

Helping Your Kids Embrace Sexual Integrity

*Talking to Your Kids About Sexuality,
Gender, and LGBTQ+ in Each
Phase of Your Kids' Childhood*

How to Think About Engaging Your Kids

Sexual Integrity v Sexual Purity

- **Sexual Purity**
 - Sexual Purity is commanded by God and is incredibly important
 - Unfortunately, in our modern age, the word purity has come to be seen in a negative light
 - Because of Christian purity movements that have unintentionally done harm
 - Purity seems to have the feel of an unattainable goal
 - There's a false belief that someone can't be pure again
- **Sexual Integrity**
 - Sexual Integrity is a synonym for purity
 - Sexual Integrity helps to guard kids' potential for future intimacy through boundaries and respect.
 - Just like our personal integrity, we must guard it, we make mistakes but we become stronger

What's Most Important to Your Kids in Each Phase

- **Identity** *Who am I?*
- **Purpose** *Why am I here?*
- **Belonging** *Who likes me?*
- **Beliefs** *What do I believe?*

Why Beliefs are Priority

- Deep rooted beliefs are forged by experiences
- Beliefs lead to your actions

Beliefs → Thoughts → Emotions → Decisions → Actions

- Change beliefs, change actions
 - This is not referring to “conversion therapy”
 - aka, getting your kids to not “be gay”)
 - It’s referring to the journey to help your kids identify primarily as a Christian and to embrace sexual integrity

Have Many Conversations—Not Just One Conversation

- There’s no such thing as “the conversation” because talking to your kids about sexuality is a series of conversations

Determine Your Kids’ Phase

- Parents/guardians’ role in their kids’ phases

Birth - K *Guardian*

1st – 5th *Teacher*

6th – 9th *Coach*

10th – 12th *Guide*

Convictions v Opinions

- Help your kids to differentiate between their theological convictions and civil opinions

Realize What's at Stake

- Their identity in Christ
- Your influence

How to Engage Your Kids in Each Phase

Birth-1 Year Old

- Even if you don't believe your kids can understand you yet, tell them about how God made them
- Make sure you find a good church that will partner with you to teach Christ-centered values to your kids.
 - Get them connected to your church's weekend preschool ministry

2-4 Years Old

- Continue what you taught them and did in the previous age-level
- Teach them what the Bible says about *creation* and male & female bodies
- Begin teaching them what the Bible says about *marriage*
- Remain connected to your church's preschool ministry
 - Ask them what they learned during their weekend preschool ministry
- Begin helping them to build their relational skills
- Acknowledge differences between boys & girls
 - Name body parts
- Start helping them define *privacy*
- Give simple but clear answers to their questions about their *bodies* and *marriage*

K-1st Grade

- Continue what you taught them and did in previous age-levels
- Teach them what the Bible says about *marriage*
 - Who created *marriage* and why *marriage* was created
 - Specifically, share stories of good marriages in the Bible
- Get them connected to your church's elementary age ministry
 - Value and model consistent church attendance
 - Make sure they're in the weekend programming for kids
 - Register them for events and retreats
 - Ask them what they learned during their weekend ministry gathering
 - Use whatever weekly prompts the ministry sends home with you each week to have discussions with your kids about *faith*
 - Download and use the *Parent Cue* app to have consistently weekly conversations with your kids about *faith*.
- Continue helping them to work on their relational skills
- Affirm and help them to affirm a positive view of their own body
- Coach them on how to guard their *privacy*
- Begin teaching them about *boundaries*
 - What *boundaries* are and what they are not
 - Why *boundaries* are important
 - How *boundaries* offer more freedom than not having *boundaries*

2nd-5th Grade

- Continue what you taught them and did in previous age-levels
- Realize what they are concerned about in this season
 - IDENTITY: Who am I? What do my parents say about me?
 - PURPOSE: Why am I here? What are my parents doing? What are my friends doing?
 - BELONGING: Who likes me? Do my parents like me? When/where do I have the most fun?
 - BELIEFS: What do I believe? What do my parents believe?
- Teach them what the Bible says about *lust*, *sex* and relationships
 - Teach them about how *marriage* is a *covenant*, not just a relationship
 - Share stories in the Bible concerning *sex*, show them how Proverbs addresses *sex*, and teach them what Jesus & Paul say about *lust* & *sex*

