








SEX ED AT HOME

• BINGO •

 Respect your child's boundaries	 Name the genitals correctly	 Talk openly about porn
 Validate emotions	 Talk about menstruation	 Celebrate body diversity
 Promote self-confidence	 Celebrate families' diversity	 Start conversations

Respect your child's boundaries

Every person has different preferences when it comes to physical touch, and that includes young children. While touch is a fundamental need for babies and toddlers, it is important to teach children that they are allowed to set boundaries and have the self-confidence to stick to them. This helps them advocate for themselves and plays an important role in teaching them how to identify and get away from inappropriate or dangerous interactions with other people.

A child may not be comfortable showing affection to a person (even if that person is a relative), or they may have moments where they do not want to be tickled or touched. While it can be difficult to hear your child saying that they do not want a hug or a kiss, consent should be respected. By asking for consent, you will help your child identifying and vocalising their boundaries. These skills not only help them in the present moment but also benefit them in the long-term.

Name the genitals correctly

There are a number of reasons why it is important to teach your child the correct terms, that is: penis and vulva (not vagina) for the external parts. The first reason is, those are the accurate names. Euphemistic nicknames for the genitals might give them the impression that these parts of the body are something to be embarrassed about or ashamed of.

Using the correct anatomical name for all parts of the body helps your child building a positive body image and opens the door for honest conversations about their bodies and/or sexuality. Also, knowing the correct name of the genitals and understanding that these parts of their bodies are private can empower them against sexual abuse.

Talk openly about porn

The idea of a child either unintentionally or deliberately viewing porn might seem extremely remote to parents. However, a research by the British Board of Film Classification shows that children and teenagers are watching and stumbling across pornography from an early age - in some cases as young as seven or eight.

Reassure your child that it's ok to feel curious about sex. Your child need to know that there is no judgment from your side. Explain them that porn-sex is often different to how people have sex in real life, and that sex and relationships should be built around trust and respect.

Validate emotions

Validation of feelings is an essential component of positive mental health for both children and adults. Validation shows your child that they are important enough for you to listen to and understand.

Sometimes we confuse validation with confirmation of thoughts, feelings, or emotions. While validation is confirming that the other person has feelings and emotions that are their own, we are not confirming whether their feelings are right or wrong. Remember, feelings are always subjective.

Talk about menstruation

Talking about periods should not be a one-off conversation at a particular age. Instead, start the conversation early (certainly years before puberty) and slowly build on your child's understanding. Also, make sure to link menstruation with how reproduction, in general, works.

All genders need reliable information about periods.

Children should know what is going to happen to their bodies before reaching puberty. If you are unsure about how much your child knows about periods, ask them. You can see what information they already have and build on that knowledge.

Celebrate body diversity

From early age, you might start to notice your child becoming more aware and curious about how their bodies look different from others. Sometimes, they may look at, point, or ask questions about other people's bodies and the way they look. This is the perfect time to start teaching children about diversity and all the incredible things that make them who they are.

You can help your child learn that there is not one 'ideal' way to look or be. After all, everybody is unique and this is what makes humans and life so interesting and exciting. One of the best ways to celebrate diversity of appearance is to talk about inner beauty and qualities other than appearance.

Promote self-confidence

Self-esteem is how children see themselves—including what they think of themselves and their ability to do things. Self-esteem is shaped by how much they feel loved, and how much support and encouragement (or criticism) they receive from important people in their life, like their parents and teachers.

Knowing how much you love them gives your child a sense of security and belonging that is crucial to their view of themselves. Your unconditional love lays the groundwork for future healthy relationships.

Celebrate families' diversity

Families come in many different structures and sizes. Young children often have questions when they notice families that seem different than their own. This is a great opportunity to share positive values about families, diversity, and inclusion with your child.

Children tend to thrive when they come to understand there are different types of families and that all families are wonderful, as long as the people in them love and care about each other. This repeated message helps children feel secure, even when their family configuration changes.

Start conversations

Talking about sex with your children is important. Children who have open and positive conversations with their parents about sexuality are more likely to make safer decisions. Parents should approach sexuality as an ongoing conversation starting from birth. As children progress to adolescence, parents can provide more in-depth information and guidance.

Many think that talking about sex means only talking about the 'act of having sex'. In fact, talking about sex includes and involves topics such as: human anatomy, relationships, contraception, menstruation, STIs, pregnancy, consent, masturbation, pornography, gender identity, sexual orientation, pleasure...

Why you should not wait for questions? In order to ask questions your child needs to have some previous understanding. Also your child is more likely to ask you questions if they know they can discuss that particular issue with you. As you would do with other topics, use day-to-day situations to start this conversation.

Of course, sex education involves more discussion topics than the ones mentioned above. This is a list of ideas you might want to begin with. The key message is that sex education should not be 'a talk' but an ongoing conversation that should begin from the day they are born.

Do you need further advise? [Book](#) a coaching session with us.