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# Age-Appropriate Sexuality Resources

## REQUIRED MATERIALS FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Parents/caregivers should read one or both of the following:

- American Social Health Association, “Becoming an Askable Parent: How to Talk with Your Child about Sexuality” (Research Triangle Park, NC: American Social Health Association, 2005).

This eighteen-page, easy-to-read booklet, which can be distributed to parents/caregivers during the Program Information Meeting or the Parent/Caregiver and Child Orientation, details the ABCs of sexuality communication (“be askable, build bridges, continue to learn”), gives examples of typical situations and teachable moments, and outlines the stages of sexual development from birth to age sixteen. The booklets are approximately \$1.00 each. To order, contact the American Social Health Association, PO Box 13827, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709; 919-361-8400; [ashpublications.org/index.php/product/be-an-askable-parent-2/](http://ashpublications.org/index.php/product/be-an-askable-parent-2/)

- Options for Sexual Health, “Becoming an Askable Adult” (Vancouver, BC: Options for Sexual Health, n.d.).

This four-page guide includes basic information about being approachable, reliable, and nonjudgmental when young people have questions or concerns about sexuality. Copies can be downloaded at [ow.ly/ScMO0](http://ow.ly/ScMO0) and printed for parents/caregivers.

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

These materials are good to have on hand as examples or to loan to parents/caregivers:

- Robie H. Harris, *It’s Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health*, illustrated by Michael Emberley, twentieth anniversary edition (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2014).

A comprehensive, humorous, and reassuring celebration of changing bodies, growing up, human sexuality, reproductive health, and diversity for preadolescent and adolescent young people. At-home readings from this book provide a foundation of factual information for Our Whole Lives participants. Order from your local bookstore, from the UUA Bookstore (24 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210; 800-215-9076; [uuabookstore.org](http://uuabookstore.org)), or from UCC Resources (700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115; 800-537-3394; [uccresources.com](http://uccresources.com)).

- Patricia Hoertdoerfer, *The Parent Guide to Our Whole Lives: Grades K–1 and Grades 4–6* (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2006).

This workshop-by-workshop guide to what children will learn through the Our Whole Lives curriculum helps parents/caregivers answer children's tough questions about sexuality issues.

## RESOURCES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN GRADES 4–6

The following resources are recommended for further reading and enrichment for young people ages nine to twelve:

- Marge Heegaard, *When a Parent Marries Again: Children Can Learn to Cope with Family Change* (Minneapolis, MN: Woodland Press, 1993).  
This book helps children learn about stepfamilies. Its interactive workbook format can help them work through the natural feelings resulting from family change and can help parents and caregivers identify a child's needs.
- Joann Loulan and Bonnie Worthen, *Period: A Girls' Guide to Menstruation*, 4th ed. (Deephaven, MN: Book Peddlers, 2001).  
This book is about the physical and psychological changes at the onset of menstruation. It emphasizes that everyone has a different body and that everyone is unique and special.
- Julie Metzger, RN, MN, and Robert Lehman, MD, *Will Puberty Last My Whole Life?* (Seattle, WA: Sasquatch, 2012).  
This book has factual answers to real questions from preteens about body changes, sex, and other growing-up challenges. It is in a flip-book format; one side lists questions the authors have received from girls and the authors' answers, and the other side lists questions the authors have received from boys and the authors' answers.
- Cory Silverberg and Fiona Smyth, *Sex Is a Funny Word: A Book about Bodies, Feelings, and YOU* (New York, NY: Seven Stories, 2015).  
This book is written in comic-book style and includes children and families of a variety of configurations, orientations, and gender identities. *Sex Is a Funny Word* is written to help encourage conversations between young people and their caregivers in a way that allows adults to convey their values and beliefs while providing information about boundaries, safety, and joy.
- Cory Silverberg, *What Makes a Baby*, illustrated by Fiona Smyth (New York, NY: Seven Stories Press, 2012).  
Babies come into families in many ways and to many types of parents. Silverberg's caring text includes all kinds of kids, all kinds of adults, and all kinds of families, regardless of how many people were involved; what the orientation, gender identity, or other makeup of the family is; or how the family formed. Silverberg sees his text as taking a social justice approach to sex education. Written for preschoolers but enjoyable by older children as well.
- Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras, *My Body, My Self for Girls*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Newmarket, 2007).
- Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras, *My Body, My Self for Boys*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Newmarket, 2007).
- Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras, *The What's Happening to My Body? Book for Girls*, rev. ed. (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2009).

- Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras, *The What's Happening to My Body? Book for Boys*, rev. ed. (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2009).

The “What’s Happening to My Body?” book series, from experienced educator and author Lynda Madaras and her daughter Area Madaras, gives information about body changes, feelings, and puberty for boys and girls. The “My Body, My Self” books are in a guided journal format with questions, quizzes, and illustrations.

- *Rainbow Rumpus*, an online literary magazine, [rainbowrumpus.org/](http://rainbowrumpus.org/).

Rainbow Rumpus wants every child to have a vision of family that includes their own. The online magazine is full of stories that reflect the lives of kids and teens with LGBT parents/caregivers.

The following books on gender identity are recommended for ages nine to twelve by Welcoming Schools, a project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation:

- Ami Polonsky, *Gracefully Grayson* (New York, NY: Disney-Hyperion, 2014).