- Help them understand that their body is the temple of God
- Keep them connected to your church's elementary age ministry
 - If you haven't already, download and use the *Parent Cue* app to have consistently weekly conversations with your kids about *faith*
 - After your kids attend an elementary age ministry gathering, discuss what they learned
 - Instead of just asking, "What did you learn?" each week, try different prompts like:
 - In one sentence, tell me what you learned today
 - How did today's lesson make you feel?
 - How did God show you His love today?
 - What's one thing in the lesson that made sense to you about God?
 - How did your friends feel about church today?
 - How can you use today's lesson to help your friends?
 - What do you like most about your leaders?
 - Did you disagree with anything in the lesson?
 - What was the best thing that happened at church today?
 - Did anything funny happen today?
- Attend any *Parent Talks* or gatherings/seminars for parents that the elementary age ministry hosts
- If you haven't already, talk to them about specific issues
 - Masturbation
 - Wet dreams
 - STD's
- As they get older, begin talking to them about helping them set boundaries around the digital world
 - Websites, social media, online experiences
 - Inappropriate websites
 - Bad *YouTube* videos
 - Streaming services and apps
 - Online chats
 - Reality of cyberbullying
 - Dangers of pornography
 - Social media addictions
- Dialogue with them about what they're learning in school about *sex*, *gender*, *relationships*, and their *bodies*
- Help your kids script responses and to know what to do if they are placed in difficult situations
 - If an adult or another student makes them feel uncomfortable

- If an adult or another student tries to touch them inappropriately
- If another student says they were touched inappropriately
- Explain *conception*
 - Give a simple and clear explanation
 - Teach them that *life* begins at conception
- Acknowledge that different types of marriages exist, but that you honor God's view of marriage
- Help them to value kindness towards others during disagreements
- Their *bodies* are changing—so be patient
 - Listen to how they express their feelings
 - Be willing to discuss their questions
 - Do not get mad at their feelings and questions
- Determine whether or not you will allow them to go to sleepovers
 - While many people think of sleepovers as harmless, keep in mind:
 - While you may trust the other family, you don't really know everything about every member of the family
 - You have no control over whether or not a family friend or extended family member suddenly stops in to stay while
- Help them understand *modesty*
- Discuss the concept of *beauty*
 - Help them understand what *beauty* is and what it isn't
- Begin discussing *healthy relationships*
 - Why healthy relationships are important
 - What good friends do and don't do
 - How good friends make your life better
 - How they can make their friends' lives better

6th-8th Grade

- Continue what you taught them and did in previous age-levels
- Realize what they are concerned about in this season (and into 9th Grade)
 - IDENTITY: Who am I now? What are my friends saying about me?
 - PURPOSE: Why do I exist? What do I like doing? What are my friends doing?
 - BELONGING: Who likes me? Who are my friends? When/where have I had the most fun?

- BELIEFS: What do I believe? What do my friends believe? What do my parents believe?
- Teach them why the Bible teaches that sex outside of a marriage between a male and female is a sin and dangerous
- Connect them to your church's student ministry
 - Above all else, make sure they are in a student ministry small group
 - Get their small group leaders' contact info.
 - Communicate with your kids' small group leader when needed
 - if your kids had a bad day...
 - if something good happened in their life...
 - When there's a death in the family...
 - If you've noticed changes in their attitude, behavior, etc.
 - Regularly thank your kids' small group leaders for investing in your kids. Do things like:
 - give them gifts
 - send them an encouraging note, etc.
 - Honor confidentiality between your kids and their small group leaders
 - Don't try to "get information" from your kids' small group leaders about what your kids may have told them
 - Have them attend weekly student ministry gatherings
 - Register them for student ministry events and retreats
 - After your kids attend a student ministry gathering, discuss what they learned
 - Instead of just asking, "What did you learn?" each week, try different prompts like:
 - In one sentence, tell me what you learned today
 - What can/will you do differently because of what you learned today?
 - Based off what you learned today, what do you need to start doing? What do you need to continue doing? What do you need to stop doing?
 - How did God show you His love today?
 - What's one thing in the lesson that made sense to you about God?
 - How might today's lesson help you to help others?
 - Did you meet anyone new today? If so, who? What were they like?
 - If you taught the lesson today, what would you have said?
 - What do you like most about your leaders?
 - What do you feel like God was telling you today?
 - Did you disagree with anything in the lesson?
 - What was a good question that someone asked today?

