

SCRIPT #5 - Sexual Decision Making FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

CULTURE REFRAMED

In this script, you are sharing with your teen that the decision to have sex is important and should be carefully thought through beforehand. You are exploring the different reasons that people have sex and are emphasizing the importance of clear communication. Before starting, discuss with a friend or partner what criteria you want to provide to your teen about when it's okay to be sexual with someone. If you have religious considerations or strong feelings about when it's okay to have sex, read through this script first and decide where you will insert those beliefs. Your teen might not agree with you, and that's okay. Your opinion still matters. Consent and protection from infections and pregnancy are critical parts of this conversation, and these topics are covered in two other scripts: Communication and Consent, and Protection and Contraception. Please read through those scripts before you begin this conversation.



parent

I'm wondering if you have ever thought through how you would know if it was the right time to have sex?

Seriously? I do not want to talk to you about this.

teen



parent

I get that. You are your own person, and you will make your own decisions. But I do think it's essential to think about this ahead of time. That way, when the time comes, you have thought it through. What are the things you would consider?

I don't know. I guess it just depends on how I was feeling.

teen



parent

Feelings are important. What kind of feelings do you think would matter?

I don't know. I guess feeling like it was something I wanted to do.

teen



parent

For sure. It would have to be something you really wanted. That's important. Wanting to please someone or feeling like you're supposed to do something—or even just feeling turned on—could get in the way of knowing, in the moment, if you really want to be intimate with someone and how far you want to go.

I think you just know.

teen

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parent

Maybe, but it couldn't hurt to think it through beforehand. Because in the moment, there are a lot of emotions and hormones that can be very exciting but may also stop you from thinking clearly.



teen

Yeah, but you could change your mind.



parent

And you might change your mind. But even then, you could pause and ask yourself. "Am I going past where I thought I wanted to go because I really want to? Or is something else going on." Of course, drinking or drugs could really mess up your thinking in a moment like that.



teen

You don't have to worry about that.



parent

Good. Because alcohol and drugs literally shut down your capacity to pause and reflect on your behavior.



teen

I know.



parent

People are sexual with each other for all kinds of reasons. Sometimes just for pleasure, other times because they are looking for emotional intimacy. It can get complicated.



teen

It also depends on what you mean by sex.



parent

Right. There are all different levels of this. You can just want to kiss someone, and see what it's like. Of course, you always need consent for everything.



teen

People just don't think about it this much.



parent

I know, and that can be okay if both people are on the same page. It's when each person has a different idea about what's going on that it gets tricky. People can be thinking that the more physical you are with someone, the more you have emotional feelings for the person. Other people think it's fine to be sexual with someone just for pleasure, without the need for any emotional connection.



teen

What's wrong with that?



parent

[Here, you should speak to your own values and alter the following script to reflect those values.] It's not about being wrong. I think people have a right to make their personal choice about this, as long as you communicate clearly and honestly. Otherwise, you can really be hurt, or hurt the other person, and that's not cool.



teen

I can agree with that. But it's not always easy to know.



Exactly. I'm glad you can see that. When it comes to sexual relationships, communication can be hard. It's important to think about how the more physically intimate you are with someone, the more emotions may come up for people. When two people share their bodies fully with each other, this can be a very emotionally vulnerable experience.



So now you're grossing me out.



That's okay. Just think of it this way: if you can stand talking to me about this, you will probably be able to speak to a partner about it one day. That's not so bad.



Is there anything else?



A little bit more. As your parent, I want you to know what I think, and I want you to know that you don't have to agree with me, but talking is important.



Okay.



Deciding to have sex is important. It should never be something that just happens. In my opinion, sex is always better when you feel emotionally close to the person—when you trust them—and when you can both talk about what each person likes.



Got it.



Knowing how far you want to go beforehand is something you should always think about. That way, even if you change your mind, you can pause and decide rather than just letting it happen.



Okay.



I appreciate you talking to me about this. There is much more to this conversation. For instance, how you understand consent, and how getting to know your own body is vital before you share that experience with someone else. But those can be other conversations. For now, just remember that when you have confidence in what you really want and can communicate that—and really listen to the other person—then being sexual can be an incredible experience.



Right. Got it. Enough for now.

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