

Sexual Health Rights and Principles

There are six basic sexual health principles that can help you guide your children in making healthy decisions. Within each of these principles, safety, trust, communication, respect, and accurate information are all key to achieving the sexual health and happiness of everyone involved. Think through how these can relate to you and if there are other rights you would like to add!

Consent:

Consent is the full, continuous, mutual agreement to sexual activity between the individuals involved. Consent includes the right to:

- Choose what to participate in, not participate in, or to abstain from altogether
- Change your mind at any time
- Fully understand what you are agreeing to

Non-Exploitation:

Exploitive relationships use coercion and power differentials to benefit one individual over another. You have the right to non-exploitive relationships and to:

- Feel safe in your sexual activities
- Not be taken advantage of due to age, gender, religion, ability, race, etc.
- Voice your needs, concerns, and preferences as they relate to your sexuality
- Not please others at your own expense

Protection:

Protection from STIs, HIV, and unwanted pregnancy comes through medically accurate education, information about the risk each participating member poses to the other, and access to appropriate healthcare and resources. You have the right to:

- Ask about the risk your partners pose to your sexual health
- Deny sexual contact without the use of protection
- Educate yourself and others about types of protection

Honesty:

Honesty is being truthful within sexual relationships. Partners should voluntarily share important information in an environment of safety and trust. You have the right to:

- Be honest with yourself and your partners
- Give and receive accurate information, even when stakes are high
- Ask questions of your sexual partners that impact your sexual and emotional health

Values:

Sexual activities can have different meanings for different people. Sharing sexual values can help to clarify what is acceptable for each person in the relationship and create clear expectations. You have the right to:

- Take time to know your own and your partners' values around sexuality
- Have your values respected without being belittled or condemned
- Feel safe sharing the values that you have and why you have them

Pleasure:

Safe sexual experiences built on trust have the ability to bring enjoyment and satisfaction to everyone involved. You have the right to:

- Find your personal sexual preferences, expressions, and desires
- Feel safe when exploring sexually
- Experience consensual pleasure without pain