

A pink ceramic mug is positioned on the left side of the image, partially overlapping an open book. The book's pages are visible, showing some text. The background is a clean, white surface with a subtle vertical shadow line.

# NOT YOUR MAMA'S SEX TALK

**A guide to having healthy  
conversations about sex  
with your kids.**

By: Rachel Gunn



## **Be Real. Be Bold!**

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You are your kids' first line of defense.

Your job is to educate them, equip them and empower them. Don't shy away from this. Be real with your kids and be bold when you talk about sex!


With the invention of the internet and social media, our kids have more access than ever to sexual content. As parents, what can we do to help them? Banning media from the home is not a realistic option. Kids are likely still getting access from their friends and classmates. Avoiding the issue altogether is impossible. Even content blocking services cannot catch everything. Parents, you should be approaching this dilemma in a head-on way so that your children can learn about sexual culture and relationships from their most trusted source: **you**.

Research shows that one of the most effective ways to prevent our kids from

developing an unhealthy view of sex is having regular conversations with their parents. For many parents this idea is likely to induce some level of anxiety. We don't want to answer those tough and embarrassing questions. We know we need to have the talk, but we just can't seem to make it happen. If this is you, then you have come to the right place! This guide will help you gain some confidence and develop some effective strategies for talking with your kids about sex.

**You are the source  
your kids trust**

**THE MOST**



**Your words don't  
fall on deaf ears.  
They fall on  
fertile soil.**

Much of what you do as a parent is seed planting. Your words are sinking in on some level. And when the time is right, those words of wisdom, encouragement, and insight will come to mind and serve them well. So don't be discouraged if much of what you are saying seems to be falling on deaf ears. Really, your words are falling into fertile soil to sprout up later, when the time is right. **So keep planting those seeds!**

# Tips for Success

## **Prepare ahead of time.**

### **Plan.**

Think through how you want to introduce the talk. Will it be around a special event? Will be a casual evening? We planned our talk for Valentine's night. A friend took her daughter on a weekend girls' trip. Another friend just picked a date and went for it. It doesn't matter really how you do it. Just that you do it! Choose something that fits your personality and capabilities. **DO NOT** set yourself up for failure by trying for something that is outside your comfort zone!

If you struggle setting the date and sticking to it, consider asking a friend to be an accountability partner. Set your dates together and hold each other accountable to be ready by the date. You may even enjoy doing your research and planning together.

### **Research.**

Decide what you want to share and how you will share it. Will you go full scientific or keep it vague? Will you use handouts or create a visual with your words? Again, stay within your comfort zone. The **how** is not as important as actually **having the talk**. Then take some time to research. Be over-prepared but be ready to scrap a good bit of it. Once you get into the conversation you may not need all the science and info!

## **Be open and honest.**

Honesty is always the best policy. Your kids may ask some tough and embarrassing questions, but answer them honestly. Be age appropriate as well. It's okay to leave some things out and tell your kids that you will share more later, when they are older. But whatever you do share, be open and honest about it. One good thing about our choices, whether good or bad, we have the experience of having lived with the consequences of them. And with that comes the gift of wisdom. We can share with our kids the positive and negative affects of our choices. We have real life examples of how choices impact our lives.



# Tips for Success

## **Keep the conversation going.**

Whenever you start having the conversation with your kids, remember that it is an ongoing talk. One and done will not cut it with our kids these days. Once you have the talk, be prepared to field some questions over the next couple of days and maybe even weeks, depending on how your kids process information. Be open and willing to answer their questions. Be ready to have sex worked into everyday conversations; and get okay with it. When you can create a more natural atmosphere around a topic, you encourage open communication. And while open communication about sex may be awkward for you, it is imperative that your kids have a safe space to ask and learn about sex. And, as a bonus, you get to guide the narrative. When you start young and keep the communication open, your kids will keep coming to you for information.

## **Tackle the hard stuff.**

This is tough, but so very much needed! Culture today is not shying away from the gritty, dirty, shameful sex topics and we can't either! When they ask about things that make you cringe, be calm. Try not to shut the conversation down. You can control the amount of content you share, but be careful not to avoid it altogether. If they are asking, then they have likely heard something. It is a good opportunity for you to show your kids that you are the keeper of knowledge and that you are willing to share that knowledge with them. As part of our conversation, we told our girls that our job is to equip them and that means preparing them for things they will likely hear, see or experience. While we prepare them the best we can, we also invite them to ask us anything. If they hear something or see something, we will be happy to explain it to them; they just need to ask! If you make this promise, be sure to follow through with it. When they come to you and ask, DO NOT focus on where or how they saw something. Focus on sharing the information. Follow up later if you need to, but don't approach it within the initial conversation.



# Tips for Success

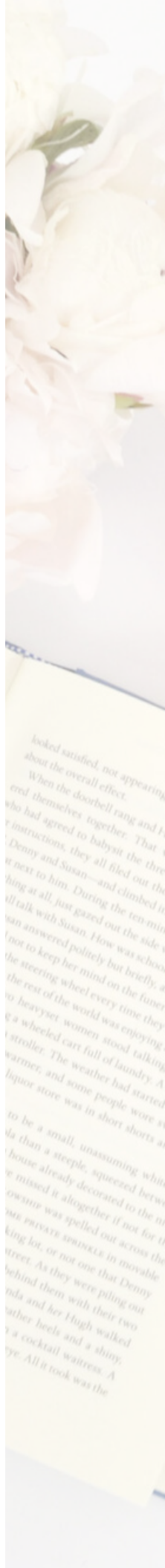
## Team up

Talk to your spouse or parenting partner first! Get on the same page and team up. This will look different for each family. It may be that you and your partners get on the same page behind the scenes, but talks happen individually between parents and kids. It may be that you all sit down as a family. Maybe your family splits the talks between girls and boys. However you do it, just be sure that you are getting your team on the same page. You all want to be sending the same message, communicating the same values and with the same willingness.

