

11 Sex in the iWorld

PARENT GUIDE

BIG IDEA:

We tend to be reactive rather than proactive in our sex talks at church. Thus, we need to look ahead and understand what topics or ideas will face our kids in the near future. As technology keeps developing, it will become more and more intertwined with sex and sexuality. We want to help our students cultivate a thoughtful response to whatever questions come their way about the latest and greatest sexual fad.

5 Minute Check-In with Yourself and/or Your Spouse:

1. What inventions or trends have changed the world since you were a teenager? How have they impacted your relationships? (For instance, if you're a Gen X parent, the cell phone has dramatically changed the way we communicate today.)
2. What do you wish your parents would have said to you about these new technologies or trends, if they had known the impact these things would have on you today?
3. What restrictions do you place on technology in your home? Do these restrictions allow your child to become more dependent on God, or do they simply make your child more dependent on you?

5 Minute Check-In with Your Child:

1. What stood out to you in this week's teaching and/or small group time?
 2. Do you have friends that have been impacted by a text or even a sext? What can you share about their experience? Has it taught you anything?
 3. What are some ways we can help prepare you for the future when it comes to sex, sexuality, or relationships? (This might be a scary question to ask, but it also might open up some interesting dialogue.)
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Tips for Further Conversation:

Some of the topics in this video will be very familiar to your child, while others might not be as well known. Whether they're familiar with these ideas or not, we want to prepare them well for the real world. Here are some things to consider as you dialogue with your child this week:

Your child may feel overwhelmed.

Some of these topics might be new for your child. Give them space to process. Polyamory and VR porn are not everyday topics for most teens. Don't be surprised if this conversation induces fear or even shame. If something is triggering for your child, invite them to process it with you. Be sure to communicate that it is okay for them to feel overwhelmed; sit patiently with them in this feeling.

You may have a teen who experiences shame about sexting.

It is highly likely that your child knows someone who has sent or received a sext. They may have done so themselves. If so, they may feel shame discussing sexting, especially after hearing about its impact. As we urged you in this week's video: Don't shame your child for sending or receiving a sext. They may not know better. Make sure you, as a parent, create a space that allows your teen to want to come and talk to you about it.



Here are some helpful tips to consider if you learn your child has sent or received a sext:

1. **Let your child know that you love them!** Kids want to be seen, they want to be known, and—though they will never admit it—they want to be found out. The best response a parent can give a child after finding them looking at porn or sending a sext is to simply say, “I love you!” No, the conversation does not stop there—but this is a beautiful way of starting it.
2. **Control your anger.** It can be easy to take this personally. Don’t. This is not a failure on your part. Remember, we are all sexually broken and in need of a Savior.
3. **Go after their heart, not just their behavior.** You want to deal with the root of the issue, not the symptoms.
4. **Don’t forget to examine your own heart.** Are you living out God’s design for your own sexuality? How you answer this question will often determine how you respond to your child.

Additional Resources:

VIDEO: Full-length interview with Jay Stringer

TOOL: Weekly devotional

