for-young-people-with-disabilities-2/>

Please visit our website, <https://candorhealthed.org/>, for more resources and to learn more about our other health education programs.

Sincerely,

The Candor Health Education Team