**Questions about Sex and Sexuality (Key)**

1. **Why do gays do it in the butt?**

**The proper term for that is anal sex. It is when a man puts his penis into his partner’s anus. It’s not an activity that is specific only to homosexual couples. Sometimes heterosexuals engage in anal sex also.**

**What’s most important is that no matter the sexual orientation of the couple, it is possible to give or get a sexually transmitted disease (STD), including HIV, through anal sex. As with any type of sex, you can reduce your risk of transmitting or getting an STD by using a condom, although a condom is not 100% effective. Abstinence or not having any type of sex is the only 100% way not to get an STD.**

1. **Is it against The Bible to use birth control?**

**(Using VQP)**

**Thank you for asking; a lot of people have that question. Birth control is any method that is used to prevent pregnancy. Examples of birth control are the birth control pill, the shot, or the natural rhythm method. They all have varying degrees of effectiveness. Although, birth control can be used to prevent pregnancy, it is sometimes used for other health concerns,**

**Some people believe that birth control is not against the Bible or their religion and that every woman has the right to family planning. While other people believe that birth control is against the Bible or their religious beliefs. They believe that the sole purpose for sex is to reproduce, therefore, any mechanism used to prevent pregnancy and new life is wrong.**

**This is a subject that you should discuss more with a trusted adult family member, faith leader or health care provider to gain more insight. Eventually, you will have to decide for yourself what’s best for you and your situation.**

1. **What is secondary virginity?**

**Sometimes after a person has sex, whether it’s vaginal, oral or anal, they decide that it was a bad decision and they don’t want to do it again. Some people refer to this decision not to have sex again as having “secondary virginity.” In other cases, a person—guy or girl—might have been raped or abused. They feel that because they didn’t** [**consent**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/consent/) **to that behavior, it doesn’t really count, and they consider themselves virgins until they make the choice to have sex with someone.**

**This works for a lot of people. But it’s also important to count any sexual experiences you’ve had (consenting or not) as part of your sexual history when you visit a** [**health care provider**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/health-care-provider/)**. Your risk of exposure to STDs depends on whether you’ve had sex. If you have been exposed to STDs, then you need to protect yourself and any future partners from infection by getting tested.**

1. **Why do some people think gay couples shouldn’t have children?**

**(Using VQP)**

**I’m glad you asked that question, a lot of people have that same question. The answer to that question actually depends on someone’s personal beliefs and values. Since two gay people can’t physically have intercourse and conceive a baby, some people believe that a child should have a mother and a father. They also believe that raising a child in a same-sex environment will make that child homosexual. Factually, that is not true.**

**On the other hand, there are other people that believe that gay couples can be wonderful parents, no matter their sexual orientation. People of this mindset believe that as long as the parents have a healthy relationship and can provide a loving, protective environment for a child, they are as suitable a parent as any heterosexual person.**

**This is something that you may want to ask a parent or other caring adult, but eventually, you will have to decide for yourself. I hope I have given you enough information to help you with formulating an opinion. If not, I can certainly refer you to additional references or someone else that may be more helpful.**

1. **I’m afraid my coochy is too smelly to have oral sex. What should I do?**

**Every girl’s vagina has a natural scent that is perfectly normal. A girl should follow a good hygiene practice of washing with mild soap and water every day. If a girl washes daily, and is still concerned, she should make an appointment with a health care provider to make sure she doesn’t have an infection.**

**More importantly…it sounds like you are thinking about or having oral sex. You should also know that oral sex is a risky behavior that could put a person at risk for STDs.**

1. **Am I too young to fall in love? Is it the same as lust?**

**(Using VQP)**

**I’m glad you asked that question, a lot of young people your age have that same question. First of all, love is emotional and lust is often just physical. And they certainly don’t mean the same thing. And whether you’re too young…it really depends on a person’s values and beliefs about the “right” age for love. Some people feel that young people are very capable of loving-- Loving their family, their siblings, even a romantic partner. While other people believe that age and maturity level are key when determining if a person can be “in love”. The most important thing**

**is that you consider the emotional consequences that come with romantic love and maybe discuss the consequences with someone that you trust. Ultimately, it’s up to you to decide. And remember, just because you love someone, it doesn’t mean that the relationship has to involve sex. There are lots of way two people can show their love without having sex.**

1. **If a girl has more than one partner, is she a slut?**

**We should be careful about labeling and judging others. You never know a person’s situation and why they behave the way they do. What matters is that *you* are certain about your personal rules regarding your body and sex. Anytime someone (male or female) has multiple partners, they are increasing their risk for STDs. It is important for them to get tested with every new partner and always use condoms when having sex. A person with multiple partners may also have to deal with the social consequences (i.e., rumors, bad reputation).**

