

Why Parents are Important

- Research shows that what parents talk about with youth can help shape their attitudes and behaviors—and even help keep them safe from HIV!
- Even though some children might not seem comfortable talking about sex or HIV, many kids want to learn about HIV and want to learn from their parents.



Want to learn more?

Learn from reliable sources. Talk to your health care providers or go to:

www.actagainstaids.org/basics/

www.kff.org/womenshealth/3040.cfm

www.cdcnpin.org/parentsmatter/

Websites on sexual health
for young adults:

www.avert.org/teens.htm

[www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/youth/
index.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/youth/index.htm)



Positive Parenting: How PARENTS can help prevent HIV & promote sexual health in youth



Some things to consider

- Talking about how to prevent HIV with youth can be hard for parents, including parents who are HIV+.
- Your child does not need to know about your HIV status in order for you to start talking about sex.
- If you are not ready to talk with your child about how to prevent HIV, there are people to help you. You can ask a case manager, nurse, counselor, or doctor for help.

Advice from Parents with HIV

“I have her voice her opinion and keep talking, because some things have got to stick. You don’t just have one-sided conversations about their body.”

- Mother

“Respect them and be honest with them. Always try to remember where you were at when you were their age...Because that was one of the hardest things I found growing up — that I couldn’t talk to the adults in my world about what was happening.”

—Father

Information for families affected by HIV/AIDS

With youth ages 10-18



When should I talk?

It can be helpful to have these conversations when you are in good health, when you and your child are on good or “normal” terms, and *before* your child seems interested in sex. About 33% of teens report having sex by age 14.

What should I talk about?

Some topics that you might want to talk about include:

- How HIV is transmitted
- Staying safe from HIV at home (e.g., cleaning up blood or cuts)
- What condoms are and how to use them
- What birth control is (and that it does not protect against HIV)
- What you think about your child having sex or using condoms
- Where they can go to learn more

What are some good ways?

- Families have different ways of talking and the best way to talk can vary by child.
- Programs for parents suggest that talks should be interactive (e.g., both parent and child talking).

What can I do to involve my child in talks about HIV?

1. Start a simple back and forth conversation.

For example, parents have asked:

- “What do you know about HIV?”
- “Have you learned about HIV in school? What have you learned?”

2. Use hands-on or visual examples.

- “Here’s a brochure I got from the health department. Let’s look at this together.”
- “There are lots of websites to learn about HIV. Let me show you some that I trust.”



2. Gently quiz your child.

- “Do you remember if you can get HIV from oral sex?”
- “What do you think you could do if you and your boyfriend were in the heat of the moment and wanted to have sex?”

4. Check in on your child's thoughts, feelings, questions.

- “Do you have any questions about HIV? Is there anything you were wondering that we did not talk about?”
- “It’s important to be able to talk about what’s going on with your body. What are you most concerned about right now?”



5. Set the stage for future talks.

- “We’ve talked about a lot of things and there is still more to learn. It’s okay to ask me questions about HIV in the future.”
- “I’ve given you a lot of information. Why don’t you spend some time reading it and come back and let me know what you think.”

HIV is preventable.
Let’s keep our youth safe!