

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Let's say someone you care about wants to have sex and you don't know:

- What to do or say
- How it may change your feelings about yourself or your relationship
- How to prevent pregnancy or disease
- How to say "NO" without losing your partner

Some couples have trouble agreeing on a stopping point. What should you do?

The first thing to do is to stop and

REMEMBER: The way you get pregnant is through sexual contact.

ALSO: Anyone who is sexually active can get sexually transmitted diseases.

You know how you feel when you're sexually attracted to someone. But do you know all the facts? Knowing the facts about sexual activity can help you decide what to do, and what not to do.

If you can't talk to your parents, or your friend's parents, or another trusted adult about sex, you can still get the facts from:

Family Planning Health Services675-5395

Or, access their website at: www.fphs.org

Long-distance callers may call toll-free. . .(800) 246-5743

Emergency Contraception Hotline. . .(888) 323-4778

Confidential pregnancy and contraception services to teens are guaranteed by State law. Family Planning provides reproduction education, pregnancy prevention (abstinence, natural family planning, and contraception), emergency contraception, and sexually transmitted disease prevention services confidentially, based on ability to pay.

There are many levels of affection and touching before sexual intercourse occurs. You can stop at any level. Try to avoid situations where you have to decide when to stop. **BEFORE** you get into a difficult situation, talk about your feelings with your partner. Be sure to be specific about what seems right to you.

If you can't agree, you may have to say NO, although it's hard to say NO to someone you really like. Only you know how much you can handle, and you are the one who must deal with the consequences.

It is important to be sensitive to your partner when it comes to the question of sexual activity. When someone is not ready for sexual involvement, it is insensitive and unfair to pressure them. Forcing someone to have sex is illegal.

It is also illegal for anyone under 16 to have sexual intercourse *or any other sexual contact.*

Be aware that teachers, school counselors and health care workers have an obligation to report abuse whenever they suspect it has occurred, and that underage sex can be considered abuse.

For more information about the risks of being sexually active, see:

AIDS, page 1

PREGNANCY, page 42

SEXUAL ASSAULT LAWS, page 26

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES, page 53

SEXUALITY

The teen years are an important part of growing up for many reasons. Some of those reasons include the development of your body and changes in your emotions. These changes are all a part of your developing sexuality. This can be a weird time for everyone.



Many of the changes you are experiencing are sexual. Your body is developing into an adult, and your feelings can be very strong. Having good information and understanding these changes can make them seem less confusing.



The more you know about and like yourself, the more likely it is that you will make decisions that are right for you, especially the decisions that involve dating, relationships, and sexuality.

There are lots of messages around about love and sex. Friends, parents, religion, television, the internet, and magazines may offer different ideas about being in love or being sexually active.

It is important that you get the facts and sort through your feelings. You are the one who must make choices and be willing to live with the consequences, good or bad.

You don't need to be embarrassed or feel pressured into doing anything that you think is "too soon" or "too fast." There are many ways of showing someone you care about them or that you "fit in" without making yourself uncomfortable.

Talk with your parents or other adults whom you trust and respect. Ask at school about PEER SUPPORT programs where students help each other with their mutual concerns.

If you're still confused or uncomfortable about sex, or just need to talk to someone about it, call:

Family Planning Health Services 675-5395
Long-distance callers may call toll-free. . (800) 246-5743

Teens may make appointments to talk confidentially about sexuality, relationships and lifestyle issues.

GAY/LESBIAN/BISEXUAL FEELINGS

Sexuality can be especially confusing if you're feeling an attraction to someone of the same sex.

An attraction to someone of the same sex doesn't automatically make you gay or lesbian. Mature sexual feelings are just forming in your teen years, and some confusion at this time of your life is not at all unusual.

What's important to know is that if you are gay, lesbian, or bisexual, you are not alone. Gays and lesbians are all ages, shapes, colors, and religions; they work in all jobs and live in all neighborhoods. No doubt, some of the people you know are gay or lesbian or bisexual, and you may not even know it, because they don't look any different from anyone else.

More and more often, clergy are prepared to handle sexuality concerns, so if it's hard for you to talk with your parents or friends about your feelings, try your pastor, priest or rabbi.

If you still have questions or are searching for help to work through your sexual orientation, you can call:

Family Planning Health Services675-5395

Long-distance callers may call toll-free. . .(800) 246-5743

There is no charge for an appointment to talk with someone confidentially about your sexual feelings or behavior.

R.A.Y.S. (Runaway and Youth Services)848-7238

Long-distance callers may call toll-free. . .1-877-920-7238

Talk anonymously on a 24 hour hotline to discuss your concerns.



If you feel you are gay or lesbian, and want support and information, call:

Outreach Youth Central355-6867

Long-distance callers may call toll-free. . .(800) 551-3311

Addresses the needs of youth who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered, or questioning their identity pertaining to these areas of life.