

How and When to Tell Your Kids about Sex: A lifelong approach to shaping your child's sexual character.

By Stan and Brenna Jones; Revised and Updated in 2019

This cover letter is provided to give an overview of this book series and explains how parents can use it as they teach their children about God's design for sexuality. We acknowledge that this topic can be sensitive and, sometimes, anxiety-provoking for parents. We also want to affirm that there are few topics today as important for parents to be teaching the truth to their children.

Today, there are numerous books written to help parents talk to their children about sexuality. No book is perfect... including the ones that are being reviewed here. However, we have found this book series to be helpful to parents in training up their children to know God's design for sexuality. Parents will need to determine what information they feel comfortable using and when to present it to their children. Prayerful discernment is needed and encouraged.

In a perfect world, it would be nice to wait until children were much older before addressing this topic with them. However, in today's society, to delay only puts our children at risk of having seeds of misinformation sown in them. In addition, while not found in every case, common threads among many children that have been sexually abused or who sexually abused others were a lack of accurate information about sexuality, the presence of distorted information about sexuality, and a lack of an ongoing dialogue with their parents about Godly, healthy sexuality.

About the Book Series:

This series contains one book for parents and four, age-range specific, books for parents to read with their children. The books for children are set up in a progressive developmental format. That means that as your children get older and they progress through the series, the books provide increasingly more information about sexuality in terms that children in that age-range can understand. The age ranges on the four children's books are suggestions. Parents need to determine what timing is appropriate for each of their children. We recommend that parents read through the children books before reading them to their children in order to be familiar with the content.

Parent Book: How and When to Tell Your Kids about Sex

Book 1: The Story of Me Ages 3-5

Book 2: Before I Was Born Ages 5-8

Book 3: What's the Big Deal Ages 8-12

Book 4: Facing the Facts Ages 12-16

Concerns parents often express about talking to their children about sex:

Concern: "This information is too detailed, too much and too soon for children to understand."

Truth: Children are less anxious about receiving this material than parents are in giving it. God designed an inquisitive thought process in children. By providing them with accurate, Godly information about sexuality, you are "inoculating" them against the lies that the world has to offer. That is, they can more easily recognize and resist the world's lies when they have a sure footing in the truth. If you start a dialogue about sexuality with your children when they are young, they are more likely to bring their questions to you and to listen to your advice on this topic.

Concern: "My parents never talked to me about sex and I turned out all right. Besides, everyone seems to figure these things out on their own anyway."

Truth: In past generations, it was more likely that parents did not talk to their children about sex. However, things are very different today in our sex-saturated society. You may have turned out "all right" but your child may not be so fortunate. If your parents never talked to you about sex, it is time to break a generational pattern and begin sharing God's design for

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sexuality instead of leaving it to chance.

Concern: “If children read these books, they may be more likely to start talking about it with others or start experimenting.”

Truth: Children are NOT more likely to talk about sexuality or to experiment with sexual behavior when they have been appropriately taught this information. The most vocal kids are often the most misinformed and are NOT the ones you want your child “learning” from. Appropriate sex education, as presented within the beauty of God’s design, is one of the best ways to prevent child sexual abuse and harmful acting out behaviors.

Concern: “Details of this nature will erode my child’s innocence.”

Truth: In most cases the apprehensions that parents feel about talking to their children about sex is due to the parents’ own experiences, feelings, and fears about sex. Remember, what you are teaching is God’s design for sexuality!

Concern: “What if my child wants to know more and starts asking more specific questions?”

Truth: The world isn’t afraid to talk to your children about sex. While some apprehension is expected, parents need to overcome their fears and do what is right for their children. A parent’s greatest privilege is in being their child’s first teacher in all things and especially in this area.

Concern: “I know everyone who my children are ever with and monitor all the places they go, so I’m not worried about them hearing things from others.”

Truth: While it is good for parents to know where their children are and who they are with, at some point, parents aren’t going to be by their child’s side when he or she needs to make important life-decisions. Teaching them in the way they should go is the best way to ensure they make wise choices.

If you are not ready to read one or more of the books to your children:

Parents sometimes tell us that feel the material in the children’s books is “too much information, too soon.” Even if you are not ready to read one of the books to your children, we still encourage you to do the following:

- (1) Read the sections of the book for parents that are relevant to the ages of the children you have.
- (2) Read the children’s book that you would be scheduled to read to your child next.

Taking these two steps allows you have the information you need readily at hand so that you are prepared and watchful for opportunities to teach your children biblical truth about sexuality.

Conclusion:

Children that have been raised with the truth are best prepared to react with courage and confidence in resisting the distorted damaging sexualized opinions of the world. A solid foundation in knowing God’s design for their sexual development will bring honor to God and lead to blessing in future relationships. Parents have been blessed with this opportunity, responsibility, and calling to teach their children about sex.

If you have questions, please contact Craig Stickling, LCPC or Ted Witzig Jr., Ph.D. at ACCFS.