

**Notes from “1000 2-Minute Conversations. Talking to your Daughter About Sex”
Feb 1, 2018
Presented by Carrie Kirkpatrick**

(Coming up: Feb 8, library. Rachel Wigglesworth will do a program for parents of teenagers.)

Intro

Inspiration for this session: the concept of 2-minute conversations that came out of a panel for dads back in 2010. Kids only have a few moments of attention. Harness young curiosity and

We also did a Raising Girls session in 2013 on Your Daughter’s Bedroom: Insights for Raising Confident Women, by Joyce McFadden). Notes from all previous sessions are on GAP web site (gapjh.org)

The McFadden book was based on a Survey of 65,000 women asking what’s missing from your education about womanhood. Most common responses:

- 1) Relationship with mom – what it means to be a woman, especially sexually. Tons of information was left out.
- 2) Masturbation
- 3) Menstruation

Tonight’s Presentation is based on From Diapers to Dating by Debra Haffner.

Goal: conversations about sex and sexuality can be awesome, not awkward. Under age 10, awesome is easy. The info is empowering; kids are fascinated by how the body works. Later on, it’s bound to be uncomfortable. That’s normal.

In General

- Begin with the end in mind. **Consider this:** what does it mean to YOU for your daughter to be sexually healthy?
- Even at the beginning, give anatomically correct info. And let caregivers know you want them to use the same terms.
- Discover your own values first. Do some soul-searching ahead of time so you’re not just reacting to whatever comes your way.
- Consider where your child is developmentally. You might need to stop talking in order not to outpace them. Follow their lead.
- Always start with “Tell me what you know about ____.” Find out where they’re starting.
- How will they know to come to you?
- Be honest
- Be ahead of the curve

- A real foundational relationship is key. The books Carrie recommends to discover the necessary components for this is Parent Effectiveness Training, How to Talk so Your Kids will Listen and Listen So Your Kids will Talk, and Parenting From the Inside Out.

Developmental Themes

Birth to age 2

- Teach body parts
- Voice tone, toy and color choices, gender biases
- Meaning of love and touch
- Parent's response to genital exploration. Avoid shame.
- Biological sexual development.
- Feelings! It's all based on your relationship with your child. See their feelings. Help them verbalize

Ages 2-5

- Sex play – what's normal and what's out of the ordinary. (healthy –curiosity, giggling, kids the same age, they stop when you ask them to; not healthy-a three year age difference between kids, any sensed aggression or ideas that seem not age appropriate, they don't stop when asked to and incidents continue)
- Friendship and feelings
- Love
- Reproduction
- Sexual abuse – who's OK to touch your genitals. Always tell parents.
- Feelings! You want them to feel seen.

Ages 5-8

- Decision-making as a concept. There are consequences to our decisions, as a concept
- Anatomy and reproduction
- Friendship
- Sexual abuse
- TV ads, movies, media
- Feelings!
- Porn – average age of first exposure to porn is 7-9 (usually accidental)

Ages 9-12

- Puberty for boys AND girls. Girls need to know what's happening to boys' bodies, too.
- Issues of early adolescence
- Love
- STDs and AIDS
- Abstinence
- Body image – discuss the concept of “sexy” at a young age. They certainly hear it all the time. What does it mean ? it is for adults and not for kids ?
- Feelings!

Take-Home Tips

- Handout of communication tips
- Common Sense Media, Mighty Girl, sex ed rescue are good places to start for resources
- Shame is a destructive force
- Ask what they know before launching into your talk
- Anticipate and lay a foundation
- It's less awkward (for the kid) under age 10. Start early!
- Unique role of mothers and fathers. Mother: what is it to be a woman? Father: watching dad for cues and how to be treated.
- KISS – keep it super simple.