➤ What was the best thing that happened at church today?

- Attend any *Parent Talks* or gatherings/seminars for parents that the student ministry hosts
- If you must choose, their participation in student ministry should be more important than youth sports & youth clubs
- If you haven't already, talk to them about specific issues
 - Masturbation
 - Wet dreams
 - STD's
 - Their friends may have different beliefs about sex
 - How emotions and thoughts are connected to sexual desire
 - How your mind can be seen as a "sexual organ"
 - Because of how temptation enters your mind
- Dialogue about what their school is teaching them about *sex, gender, relationships, and their bodies*
 - When their school has lessons/presentations about *sex, biological sex, & gender*, determine which lessons/presentations you want them sit in and which ones you don't want them to sit in
 - Help them to know when to and when not to voice their disagreements and/or frustrations
 - Help them to script respectful responses to teachers and students with whom they may disagree
- Continue discussing and setting boundaries around the digital world
 - Employ parental controls/privacy settings on all electronic devices
 - Download a reputable security app for electronic devices
 - Make sure they are sharing their location with you at all times (on their electronic devices)
 - Make an agreement with them about their online time and/or social media accounts:
 - You have FULL access to ALL of their social media accounts and online accounts
 - All login ID's and all passwords
 - They can never create social media accounts or online accounts without your permission and involvement
 - They must treat people well and can't post inappropriate content
 - They must show you any posts, comments, and messages they receive that are inappropriate
 - Violent and abusive
 - Makes them feel uncomfortable
 - Has sexual content
 - Makes sexual suggestions to them

- Bullies and degrades them
 - Threatens them and/or someone else
 - Contains inappropriate images and videos
 - How much online time they have each day or each week
 - When they can and cannot be online
 - What (kind of) accounts they can accept as friends/connections
 - What happens if they violate any part of the agreement or if they act in ways that make you suspicious of their online time
- Talk to them in greater detail about how pornography harms everyone
 - Viewing it can become a struggle for both men and women
 - It hurts everyone involved—the audience, the cast, the filmmakers, etc.
 - It dehumanizes the cast
 - It negatively impacts the audience’s relationships
 - It compromises future intimacy
 - It can negatively impact the audience’s brain patterns
 - It can be a gateway to worse habits
- Respect their questions as well as their answers to questions
- Take their words and feelings seriously
- Answer their questions about *sex* in detail
- Make sure you know who their friends are
- Define *dating*
 - What your *dating* values are and what they are not
 - When they can date (at what age)
- Agree on *boundaries* regarding their *bodies*, *sex*, and *so on*
- Help them script responses to more difficult situations
 - If they are pressured to have sex
 - If they are pressured to have sexual experiences (without actually having sex)
 - If they ever feel pressured by friends and classmates to identify as a *sexual minority*
 - If they are offered drugs and alcohol
 - If they are coerced to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable
 - If they are with a group that’s bullying another student
 - If they are encouraged to run away
- Script your own responses for when your kids surprise you
 - If your kids come out to you

- If your kids tell you they aren't sure about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- If your kids have been looking at porn
- If your kids have done inappropriate things online
- If your kids tell you someone did something inappropriate to them

