

How and When to Tell Your Kids about Sex Talking about Petting – Middle School

“Christopher, I hope that as you feel more and more attracted to girls, and begin to really feel special feelings about some, that you will realize what a precious gift those feelings are. Those feelings someday probably will allow you to fall in love with the woman you are to marry. God made you to have those feelings, including the feelings that men have of wanting to kiss, touch, and even have sex with a girl. But He did not make you so that you have to act on those feelings by getting physical with a girl.

“Many of the feelings we have about sex are not from God, though. When I was a young man, I remember feeling real affection for some girls, but I also remember feeling selfish, feeling that I wanted to touch and feel a girl's body because it would be fun for me, would excite me, and would make me seem cool with my friends. I sometimes would not think about the girl as a person, but only about her body. These feelings were wrong. Girls have sinful selfish feelings too, and may also be ready to do anything to get a guy to like them as well. That's not what God wants either.

“Son, many kids in high school will have sex with people they are dating. Many of them who don't go all the way into sexual intercourse will be much too intimate, so intimate that they might as well be having sex. You know that intercourse is wrong when you are not married, but what about other things like kissing and touching? What's right and what's wrong?

“‘How far can I go?’ is really the wrong question; it's like asking ‘what can I get away with?’ The real question is ‘What is best for me and the girl I am dating? What does God want me to do?’ I don't have the perfect answer for you. There isn't an absolute rule in the Bible. But here is what I think:

“Sex outside of marriage is wrong because the joining of our bodies makes us one, and we're supposed to be one with a person only in marriage. I should be one only with one person, my wife. You should be one only with one person, your wife, after you marry her. Oneness is something that happens immediately when you have sex, but it is also something that happens gradually in many small ways, and sharing bodies without having intercourse is one of those ways. If you get involved with a girl and enjoy just about every part of her body and she yours, but without having intercourse, you have begun the process of becoming one with her. You will have started down that road when it is very unlikely you will marry her. You will have also put yourself in a situation where, because of the excitement of the moment, you will find it very hard to make the decisions that Jesus would want you to make.

“I think then that you should decide not to get very physical with the girls you date in high school. You probably will not meet and date the woman you will marry until college or after. If you meet and date her in high school, you probably will wait a long time to marry. I would urge you not to go beyond kissing in your dating relationships while you are a teenager; no touching of girls' breasts or genitals, and no letting them touch your genitals. These experiences are too intimate, too close, too powerful to play around with when you are so far from marriage. Enjoy your dating. Enjoy the respect and fun and appreciation you will find in your relationships.

“I want you to understand that if you choose not to get into sexual intercourse or into heavy petting, you will be in the minority. Guys may razz you for being a virgin, or for being a prude; girls you date may want to do more with you than you feel is right. You will also find it frustrating sometimes not to have sex and not to do petting. But this is a frustration you can live with; no one ever died or went crazy from not having sex. You will need a lot of strength to live your life by God's rules. But it's no more of a difficult task than any that God has given to His saints.”