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Talk To Me First: Everything You Need To Know To Become Your Kids' "Go-To" Person About Sex



Synopsis

We live in a time when kids of all ages are bombarded with age-sensitive material wherever they turn; "sexting" and bullying are on the rise at an increasingly younger age, and teen moms are "celebrified." What is a concerned--and embarrassed--parent to do? With wit, wisdom, and savvy, Deborah Roffman translates her experiences gleaned from decades of teaching kids and parents, and as a mom, into strategies to help parents navigate this tricky terrain. *Talk to Me First* is for any parent who wants to become and remain the most credible and influential resource about sexuality in their children's lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I thought this was about how to have "the talk" with your kids but it turns out this is so much more. This is a parenting book with a reminder that good parenting doesn't go out the window when sex is involved. At first I was uncomfortable with some of what she was saying -- terminology, especially -- but, by the end, I was convinced that Deborah Roffman has good ideas and can help parents find a path forward in helping parents prepare kids for -- and defend them from -- today's over-sexualized world. Our pediatrician once gave us the lecture "Be the Parent" and it rings true, here. Even if this makes you squeamish, you owe it to your kids to break through and get over it. I loved this book and can't recommend it highly enough. Roffman is compelling in how she addresses "sex" questions from kids of all ages. She convinced me that "the talk" is only one part of a lifetime of preparing kids to inhabit, take care of, and respect their bodies. She points out how kids can misunderstand (or understand only too well if taken literally) the messages of modern culture -- that "sex" doesn't count

if it's not intercourse; that "sex" is fun and recreational but not necessarily (or not at all!) tied to relationships and responsibility (think "friends w/ benefits"); that porn is bad not b/c it shows sex but b/c it shows sex as idealized (IRL nobody really looks like that or performs like that) and devoid of emotional meaning and attachment, not to mention it's so often violent, etc. I also thought she had great analogies that helped me break through the hesitation that talking about sex would encourage sexual behavior and activity sooner.

One of the most frustrating and scary things about parenting adolescents is how quickly (and often imperceptibly) things change. What worked for your pre-teen or teen last week doesn't work this week. The knowledge you had a couple of months back about who your son or daughter's friends are is, in a moment, found to be inaccurate. What felt before to your son like kind, caring interest now feels like intrusion. "But I thought you liked (fill in blank)..." rapidly becomes an indictment of your own lack of getting it. "Getting it" is a somewhat mysterious thing that happens when your child (of any age) feels that you are engaged and close enough to them to make an accurate guess about who they are or how they might feel, now. But it doesn't happen without your teen, especially, feeling that you can be asked about, (semi-respectfully) argued with, and probed for your own opinions and values. Your teens want to know what you value and will use that information (gleaned more from what you do and how you do it, than from what you actually say) to figure out their own similar and unique values that form their sense of identity. If your teenager and pre-teen can ask you questions, express their own thoughts and have them listened to without a whole lot of judgment thrown in--while at the same time you provide sound information in a reasonable, calm way--you're on the way to "getting it." When you "get it" your kids will share more with you about what really matters and ask you about the things that really matter. Your kids will be safer, make better choices and manage the risks of adolescent more smoothly. Lest you think "getting it" is an elusive quality that cannot be taught--like being cool--it isn't.

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