



# MIDDLE SCHOOL SEXUAL INTEGRITY

## CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR PARENTS

YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOLER IS CHANGING FAST! Changing their friends, changing their style, changing their interests, and yes - changing physically. As with any change, you have three options. You can resist it, and inevitably fail. You can ignore it, and become increasingly disconnected. Or you can talk about it, and probably suffer a fair amount of eye rolls. During this phase, your role is to INTERPRET:

### WHAT **TO** SAY:

"I'm so glad you asked me."

Thank you for telling me. You will never get in trouble for talking to me about that." (*Encourage conversation through your words, tone, and body language.*)

"I think it would be good for us to talk about this again sometime. Is that okay?" (*Keep the lines of communication open.*)

"You are becoming a beautiful young lady/handsome young man." (*Give authentic, positive affirmation and affection to the point of embarrassment.*)

"Don't be afraid to talk to a boy/girl. Treat them as you would a friend and treat them with respect."

"How do your friends talk about the opposite sex? What are some words that would be more respectful?" (*Refine the vocabulary and promote respect for each other.*)

Read books like *Teaching your Children Healthy Sexuality* by Jim Burns to help you answer questions about sex.

Start to discuss relationship values by using phrases like these: "Honor God with your body."

"Don't let anyone or anything control you."

"Guard your heart."

"Your interest in girls/boys is probably growing and your hormones are kicking in. Creating and deciding on a few boundaries now is an important way to help you make wise decisions. Let's come up with a few of those together."

"Let's talk about a few ways you can respond if you ever get into an uncomfortable situation."

"Looking at, watching, or talking about sex in disrespectful ways dishonors the way God created it to be = a private, intimate part of marriage."

### WHAT **NOT** TO SAY:

"We don't need to talk about that."

"You're not supposed to be thinking about things like that."

"Don't worry, right now you're just in an awkward phase."

"Remember, kissing a boy will get you pregnant." (*Don't tease or give inaccurate information.*)

"Why aren't you dating anyone?"

Nothing.

Make sure to involve professional counselors as needed, as well as your ministry leaders.

If you haven't yet, inform your child about how boys and girls bodies will change as they get older and mature. Consider covering these topics: body odor, growth spurts, breast/testicular development, growth of hair, menstruation/vaginal discharge and wet dreams.

### **JUST REMEMBER:**

THEY MAY NOT ALWAYS ACT LIKE IT, but they need you now more than ever. Encourage their questions by being available and relaxed. Keep your cool if a question catches you off guard and be sure to take what they say and how they feel seriously. Keep the conversation going by staying curious about their world and what concerns them.

**SEXUAL INTEGRITY:** Guarding my potential for intimacy through appropriate boundaries and mutual respect.