

## SCRIPT # - WHAT IS SEX? FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

CULTURE REFRAMED

In this script, you are laying the groundwork for an ongoing conversation with your teen. You are letting them know that sex is not just vaginal-penile intercourse or a way to make babies. You are also letting them know that thinking things through and being able to talk about all the different aspects of being a sexual person is the best preparation for making healthy decisions.



parent

*Now that you are getting older (entering high school—or whatever stage your teen is going through), it's important to me that we can have open conversations about sex. I want you to know that you can always come to me with questions.*



teen

*I know I can. You don't need to worry.*



parent

*I appreciate that. I'm sure you have a lot of information. And it's also important to me that you hear my perspective. Sex is a huge topic with many different parts.*



teen

*No kidding.*



parent

*And even though it can seem like you know everything you need to know, it's my job to give you my perspective.*



teen

*You really don't need to do this. I'm good. I know what I need to know.*



parent

*Okay. Perhaps you do. So, humor me. For example, just trying to define "what is sex" is not necessarily so easy. When you hear someone say that they had sex, what do you think they actually mean?*



teen

[Answers will vary. For example, "They had sex—they did it, like how babies are made."]



parent

[Reflect back what your teen said. For example, "Absolutely, making babies might be one of the outcomes of having sex.] *However, sometimes I think people assume sex only refers to vaginal-penile intercourse. This is often what is taught in school. But when you only think about sex in that way, you don't consider all the other reasons and ways that people have sex.*

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE TO HYPERSEXUALIZED MEDIA AND PORN

*Yeah, I get that, but when you say you're having sex, most people think of it that way.*

teen

parent

*Right, but in my opinion, that leaves out too much stuff that you also need to think about when you're trying to figure things out.*

teen

*Like what?*

parent

*Well, we have to think about the fact that people decide to be sexual with someone in many different ways and for many different reasons. Most of the time, it doesn't have anything to do with making babies. Maybe they want to feel close, or maybe they want to experience the physical pleasure.*

teen

*Yeah, so what's wrong with that?*

parent

*Nothing! It's great that sex is pleasurable. If it weren't, and if we weren't hard-wired to want to experience sexual pleasure, human beings would have died out long ago.*

teen

*Yeah, so?*

parent

*So maybe rather than just thinking about sex as a way that babies are made, we should think about sex more openly. Regardless of gender or orientation, sexual activity really includes any way of being physical with someone where both partners (usually two) experience sexual pleasure.*

teen

*I guess.*

parent

*There will be many times in life when you have to decide whether you want to be sexual with someone. There are so many different physical and emotional reasons that people have sex. It can be hard to sort it all out.*

teen

*Okay. I get it. It's complicated.*

parent

*It **is** complicated, and complicated feelings are involved. How you decide to be sexual with someone has to be thought through and discussed. When you don't feel comfortable talking about something, there can be a lot of misunderstanding between people.*

teen

*It's not something a lot of people like talking about.*

parent

*Exactly. So even though it can be hard, getting comfortable talking about this now prepares you to be able to talk about sex one day with a partner.*

teen

[Perhaps your teen responds, or perhaps they just try to stop the conversation. For example, "Okay. I get what you're saying, but is that it? Can we stop now?"]



[If the teen is engaging with your questions and open to continuing the conversation, then you may wish to reference the script on discussing pleasure. If your teen is eager to conclude this conversation, then continue with these talking points.]

*I appreciate you being open to this conversation, and I really want to understand how you think about it. We don't have to agree, you know. I just want to be able to talk about this openly.*

*Yeah, Okay. Are we done?*



*Yes, we can be done for now. But I'm glad we started this conversation. There will be many times in your life when you are making decisions about being sexual with someone. Those are your private decisions, but it's my job to have had these conversations with you.*

*Is that necessary?*



*Yes. At the end of the day, I have to look in the mirror and know that I have done the best job I can as your parent. Talking to you about this is part of my job. So, thank you.*

## ACCESS OTHER SCRIPTS IN THE SERIES FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

Script #2 - The Harms of Porn

Script #3 - Counteracting Media's Messages about Relationships

Script #4 - Communication and Consent

Script #5 - Sexual Decision Making

Script #6 - Understanding Sexual Pleasure

Script #7 - Biological Differences for Sexual Arousal

Script #8 - Protection and Contraception

Script #9: Sexting and Managing your Digital Footprint