

Common Questions Asked By Parents:

Q: What is a good setting to have this conversation?

A: A private setting is best. You will get answers if you set up a comfortable environment and listen respectfully. Take your child out to a coffee shop or for a drive, away from siblings and distractions for both of you. Avoid going to a place where either one of you may run into someone you know.

Q: What should I hope to get out of the conversation?

A: First, you want to have a productive conversation. This means that through the process of your conversation, you want to support your child and confirm that you are a good resource and non-judgmental listener. Second, you want to invite your child realistic strategies for confronting the problem effectively. You will never accomplish the second goal without the first.

Q: Are there any other nuts and bolts tips on having the actual

A: Share your own experiences, especially the ones when you were your teen's age, made mistakes and learned from them. Avoid talking about what you have recently experienced because you need to maintain boundaries—they need a parent figure now, not a friend. The hard reality is that you can't always fix things for your kids, you can only try to give them skills and support that set the foundation for doing it themselves.

Q: How can I tell if my teen might want to talk to me?

A: Anytime your teenager wants to talk to you, drop everything and pay attention. Watch for signs of your teen wanting to talk, such as if your teen hangs around where you are but doesn't necessarily say anything, or if your teen says he or she doesn't feel well but there doesn't seem to be anything physically wrong. Notice if your teen tries to get you alone, away from others. If your teen wants to talk to you but also couches it as "no big deal," don't believe it. Just bringing it up, he or she is already telling you that it is a big deal.

Warning signs for parents that your teen may be a victim of dating violence:

- Failing grades
- Becomes uncharacteristically secretive
- Loses interest in activities such as sports or choir
- Avoids friends and family
- Has difficulty making decisions
- Sudden changes in mood or personality, becoming anxious or depressed
- Drastic changes in clothing or appearance
- Physical signs of injury such as bruises, scratches or other injuries
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits, avoiding eye contact, crying often
- Uses alcohol or drugs
- Constantly thinking about dating partner
- Behaves differently around his/her boyfriend/girlfriend
- Excessive text messaging or calling from dating partner
- Makes excuses for behavior of dating partner

If you are concerned about your teen, please reach out.

You can contact our 24hour crisis line at (708)386-4225,

Or visit www.sarahsinn.org for more information.

sarah's inn



together strong