## Start early.

The best thing you can do is to start early with your kids. The sooner you start, the more natural it will be when they get older. If your kids are already older, don't worry about it! You can always catch up! However, if your kids are younger, start using language and sharing information a little at a time. When they ask questions, don't shy away. Be confident in your answers and willing to talk. If the topic is too mature for them, then you can always tell them you will share more later. Use your intuition about how much is too much to share. Just be sure that you are communicating confidently and not creating a stigma around the topics.

**If there will be rules  
about dating, share  
them early.**



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IT'S NOT  
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DO IT  
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# CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK

These principles make up the framework for conversations about sex, and really any conversations you have with your kids. As more conversations take place, keep these ideas in mind. Hold yourself accountable for having the tough conversations. Always be authentic, approachable, and available to your kids. It won't always be easy, but the payoff will be great in time.

**AUTHENTICITY.**

**APPROACHABILITY.**

**AVAILABILITY.**

Our first impulse may be to keep the conversation surface level and fend off any deep or embarrassing questions from our kids. This may work at first, but remember our goal is to equip our children. In order to equip them with information and empower them to make healthy choices, we need to earn their trust.

We earn their trust through honesty and openness. And this means answering those tough and embarrassing questions. Regardless of the choices you made as a young adult, you can always present your past as a learning opportunity for your kids. So prepare yourself to be authentic. If the topic is awkward for you, own it. If it is hard to answer questions, let them know. When we try to hide our feelings, we generally only succeed in giving off some kind of awkward vibe anyway.



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**AUTHENTICITY**





Your kids may have heard some things already. They may share opinions that they've already formed. Your instinct may be to correct those opinions immediately. But, when we correct our kids' opinions, they can feel like we have shut them down. They can feel unheard and begin to resent us. This can lead to them shutting us out later, which is not what we want. So if your child shares an opinion, listen to them and validate their opinion. This may seem counter-productive, but it shows them that you are approachable. And in the long run, this works in our favor. If our kids see us as approachable, then they are more likely to share their struggles and seek us out for advice. And this is the key. We want them to want our advice. They are more likely to listen when they've asked us.

# APPROACHABILITY

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This is an important next step. Availability happens after the conversation and should be ongoing. When our kids ask us questions in the future, we need to stop and answer them. Then we need to be open to any conversation that follows.

This doesn't mean that we are available around the clock. When you are busy, that's okay. Just be sure to pause and set a time to revisit the topic or question. Then follow up. This tells your child that you are available and willing to talk to them, even about the difficult stuff.

Again, we want our kids to come to us when they are older and their decisions have greater impact on their lives. In order to achieve this, we have to put the time in when they are younger to build a safe foundation. This requires availability and willingness to talk to them.



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# AVAILABILITY

# CONVO THOUGHTS & IDEAS



1

## Relationship

- Healthy vs unhealthy relationships and how to know the difference.
- What are the red flags and potential dangers of relationships?
- Who to turn to for help if you feel uncomfortable in a relationship.
- Family boundaries/guidelines surrounding relationships. If there are rules, be sure they know them early.

2

## Consent

- What is consent? What does it look like? How to be clear about saying yes or no.
- Yes once does not mean yes always. Consent must be given each time.
- A playful no is still a no. It is NEVER too late to say no. A hesitant no is still no. Phrases that mean no: Maybe not, I don't think so, not right now, etc.
- Cultural norms and consent. Boys can say no too. Girls must respect a boy's right to say no.

3

## Pornography

- What is porn?
- Effect of porn on brain development, sex drive, view of healthy relationships and sex.
- Does porn reflect a healthy sexual relationship? Is porn reflective of healthy sexual activity?
- Why is porn addictive?

4

## What to do if

- Someone asks you out and you don't want to go.
- Someone sends you or asks you to send a nude.
- Someone tries to make you do something you don't want to do.
- You feel like you are trapped in an unhealthy relationship.
- You can't stop watching porn.
- Someone has a nude of you and they are threatening to share it or they have shared it.

These topics are a guideline to some of the important issues facing our kids today. Use this list as a jumping off point.

Research these topics and consider how your family will address them. As you research, let these ideas inspire others topics to cover.

Every family is different. What you talk about and how you talk about it will depend on your family's values, dynamics and personalities. There is no real right or wrong way to go about having these talks. Just BE SURE TO GO ABOUT IT!







Hey, I'm Rachel. My heart and my mission is to impact families in a way that creates positive change for future generations. I believe that with the right tools, motivation and confidence, parents can build strong relationships with their kids while maintaining healthy boundaries.

Through my nonprofit, Seeds of Impact, I meet moms where they are and walk with through the challenges of parenting.

# A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME...



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*rachel gunn* FAMILY COACH