

PARENT ENGAGEMENT LETTER

Talking with your kids about sex can be daunting. Fear of messing it up (or them) can keep us from doing anything! We can have good intentions about creating a culture of grace and openness for our kids but get stuck on the approach or words.

Here are some of the reasons that keep parents from engaging with their kids on the topic of sex.

- I feel unsure how to start the conversation.
- I am afraid of saying the wrong thing.
- I'm worried that sharing my experiences will make them lose respect for me or make them feel they have permission to do the same things.
- I'm concerned I will expose them to information too early.

While many parents hope their kids will learn about sex in a God-honoring way from the Church, research shows youth pastors believe parents should take the lead.



Youth pastors overwhelmingly believe that parents should take the lead in educating teens about sexual health and behaviors (nearly nine in 10 youth pastors say this). In reality, though, seven in 10 youth pastors believe friends and social media have the biggest influence on learning, tracking with what young people say is the greatest influence on their views of sex.

Beyond the Porn Phenomenon

One way or another, our teens will learn about sex. We can't leave the teaching up to the media and friends.

Pure Desire is here to help. We've gathered information and resources we found most helpful throughout our decades of experience and put them in one place for you in our Youth Leader Library. The best thing you can do is watch and read through resources, educate yourself, and be equipped to have simple conversations as your kids' experiences come up. It's not one big talk but creating a culture of safety and ongoing conversations.

One easy guideline we like to give parents is to talk to their kids about what was happening when you were their age.

Even if you don't have the exact experiences your kids have or will have, sharing your experiences and talking to them about how you felt during that experience and what you think would have helped you shows them you are safe for these kinds of conversations.

It's okay if you don't do things perfectly, and you need to tell your teen you'll find answers for them. Being a safe place for your teens to come to with anything is the best thing you can offer them.