

JACK'S CORNER

QUESTION: My 4th grade son has been caught joking about sex. I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised, but I was. I want to talk with him, but I need some suggestions.

ANSWER: Most kids know far more than their parents think they do about sex. Unfortunately, most of what they know (or think they know) doesn't come from godly sources. It comes from peers, TV, music videos, magazines and bathroom walls. Horrifying thought isn't it. I continue to be saddened by kind of movies and TV young children are exposed to, often right in their own homes. Too often, Christian parents and the church are conspicuously silent about much of this topic, but the media sure aren't. Night after night, program after program, our children are made very aware of every aspect of sexuality. Kids are hungry for information about sex, and they will find out what they want to know from any source that will give it to them. As Christian parents, we want them to understand sexuality in the context of God's Word. **Sexual behavior is not a matter of opinion or preference or age, it is mandated in Scripture.**

At the 4th grade level, your son is aware enough about sexuality that he should have numerous heart-to-heart talks (in language he can understand) about genitalia (parts and function), arousal, masturbation and nocturnal emissions, orgasm, virginity, pornography, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy all in the context of God's holy plan. God **WANTS TO PROVIDE FOR US** a sexual life that is within the context of a committed marriage (It is God who makes marriages.) that is free from past guilt, free from sexually transmitted diseases, free from fear, and free to get better with time and practice. He also **WANTS TO PROTECT US** from the guilt of past sexual encounters, disease, unwanted pregnancies, emotional scars, and sin (The Bible says sexual immorality is a sin against God. GEN. 39:9 and many more.)

If you're worried about what kind of language and just how much you should tell him, there are some great Christian resources available, including the materials SOTHCS sends home to you. Parents are essential in helping to form a child's sexual attitude, morals and desire. Although mothers are often "stuck" with the role of Sex-Ed. teacher by default (Dads chicken out.), research indicates that fathers are the more influential parent in determining their child's attitude about sex and the kind of partner he/she will choose.

Realize that sex-ed. is an on-going process with your child. Be open and honest. **MODEL** godly affection and sexual purity in your life. Help your child come up with a set of Christian values and expectations. Teach them how to set limits and say "no!" Use **age-appropriate** TV and movies as conversation starters. Insist on standards of modesty in dress. Help him/her understand and recognize behavior like flirting, seduction and promiscuity. Talk seriously about sexual perversions and abuse. Pray about your child's future spouse with him/her. Familiarize yourself with some of the great chastity programs available through your church or Christian publishers. Equip your child for life in this sexually-charged world! If you won't, the media will.

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