Preadolescent Grayson, assigned a male gender at birth, slowly realizes her gender identity as a girl. She bravely auditions for the part of Persephone in the school play, with mixed responses from her teacher, friend, school bullies, and adults. Grayson expresses a range of emotions as she narrates her story.

- Pam Muñoz Ryan, *Riding Freedom* (New York, NY: Scholastic, 2002).

This fictionalized biography tells the story of equestrian Charlotte “Charley” Parkhurst, who lived in the mid-1800s disguised as a man in order to follow her dreams. She became a stagecoach driver and was the first woman to vote in the California presidential election.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, FAMILIES AND PROFESSIONALS

The following resources are recommended for further reading and enrichment for parents, caregivers, and families, and for educators and other professionals.

### Books

- Melanie Davis, *Sexuality Talking Points: A Guide to Thoughtful Conversations among Parents and Children*, [melaniedavisphd.com/shop/sexuality-talking-points/](http://melaniedavisphd.com/shop/sexuality-talking-points/).

Written by a professional sexuality educator and Our Whole Lives facilitator and trainer, this workbook includes engaging text and Thinking Points exercises that help parents/caregivers pinpoint the sexuality information and values they want to discuss with their children and teens. Talking Points help parents begin conversations that nurture children and teens toward sexually healthy adulthood.

- Mary Gossart, *There's No Place Like Home...for Sex Education* (Eugene, OR: Planned Parenthood of Southwest Oregon, 2015).

This guide helps parents and caregivers share accurate, age-appropriate information about sex with their children from pre-school to high school. This resource is available in English and Spanish. It has also been adapted for use within Native American families.

- Debra Haffner, *What Every 21st-Century Parent Needs to Know* (New York, NY: New Market Press, 2008).  
Written by a Unitarian Universalist minister and sexuality educator, this book addresses drinking, drugs, and teen sex with research and statistics that may calm many parents'/caregivers' fears. Haffner illustrates how one's parenting style can offer viable solutions to common problems.
- Karen Rayne, *Breaking the HUSH Factor: Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex* (Austin, TX: Impetus Books, 2015).  
Rayne's book makes no assumptions about gender or sexual orientation, and it will not scare parents and caregivers about their children's sexuality. Instead, it offers ten concrete rules to strengthen your relationship with your teenager so that you can start to talk about sex.
- Deborah Roffman, *Talk to Me First: Everything You Need to Know to Become Your Kids' "Go-To" Person about Sex* (Boston, MA: Da Capo, 2012).  
Roffman increases parents'/caregivers' comfort in discussing common adolescent concerns and identifies the kinds of information young people need.
- Al Vernacchio, *For Goodness Sex: Changing the Way We Talk to Teens about Sexuality, Values, and Health* (New York, NY: Harper Wave, 2014).  
Vernacchio helps parents, caregivers, and others embrace twenty-first-century realities by promoting healthy sexuality, values, and body image in teenagers. He presents sexuality as a natural part of life, with healthy sexuality developing from a sex-positive, affirming stance. Includes real-life examples from the classroom, exercises and quizzes, and a wealth of sample discussions and crucial information.

### Videos

Planned Parenthood has a number of videos to aid parents and caregivers in talking with their children and teens about sexuality, which can be found at [plannedparenthood.org/parents/talking-to-kids-about-sex-and-sexuality](http://plannedparenthood.org/parents/talking-to-kids-about-sex-and-sexuality).

### Websites

The following websites offer respectful and reliable information regarding various sexuality topics for parents and caregivers:

- Families Are Talking: [siecus.org](http://siecus.org)
- Talking with Kids about Tough Issues: [childrennow.org/parenting-resources](http://childrennow.org/parenting-resources)
- Parents' Sex Ed Center: [advocatesforyouth.org/parents/](http://advocatesforyouth.org/parents/)
- Love Is Respect: [loveisrespect.org/](http://loveisrespect.org/)
- Tools for Parents (Planned Parenthood): [plannedparenthood.org/parents](http://plannedparenthood.org/parents)
- PFLAG: [pflag.org](http://pflag.org)
- Gender Spectrum: [genderspectrum.org/](http://genderspectrum.org/)
- Kids Health: Cyberbullying: [kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/cyberbullying.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/cyberbullying.html)
- Parent's Guide to Internet Safety: [whoishostingthis.com/resources/esafety/#page-1](http://whoishostingthis.com/resources/esafety/#page-1)

- Resources for Parents and Young People: [plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-southwestern-oregon/local-training-education/your-education-resource](http://plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-southwestern-oregon/local-training-education/your-education-resource)

### *Organizations*

- ETR Associates, 100 Enterprise Way, Suite G300, Scotts Valley, CA 95066; [etr.org](http://etr.org)
- PFLAG, 1828 L Street NW, Suite 660, Washington, DC 20036; 202-467-8194; [pflag.org](http://pflag.org)
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 434 W. 33rd Street, New York, NY 10001; 212-541-7800; [plannedparenthood.org](http://plannedparenthood.org)
- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), PO Box 5175, New York, NY 10185; 212-819-9770; [siecus.org](http://siecus.org)