1. **I have a crush on a guy and we fooled around. Am I gay?**

***OPTION 1:***

**One “crush” or sexual behavior does not determine if a person is gay, lesbian or bisexual. During the teen years and young adulthood, many people are discovering who they are and that includes trying to figure out whether they’re lesbian, gay, heterosexual or bisexual. As they grow older and continue to develop, it will become clearer.**

**Also know that sexual behaviors and fantasies don’t determine orientation. Your feelings about other people, attractions and reactions to those feelings and attractions are what can help you define your orientation when you’re ready. And remember, even if you think you are just “fooling around”, if it involves sex, always use a condom to reduce your risk of getting or giving an STD. The best decision is to delay sexual activity while trying to figure things out. Experimentation could lead to some very serious life-long consequences.**

***OPTION 2: (Using VQP)***

**That’s a great question! A lot of young men your age have that same question. It’s actually based on someone’s values and beliefs. Being gay or homosexual is being attracted to someone of the same gender. Some people believe that participating in any sexual activity with someone of the same gender means that they are gay or homosexual. While others believe that the adolescent years are often a time of exploration and experimentation about sexuality (including attraction, orientation, and identity). They feel that orientation is not determined by one act or behavior. Regardless of which side you agree with, the best decision is to delay sexual activity while trying to figure things out. Experimentation could lead to some very serious life-long consequences. I encourage you to talk about this more with someone you trust, maybe a parent, other relative or a school counselor. Ultimately, you will have to decide for yourself. I hope I have answered your question. Let me know if you want to talk again or if I can connect you with someone who might be more knowledgeable on this subject.**

1. **What does carpet munching mean?**

**Carpet munching is a slang term for oral sex. Oftentimes, it refers to oral sex between women. One important point to remember is that oral sex is still SEX. And with sex, there are certain risks and consequences that should always be considered like STDs.**

1. **How can I help my friend realize that it was not her fault that a family member molested her?**

**First of all, I’d like to commend you for being a very good friend. Let your friend know that in NO WAY is it her fault that she was molested! Someone took advantage of her and committed a crime against her. It’s important to find out more information from her in order to get her the help she needs. I am mandated to help protect her and I’d like to speak with her in person. Do you think your friend would feel comfortable talking to me, the nurse or the counselor about this?**

*(Assuming the response is YES)* **Great, let’s go get her scheduled…**

*(Assuming the response is NO)* **O.K., I respect your opinion as her friend—but, I’d still like to meet her. I will do my best to make sure she is safe. I must follow through for her protection. Let’s go get her schedule…**

**She’s going to thank you for this. You will play a very important role by continuing to support her through this process.**

1. **Is masturbation bad for you?**

***(Using VQP)* Great question! This is a question that many young people your age ask. This actually depends on a person’s values or beliefs. Masturbation is when a person touches his or her own genitals for pleasure. There is no evidence that masturbation is harmful to a person’s health in any way. People do feel differently about whether or not it is acceptable. Some people believe that masturbation goes against their religious or moral beliefs while others believe it is a normal and healthy behavior. If you have this question it is a good idea to talk to a trusted adult like a parent or faith leader. Eventually, you will have to decide for yourself. I hope I answered your question and if you have any other questions about this please let me know.**

1. **How do cherries pop?**

**I want to be sure that we are on the same page. By “cherries”, do you mean a girl’s hymen? And by “popping”, do you mean broken or torn? O.K., since we’re on the same page. First of all, only girls have a hymen. The hymen is a thin layer of tissue that covers the vaginal opening. A small amount of blood can be produced, when the hymen in broken or torn for the first time. This can happen under several circumstances. It does not necessarily indicate a loss of virginity. The hymen can be broken at birth, by having sex, by exercise or even riding a bike. There have even been instances, where the hymen is thicker and has to be surgically removed. Every girl’s body and hymen are different.**

1. **How do women masturbate?**

**Women masturbate by touching their genital area or breast for the purpose of self-pleasure. Most people believe that masturbation is a part of a healthy sexuality. Every woman is different, so there is no *one* way to masturbate.**

1. **I have had sex before. Now, I’ve decided to wait. Is it true that I can become a virgin again?**