9th Grade

- Continue what you taught them and did in previous age-levels
- Reaffirm biblical views of *sex, biological sex, marriage, relationships, lust, etc.*
- Teach them a biblical view of *identity*
 - What *identity* means, what comprises our *identity*, etc.
 - There are many aspects and roles that contribute to who we are, but everyone has something that is the basis for their *primary identity*
 - For believers, *Jesus* is the basis for their primary identity, because everyone is someone that God created and Jesus died for
 - Show them verses about our identity in Christ and study with them
- Keep them connected to your church's student ministry and do everything mentioned in the previous age-levels
- Talk to them about specific issues
 - Electronics (if you haven't done so already)
 - Respecting boundaries of the opposite sex
 - Hook-Up Culture
 - Kissing
 - Light kissing
 - Passionate kissing
 - If kissing is appropriate
- Keep dialoguing with your kids about what they're learning in school
- Keep attending any *Parent Talks* or gatherings/seminars for parents that the student ministry hosts
- Dialogue about what their school is teaching them about *sex, gender, relationships, and their bodies*
 - Start talking to them about what their school says about *safe-sex*
 - Talk to them about *abortion*
 - What *abortion* is
 - Revisit what you've taught them about *life beginning at conception*
 - How *abortion* victimizes both the baby and the parents

- Revisit their scripted responses to difficult situations
- Teach them about making *wise choices*
 - How to make wise choices
 - What wise choices look like in their friendships, with what they look at, what they read, etc.

10th-12th Grade

- Continue what you taught them and did in previous age-levels
- Realize what they are concerned about in this season
 - IDENTITY: Who am I now? Who have I become? Who am I becoming?
 - PURPOSE: What's my purpose? What can I do to help others? How can I make a difference in the world?
 - BELONGING: Where do I belong? Who are my friends? Who are still my friends? With whom can I make a difference?
 - BELIEFS: What do I currently believe? What do I not believe anymore? What beliefs am I reconsidering? What should I believe?
 - Beliefs about faith, about what they have learned in school, about their relationships, about their bodies, about intimacy, etc.
- They are in a season of life where they are evaluating everything they have been taught, so welcome their questions about faith and life
 - Allow them to ask questions
 - Don't get angry or laugh at their questions
 - Don't try to answer difficult questions immediately, because it unintentionally dismisses their journey while making you appear unrelatable and uninterested in them
 - Don't be afraid to answer a question like this: "I don't know, but we can find out the answers together."
 - Don't "freak out" if they share doubts with you
 - The word *doubt* implies that belief still exists
 - At least they trust you enough to share their doubts with you
 - Tell them about when you have or have had seasons of doubt
- At all costs, keep them connected your church's student ministry and their small groups
 - Don't let them decide whether or not they'll attend church and/or student ministry—you take them to church
- Realize that other adults in their life (like their small group leaders) probably have more influence with them than you do—so lean into those relationships

- Contact your church’s student ministry staff and/or leaders when you have questions about parenting
- Talk to them about specific issues
 - Respecting boundaries of the opposite sex (if you haven’t done so already)
 - Hook-Up Culture (if you haven’t done so already)
 - Kissing (if you haven’t done so already)
 - Light kissing
 - Passionate kissing
 - If kissing is appropriate
 - Contraceptives
 - Technical virginity
 - Doing anything other than actual sex. Example include:
 - Oral sex
 - Fondling
 - Public displays of affection
 - Holding hands
 - Napping together
- Dialogue with them about what society is saying about sexuality and what their schools are teaching them about sexuality
- Ask them questions to help them clarify *boundaries*
 - Set curfew times for week and weekend evenings
 - Make sure their time with family is a priority, even if it isn’t a priority for you
- Create new *boundaries* for situations you both hadn’t considered
- Stay “in-the-know” about their circle of friends
- Regularly tell them about how God is working in your life and ask how God is working in their life
- If you haven’t already, share your testimony with them
 - Talk to them about mistakes you made—especially in regards to *sex, sexuality, and relationships*
 - Share what you’ve learned from your mistakes
- Write more scripts of your responses for when your kids surprise you
 - If your kids come out to you
 - If your kids tell you they aren’t sure about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity
 - If your kids have been looking at porn
 - If your kids have made inappropriate online posts or videos
 - If your kids tell you someone did something inappropriate to them

- If your kids tell you they've been using drugs and/or drinking
- If they have been bullied

This material has been based off of psychological studies, as well as *The Phase Project* by *Orange*