
I. WHAT IS SEXUALITY?

• “The integration of bio-psycho-social growth and development, and how that impacts on the individual and his/her relationships” (Stanley Snegroff, 1988)

• SEXUALITY ≠ SEXUAL ACTIVITY

II. SEXUALLY HEALTHY NINTH GRADERS:

Biologically:

- Body awareness and appreciation
- Fertility begins
- Sexual arousal and fantasies increase
- Sexual orientation and/or gender identity are explored
- Sexual behavior experimentation

Psychologically:

- Sexual value formation
- Decision making skills increase
- Understand consequences of actions, including sexual actions
- Seek greater independence
- Empathize with others re: sexuality
- Identify value messages that differ from their own (media, peer, family)
- Identify self-destructive behaviors

Socially:

- Experiment with romantic, intimate, and sexual relationships
- Develop friendships with both same and other gender
- Feel close connection to peer group
- Separate from family
- Understand, identify, and avoid exploitative relationships
- Respect the rights, boundaries, and confidences of others
- Understand social & media pressure

III. THE SEXUALLY HEALTHY SKILL SET:

- Talk about sexual behaviors before they occur
- Negotiate and communicate sexual limits
- Differentiate between low, medium, and high risk sexual behaviors
- Understand and use appropriate contraception and safer sex practices
- Access and use health care, community, religious, school, and other services when needed

IV. WHAT'S A PARENT TO DO?:

- 1) Clearly articulate your family values regarding sexual expression
- 2) Discuss a variety of options for expressing attraction, intimacy, romance, lust, and love
- 3) Discuss factors involved in making a decision to engage in sexual activity
- 4) Reinforce teen's ability to make decisions
- 5) Discuss contraception and safer sex options, and associated values
- 6) Discuss options if high risk sexual activity occurs
- 7) Discuss exploitive behavior and why it is unhealthy
- 8) Help develop physical and verbal responses to escape unwanted sexual situations
- 9) Use inclusive language that recognizes all orientations and gender identities

V. RESOURCE LIST:

BOOKS:

- *Beyond the Big Talk: Every Parent's Guide to Raising Sexually Healthy Teens From Middle School to High School and Beyond*
Debra W. Haffner, Newmarket Press / ISBN: 1557045178
- *Gender Identity: The Ultimate Teen Guide (It Happened to Me)*
Cynthia L. Winfield, The Scarecrow Press / ISBN: 0810849070
- *Loving Someone Gay*
Donald H. Clark, Celestial Arts Publishing / ISBN: 1587612364
- *Raising a Child Responsibly in a Sexually Permissive World*
Sol Gordon, Judith Gordon, Adams Media Corporation / ISBN: 1580621775
- *Sex and Sensibility: The Thinking Parent's Guide to Talking Sense About Sex*
Deborah M. Roffman, Perseus Publishing / ISBN: 0738205206
- *Ten Talks Parents Must Have with Their Children About Sex and Character*
Pepper Schwartz Ph.D., Dominic Cappello, Hyperion / ISBN: 0786885483
- *What Every 21st-Century Parent Needs to Know: Facing Today's Challenged With Wisdom and Heart*
Debra W. Haffner, Newmarket Press / ISBN: 9781557047878

WEB RESOURCES:

- Advocates for Youth: <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/>
- Go Ask Alice: <http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/>
- I Wanna' Know: <http://www.iwannaknow.org/>
- Outproud: <http://www.outproud.org/>
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America: <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/>
- Planned Parenthood, Southeastern PA: <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/ppsp/>
- Scarleteen: <http://www.scarleteen.com/>
- Sex Ed Mom: <http://www.oxygen.com/sexarchive/>
- SEX ETC.: <http://www.sxetc.org/>
- SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the US): <http://www.siecus.org/>
- SmarterSex.org: <http://www.smartersex.org/index.asp>
- Youth Resources (for LGBTQ youth): <http://youthresource.com>