***(Using VQP)***

**I’m glad you asked that question. I lot of young people your age have that same question. The answer actually depends on someone’s values and beliefs. Since you have had sex, you should get tested for STDs and pregnancy. Once you know your health status, you can move forward with your decision to wait. As far as becoming a virgin again--Some people believe that if a person has any type of sex (vaginal, oral or anal) that they are no longer virgins. While other people believe that a person can “re-claim” virginity after having sex with a vow (promise) not to engage in sex again.**

**Just know, the label of “virgin” is not what’s important. What’s important is your decision to do what’s best for you. Deciding to wait is a very mature and healthy choice.**

**You should talk to a trusted adult, family member or counselor to support you in your decision.**

1. **I am 13 years old and I really want to have sex. Is it normal that a 13-year-old wants to have sex already?**

**It’s** **normal for people to start thinking about having sex when they reach their teen years. Puberty makes people curious and more aware of their sexual feelings and other people’s sexuality. Sometimes these feelings can be overwhelming, and people think they have to act on them to get them to go away. This isn’t true.**

**Even though you may feel turned on or like you want to have sex, it doesn’t mean you are ready to have sex. There is a lot more to having a good sexual experience than just feeling desire or being curious about what sex might feel like. It is important to also have a healthy and trusting relationship with a partner before you have any kind of sexual experience.**

**There are a lot of good things and bad things that can result from having sex. Sex is just one of many ways to share intimacy with a partner, but it also has serious consequences, like getting pregnant or getting a sexually transmitted disease (STD). If someone isn’t ready for sex, they might feel regret later or realize that they didn’t make a good decision and wish they could change it.**

**Eventually, you will decide when you are ready to be sexual with a partner. At that point, be sure you can talk openly with your partner so that you can explain what you do or don’t want to do. Both partners need to know each other’s limits so that no one feels forced, uncomfortable or regrets something the next day.**

**Someday you will feel ready for sex. Many teens wait until they’ve graduated from high school or are in a certain kind of committed relationship, like being in love, being with a person for a certain amount of time or being married. When you think you’re ready, talk to friends, parents or someone you trust to talk about the decision. Take time to talk to your partner about it, too, and make sure it is what they also want.**

1. **Is it okay to have anal sex?**

**Anal sex, just as vaginal and oral sex is a very risky behavior that can come with certain consequences. First, engaging in anal sex does not preserve a person’s virginity. Anal sex is still sex. And when having any type of sex, a person put’s themselves at risk for getting or giving an STD’s.**

**With anal sex, the tissue in and around the anus is very thin and if torn, can create a direct path for potential infection to enter the body. Condoms can reduce the risk of getting an infection. However, the only 100% way not to get an infection is to NOT HAVE SEX.**

1. **Is it OK to have sex at 15 if we have been together for a while and really care about each other?**

***(Option 1: Even though this is a non-universal topic we wanted to address the emotions and relationship status that go along with this question. Always ask enough questions to determine if the relationship is legal. Please be aware of your State Laws regarding abuse reporting laws.)***

**It’s** **normal for people to start thinking about having sex when they’ve been together for a while. Before you make that very important decision, please consider these things. You may hear a lot of your friends talk about sex, but the truth is, most kids your age ARE NOT HAVING SEX. They are choosing to wait because they have considered the many physical, social and emotional consequences that come with such a big decision.**

**There are a lot of good things and bad things that can result from having sex. Sex can make you feel closer to your partner. However, when two people have a healthy and trusting relationship, there are many ways they can show their feelings without having sex. Sex is just one of many ways to share intimacy with a partner. Sex also has serious consequences, like getting pregnant or getting a sexually transmitted disease (STD). If someone isn’t ready for sex, they might feel regret later or realize that they didn’t make a good decision and wish they could change it.**

**Eventually, you will decide when you are ready to be sexual with a partner. At that point, be sure you can talk openly with your partner so that you can explain what you do or don’t want to do. Both partners need to know each other’s limits so that no one feels forced, uncomfortable or regrets something the next day.**

**Someday you will feel ready for sex, and even then, it will be important to be in a healthy and trustful relationship. It will be equally important to protect yourselves against, unplanned pregnancy or STDs. When you think you’re ready, talk to friends, parents or someone you trust about this decision. Take time to talk to your partner about it, too, and make sure it is what they also want.**

***(Option 2: Using VQP- When the relationship does not violate law. Always ask enough questions to determine if the relationship is legal. Please be aware of your State Laws regarding abuse reporting laws)***

**I’m glad you asked that question. I lot of people your age have that same question. The answer depends upon a person’s values and beliefs. The fact is, in spite of what you may think or hear, most people your age ARE NOT having sex. And we also know that many young people later regret the decision to have sex early because they were not prepared for ALL of the consequences (i.e., pregnancy, STDs, emotional stress and unsure relationships) that come along with the decision to have sex.**

