

10 Tips For Parents To Help Their Children Avoid Teen Pregnancy

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has reviewed recent research about parental influences on children's sexual behavior and talked to many experts in the field, as well as to teens and parents themselves. From these sources, it is clear that there is much parents and adults can do to reduce the risk of kids becoming pregnant before they've grown up.

Presented here as ten tips, many of these lessons will seem familiar because they articulate what parents already know from experience - like the importance of maintaining strong, close relationships with children and teens, setting clear expectations for them, and communicating honestly and often with them about important matters. Research supports these common sense lessons: not only are they good ideas generally, but they can also help teens delay becoming sexually active and encourage those who are having sex to use contraception carefully. You may want to check out their website at <http://www.teenpregnancy.org>.

1. Be clear about your own sexual values and attitudes.
2. Talk with your children early and often about sex, and be specific.
3. Supervise and monitor your children and adolescents.
4. Know your children's friends and their families.
5. Discourage early, frequent, and steady dating.

6. Take a strong stand against your daughter dating a boy significantly older than she is. And don't allow your son to develop an intense relationship with a girl much younger than he is.

7. Help your teenagers to have options for the future that are more attractive than early pregnancy and parenthood.

8. Let your kids know that you value education highly.

9. Know what your kids are watching, reading, and listening to.

10. These first nine tips for helping your children avoid teen pregnancy work best when they occur as part of strong, close relationships with your children that are built from an early age.

A final note: It's never too late to improve a relationship with your child or teenager. Don't underestimate the great need that children feel - at all ages - for a close relationship with their parents and for their parents' guidance, approval, and support.

Source: The National Campaign To Prevent Teen Pregnancy; www.teenpregnancy.org

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