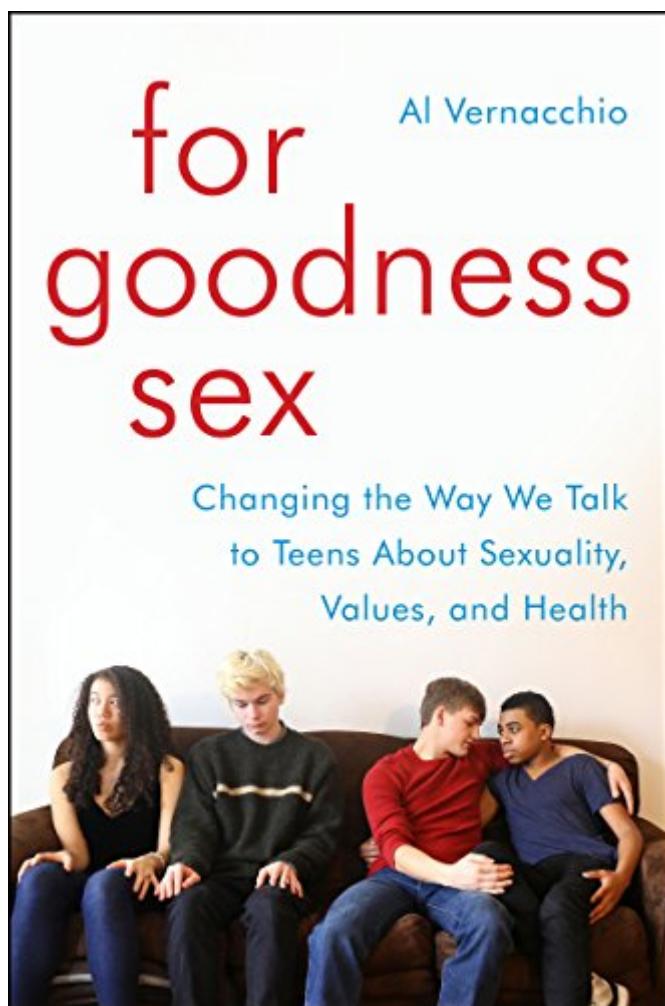


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# For Goodness Sex: Changing The Way We Talk To Teens About Sexuality, Values, And Health



## **Synopsis**

A progressive, effective, and responsible approach to sex education for parents and teens that challenges traditional teaching models and instead embraces 21st century realities by promoting healthy sexuality, values, and body image in young people. Sex education today generally falls into one of two categories: abstinence-only or abstinence-based education—both of which tend to withhold important, factual information and leave young adults ill-equipped to make safe decisions. Al Vernacchio, a high school sexuality educator who holds a Master's degree in Human Sexuality from the University of Pennsylvania, has created a new category: sex-positive education. In *For Goodness Sex*, he refutes the “disaster prevention” model of sex ed, offering a progressive and realistic approach: Sexuality is a natural part of life, and healthy sexuality can only develop from a sex-positive, affirming appreciation. Curious yet fearful of being judged, young people turn to peers, the Internet, and the media, where they receive problematic messages about sex: boys are studs, girls are sluts; real sex should be like porn; hookups are better than relationships. Without a broader understanding to offset these damaging perceptions, teenagers are dangerously unprepared intellectually and emotionally to grow and develop as sexual beings. *For Goodness Sex* offers the tools and insights adults need to talk young people and help them develop healthy values and safe habits. With real-life examples from the classroom, exercises and quizzes, and a wealth of sample discussions and crucial information, Vernacchio offers a guide to sex education for the twenty-first century.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

This book is really quite phenomenal, filling a much-needed niche in between the basic "birds and bees" discussion, and the point where you turn young adults out in the world to navigate everything themselves. This book is for parents who accept that their kids will have sex at some point, and want it to be a positive experience within responsible parameters, rather than something they undertake with information gleaned from friends and the internet (which both tend to offer huge amounts of misinformation along with any accurate info they may have). Even if you want your kids to wait until X point to have sex, this is a great book to read ahead of time, so you can have a bigger toolkit for knowing how to discuss particular topics with your teen. If you want to get a better sense of the author's approach to things, do an internet search for "Vernacchio TED Talk sex metaphor" and watch the video that comes up (it overlaps with one chapter of this book). The book is very "sex positive," meaning that he teaches that sex can be a good thing if approached responsibly, rather than being an uncomfortable or fear-based approach to sex. This is likely NOT a book you'll want to order and leave on your teen's bookshelf. It provides invaluable tools for framing concepts for your kids, but is written for parents, and he does offer his opinions on a wide range of topics, which you may or may not agree with or feel comfortable with (though he regularly says "if that doesn't feel right for you / match your values, then make a different choice"). I think most people I know will likely agree with only 60-95% of his individual opinions... BUT I think they'd benefit enormously from the book anyway because it gives you ideas on how to \*frame\* discussions with your kids in a way that's unmatched elsewhere.

For Goodness Sex: Changing the Way We Talk to Teens about Sexuality, Values, and Health by Al Vernacchio invites parents, students, educators and everyone, really, into Vernacchio's Sexuality and Society class in a private Quaker school near Philadelphia, PA. In Mr. Vernacchio's classroom, students are safe to sort out all of the negative and exploitive messages they've received about human sexuality and begin to build an accurate and positive image of themselves, which will in turn allow them to form healthy relationships and make responsible life choices. Vernacchio emphasizes sexuality as a force for good. The book is divided into eight chapters that

include subjects such as healthy sex, creating a family philosophy, becoming your authentic self, gender myths, and the effect of social media and technology on teen relationships. In Chapter 1, Vernacchio explains, "We are whole people with bodies, brains, emotions and spirits. All of those things are part of our sexuality." • Each chapter ends with real teen questions from the "Question Box" • Mr. V. keeps in the back of his classroom and Vernacchio's example of how he would answer them. Perhaps his most important message is the one that he shared in his March 2012 TED talk which as of October 2014 has been viewed more than 1.2 million times. Vernacchio says we need to abandon our "baseball metaphor" • for sex and adopt a more mutual, enjoyable metaphor like pizza. If you're having any doubts about whether or not you will like this book, watch Vernacchio's TED talk. If it speaks to you, there's a good chance his book will, too.

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