

Helping kids develop a healthy view of their bodies, gender, and sexuality starts with three simple habits at home: be open, be attentive, and be respectful. These habits create a strong family culture where your children feel loved, safe, and confident in who they are. This guide offers clear steps to help you lead these conversations with grace—especially as a dad.

The Big Three Ideas

- **Open:** Kids have tons to learn about their bodies, gender, and sexuality, and sharing age-appropriate info and answering their questions is the best way to go. Don't hide stuff that's okay for their age, like body parts or what sex is. Talk often about the good design of being male and female, and address issues related to gender identity and other gender- and sex-related topics with children sooner than you want to. Little chats over time beat one big awkward moment!
- **Attentive:** Your kid is one-of-a-kind with their own interests and strengths, and it helps them trust you and feel good about themselves when you pay loving attention. Get to know them, cheer them on, and focus on them, not your phone or friends. This builds a strong bond, so they feel secure about their body and who they are.
- **Respectful:** Everyone deserves kindness, and treating everyone kindly, no matter who they are, shows that in your family. No mean jokes about men, women, or any body type—positive words teach kids that all people are valuable. This helps them respect themselves and others too.

Key Topics to Talk About:

- **Boys and Girls Are Great:** Tell your kids that being a boy or a girl is great, and it's not about stereotypes. Being a boy isn't just about tools or muscles, and being a girl isn't just about makeup or fashion. Both are awesome in all shapes, sizes, and interests!
- **Body Parts and Safety:** Teach kids real words like "penis" and "vagina" early on to keep them safe and know those parts aren't dirty. They should know these parts aren't for others to touch and that they can say "no" if something feels wrong. Keep it positive but private for family talks.
- **Sex and Relationships:** Don't wait for one big talk—have little talks over time and ask them questions about sex, risks like STIs or pregnancy, and what's healthy or not. It's better than letting friends or the internet explain it, because kids won't ask real questions in a big group like a gym health class. Parents can make it less scary and more thoughtful.

Tips for Dads

- **With Sons:** You're their main role model, so show him positive things about being a man by being yourself. Lean into your strengths (like working hard), fix your weaknesses (like ignoring feelings), and spend time with him—maybe playing sports or reading together. Challenge him to be brave, then cheer him on big-time!
- **With Daughters:** Listen to her heart and praise her strengths, and show respect to women so she feels strong and worthy. Take her on simple dates like a walk or ice cream, and tell her she's amazing—beautiful, kind, gutsy, whatever you see. If you respect women, she'll know she's not less-than.

Why Parents Matter :

Talking about this stuff can feel scary, but it's way better than leaving it to a gym teacher or friends. Kids won't ask real questions in a big group, and nobody else can coach them like you can. Keep it open, loving, and kind, and you'll help your kids grow up feeling good about their body, gender, and sexuality! By being the one to guide them, you can make sure they learn the truth about these topics in a way that honors their unique design.