

HOW should I talk to my parents about SRH?

Top Tips!

Getting started is the hardest part.

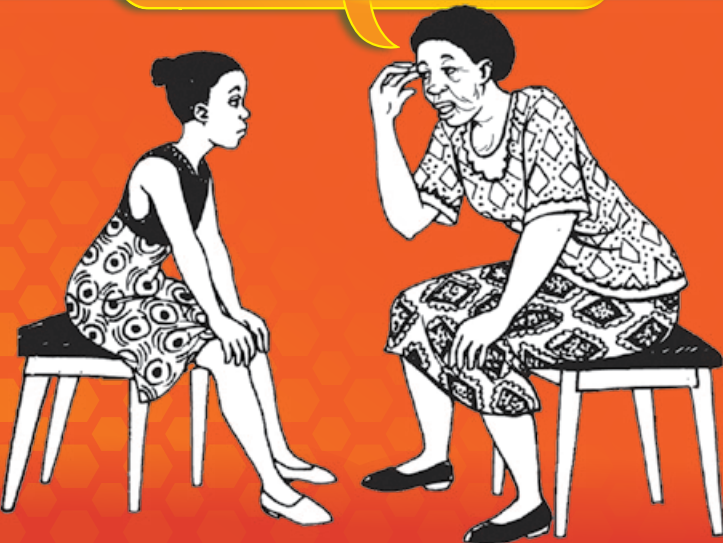
Here are some suggestions:

**“I heard someone say
(whatever it is you want to talk about).
Do you think that’s true?”**

**“Some of the kids at school are
doing ... (whatever it is you want to talk
about). Can I talk to you about that?”**

**“What was dating like when
you were my age?”**

**“How did you know that dad
/ mum / your partner was the
right person for you?”**



**“Our teacher told us about
(whatever it is you want to talk about).
I have questions that I’d rather
ask you about – is that OK?”**

OR

When a newspaper article or radio or television programme on the issue appears, bring it to your parents’ attention and discuss the issue with them,

OR

Start the conversation by showing them this leaflet or any other material from the community CSE toolkit, and asking if you can talk more about it.

If you are already sexually active and don’t feel able to discuss with your caregiver, at least visit your local clinic and get accurate advice on contraception and preventing sexually transmitted infections and HIV!



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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Why? Who? Where? What? And How? to Talk to Parents and Guardians About Sexual and Reproductive Health

Did you know?

- × Of the 158 million young people in east and southern Africa, 52 get infected with HIV every hour.
- × One in five girls are pregnant by the time they are 17 years old.
- × Pregnancy and childbirth are the second biggest cause of death for 15-19 year old girls globally.

Most young people lack accurate information about their sexual and reproductive health. To make informed decisions about your sexual health, you need accurate information.

Adolescence is a time of huge physical, behavioural and emotional changes. Comprehensive sexuality education means getting age-appropriate information about these changes and about sexuality, including: values, attitudes and skills; having relationships; culture and society; human rights and human development; sexual behaviour and sexual and reproductive health.

Ensuring your sexual and reproductive health is about knowledge, skills and accessing health services; AND about your ability to make positive, informed, safe and responsible decisions about sex and sexuality!

WHY talk?

Better one uncomfortable hour of talking now, than a lifetime of regret because you have HIV, or you or your partner is pregnant!

There are lots of good reasons to talk to your parents or caregivers about sex and sexual and reproductive health.

Test them out to see how open they will be by showing them this leaflet, or making a comment about a risky situation on TV. If they seem unwilling to talk, think of another adult you respect and whom you can talk with – your aunt or uncle, a teacher, or a community nurse.

- ✗ Your parents, caregivers or other respected adults are more likely to give you accurate, truthful information.
- ✗ They care about you and want the best for you – including making sure you stay safe.
- ✗ When you have an open relationship with your parents and caregivers, you will have a deeper understanding of each other, making it easier to talk about other, more serious issues and concerns.

WHO should I talk to?

It might be easier to approach just one of your parents, rather than trying to speak to both of them at the same time. Girls usually talk with their mothers and boys with their fathers, but not always!

Think which parent you feel most relaxed speaking to about sensitive things, or which one you have talked to about personal issues in the past.

WHERE should I talk to them?

Choosing the right moment and place can make all the difference.

Don't start the discussion when your parent or caregiver is busy, distracted or stressed. Choose a relaxed time and place where you will not be interrupted.

Or suggest something fun – going for a walk, cooking together or some other activity you like to do together.

Examples of issues to discuss

- ✗ Pressure, like pressure from your friends to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, or pressure to have sex.
- ✗ Access to health services – when to go for a check up.

WHAT should I talk about?

This is an opportunity for you to show you are taking responsibility for your health. Your parents will be happy to know that you are well informed to make safe, responsible sexual choices – including choosing not to have sex until you are ready and in a suitable, trusting and loving relationship.

- ✗ Explain that you want to be informed, prepared and mature about sexual and reproductive health and that you are not asking because you plan to rush into sex.
- ✗ Be honest, but be sensitive and respectful.
- ✗ Do talk about: understanding how you know if you are ready for sex; avoiding risky situations; how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and HIV; contraceptives; what to do if your partner is pushing you into sex, etc.

