



TRANSFORMING **CHURCH**
TRANSFORMING **LIVES**



**Permission to Discuss
Talking to children about Relationships and Sex
Guidance for Parents**

The Diocese of Guildford have produced

Permission to Discuss

Talking to children and young people about healthy relationships and sex

A Guide for Parents and Carers

The following slides contain information from this booklet.

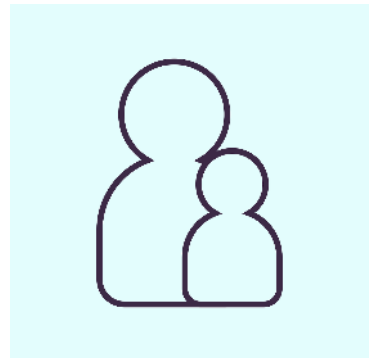


Context

- As a family of schools within The Diocese of Guildford, we believe every pupil has the right to a broad and rich education to be offered within a distinctly Christian context, valuing each child as an individual and enabling them to flourish by discovering and developing their God given gifts.
- A fundamental aspect of the quality of education our schools provide, is teaching our children and young people how to stay safe and healthy, including understanding and valuing identity, respect, and difference.

The role of parents and carers

- “The role of parents in the development of their children’s understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.”
- *RHSE Statutory Guidance, Department for Education, (updated July 2020)*



When is a good time to talk?



- Talk whenever your child is asking curious questions. All parents and carers want their child to be safe, so talking about healthy and safe relationships mustn't feel like a 'taboo' or 'no-go' zone for children.
- When you're running your child's bath or helping them with things like getting dressed or applying sun cream.
- When you are walking together, whether it's on the way home from school, or a weekend walk to the shops, you'll feel more at ease as you stroll and chat together.
- Car journeys are also a great time to talk.
- When your child is wearing their swimwear is a great time to talk about the idea that what's covered by your pants and your swimwear is private. People may overhear your conversation at a swimming pool, so bear this in mind as you talk.

When is a good time to talk?

- If they've had a lesson about personal relationships at school, ask them what they remember when they get home.
- If their favourite programme is handling a sensitive storyline encourage them to talk about anything that upsets them.
- Reading and discussing age-appropriate books and resources, some of which are referenced in this guide.
- Playing a computer game, or on an app, there may be opportunities to talk about how characters relate to each other.



Ten Top Tips for parents

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1. From the very beginning always refer to parts of their bodies by the correct terms, for example, boys have a penis and girls have a vagina.
 2. Ensure they are aware of the 4 parts of their body no one should touch unless they need help and allow them to: the genital area (penis, vagina), bottom, chest, and mouth.
 3. Reassure them they can come to you if ANYONE touches them or asks them to keep a secret. Secrets are not OK.
 4. Never expect or force them to kiss people goodbye etc. We suggest that blowing kisses, shaking hands or a “high five” can be a good alternative.
 5. Don't encourage or tease about “boyfriends” or “girlfriends”. All children will have friends who are boys and girls. Let them be children and enjoy their friendships, there is plenty of time for closer relationships when they get older.
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Ten Top Tips for parents

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6. Talk to your children about how your family values and the school's ethos affect relationships and the way we respect and behave with others.

7. Help children to understand and respect the values and make up of other families, different to your own.

8. Remember, not all children will identify with typical gender stereotypes, and that in later in life, not all young people will identify as being heterosexual.

9. Tell them they can always speak to you as a parent / carer, or a trusted adult within school, to ask about things that they have seen/heard and don't understand (again don't assume they know this).

10. As a parent or carer, keep the channels of communication going, be interested. Who are their friends at school? Who are their friends on-line? Make time to talk.

Answering children's questions

- When your child asks a question about something relating to relationships and sex, it is helpful to dig a bit deeper before you answer to make sure that you are answering what is *really* on their mind. Sometimes they just want to know about one thing. You don't need to tell them everything at once.
- Praise them for asking you the question.
- After you have answered ask them if they have any more questions.

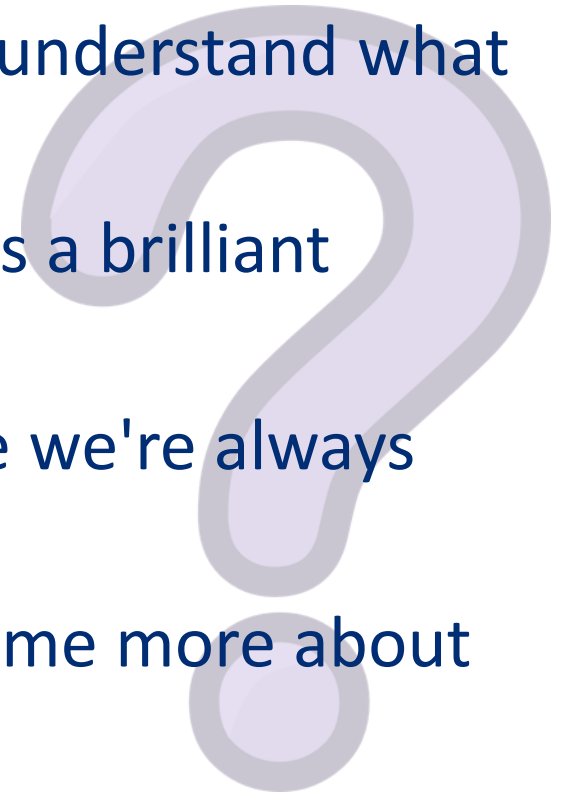
These sentences may be helpful as you respond.

- Great question - why do you want to know?
- I'll have to think about that for a while - let's talk about it again tomorrow.
- Interesting, where did you hear about that?
- I wonder what you mean? Can you say a bit more?
- I can tell you all about it if you are happy to listen; let's go for a walk and talk.



Some more helpful sentences

- Tell me a bit more about that so I can understand what you mean.
- Let's look it up together - this book has a brilliant chapter on that topic.
- Everyone's different so let's make sure we're always kind.
- Everyone's family is unique; tell me some more about what your friends said.



A few questions that children might ask and possible answers

- *Q. Why does my best friend have 2 dads?*
- A. Families can be different but valuing, being respectful and loving each other are most important.
- *Q. What is condom?*
- A. That's a really interesting question, where have you heard that word before? Sometime people want to have sex to show that they love each other but it's not the right time to make a baby. A condom stops a baby being made.



There are a few more examples in the booklet

- *Q. How do you know if someone fancies you?*
- A. Perhaps they look out for you, they may be a good friend, always thoughtful and kind towards you and want to spend time with you. This answer could be extended depending on the age of the child/young person and include conversations about appropriate close relationships in order to keep children safe.



There is more information in:

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[On the Diocesan Website](#)

