

# Little Talks to have with your 13- to 15-year-old.

1.

## Support healthy body image.

**Reinforce your child's self-esteem.** Compliment their whole self. Their appearance, intelligence, and talents are all tenuous for them right now. They need frequent reminders from you that you think they're amazing.

2.

## Discuss drugs and alcohol.

**Peers are extremely influential at this age.** If your teen hasn't been taught about drug and alcohol use, they may not be equipped to make the right choice when a situation arises. Also help them understand the connection between substance use and risky sexual behaviors.

3.

## Talk about puberty.

**As they're changing and experiencing puberty, make sure they know what's going on with their bodies.** Teens may not ask questions, so you might need to bring it up with them.

4.

## Talk about relationships, consent, and respect.

**Model for them what a healthy relationship looks like.** Educate them about consent – for themselves and others. Teach them the role respect should play in their relationships.

5.

## Address appropriate boundaries and sexual abuse.

**Empower them to set boundaries with the people in their lives.** Talk openly about sexual abuse and what they should do if it occurs or has occurred.

6.

## Reinforce family values.

**Every family has a value system.** Younger teens often push against these values. Reminding them of what your values are and why you believe they are important is essential to open communication. With that said, make it safe for them to communicate with you if they choose to go against your values.

7.

## Talk about media.

**Have discussions about how sexuality, body image, and gender roles are portrayed.** Include a discussion of media that portrays sex and the dangers that can come from viewing women, men, sex, and relationships in violent, demeaning, or non-consensual ways.

8.

## Discuss sexual health and intercourse.

**This can be difficult to talk about, but it's imperative that you educate your teen about sex and contraception.** A number of teens will have sex for the first time at this age, and it's important that they know the dangers of unprotected sex, precautions they should take in relationships, and the pros and cons of delaying sex.