**There are others that believe that a teen your age *can* handle the decision to have sex as long as they are in a legal, healthy consensual relationship. This something that you should really talk over with an older family member that you trust or a counselor. Eventually, you will have to decide for yourself if you are ready to handle the consequences of such a huge decision.**

**I hope I have been helpful, if not, I can refer you to someone that can talk with you more.**

1. **Is queefing normal?**

**First, let’s get straight on the definition. Queefing is when air is released from the vagina. It can happen during vaginal intercourse or other physical activities like exercise. More importantly, if a person is having sex, they should be having protected sex, using birth control and/or condoms to reduce the risk of an unplanned pregnancy or an STD.**

1. **Is masturbation ok?**

***(Using VQP)***

**That’s a great question. A lot of kids wonder about masturbation. Masturbation is when a person touches their genitals for pleasure. I can’t share my own beliefs about whether or not it’s ok to masturbate because families have really different beliefs about masturbation. One thing I can tell you is masturbation will not physically hurt your body. Nor will it lead to blindness or make hair grow on your palms or drive you “insane.”**

**Some families believe its ok as long as you’re in a private place. Other families believe it’s never ok. You need to check with your family or another trusted adult to find out how they feel about it. Have I answered your question? If I didn’t, you can leave another question in the box or you can talk to me after class.**

1. **My boyfriend calls me all the time and asks what I am doing before and after school. Is that okay?**

**If I’m interpreting your question correctly, it sounds as though the calls make you feel uncomfortable. Is that true?** *(Assuming the response is YES)*

**I’m glad you asked that question. It shows that you are being very intuitive or in touch with your feelings. Even though your boyfriend may be a nice guy in some aspects, being overly attached or trying to keep up with you all the time *MAY* be a sign of an unhealthy relationship. Trying to monitor a person’s whereabouts could mean that there is not enough trust in the relationship. It could also be a sign that a person is trying to control the other person’s activity or life.**

**On the other hand, you could just be a terrific person that he likes to be around ☺ You are the only one that can determine what *does* or *does not* make you feel uncomfortable. If his actions do make you uncomfortable, you should share your feelings with him and see if he responds respectfully. If he does not, you may want to closely assess if you are in a healthy relationship or not. And if not, end the relationship if you think you can do it without harm. If you are uncertain, ask a trusted adult or maybe the police for help.**

1. **I want to be close to my girlfriend, but I don’t want to have sex. Is this possible?**

**That’s a very mature question and I thank you for asking it. It seems like you have decided on a personal rule NOT to have sex, yet you are in a relationship. Remember that vaginal, oral and anal are all considered forms of sex. So your rule should apply to every type of sex.**

**Another word for closeness is intimacy. Intimacy is when two people can be themselves and share their thoughts, feelings and emotions and be vulnerable without being afraid they will be laughed at or judged. Intimacy is an important element in a healthy relationship that involves sharing a feeling of emotional closeness with another person.**

**There are many things two people can do to have intimacy without sex. You could hold hands, cuddle or kiss. If you do not want to have sex but want to be physical, make a promise to each other that things will stop at a certain point. Be very clear about what is allowed and what’s off limits. Then agree that both of you are responsible for sticking to those limits. The last thing you want is for sex to “just happen,” which is how some people end up facing an unplanned pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).** **Just remember, a person could still get an STD from genital to genital rubbing. The most important thing to do is talk with your partner before things get physical.**

**There are also non-physical ways to show intimacy. A couple might share common interests like, gaming, sports, talking on the phone, watching movies together, going on romantic picnics, writing poetry, etc. Learn to watch for signs that may signal that you are putting yourself “at risk” of breaking your rule. Even being alone with your partner may be something that you may want to avoid in order to stick to your plan. This is when going out in groups or hanging out with the family are good dating practices.**

1. **If I have oral sex am I still a virgin?**

***(Using VQP)***

**I’m glad you asked that question, a lot of people your age have that same question. The answer actually depends on someone’s values and beliefs. The fact is that oral sex is a type of sex. As far as the “virginity” portion of your question--Some people believe that if you abstain from vaginal sex that you are a virgin. While others believe that abstaining from ALL forms of sex means that you are a virgin. This is something you will have to decide for yourself, based on your personal beliefs and values. You may want to talk this over with a trusted adult (not just your partner☺).**

**Just remember, the physical, emotional and social consequences that come with the decision to have oral sex. Don’t take it lightly. Again, this is something you will have to ultimately decide for yourself. I hope I have answered your question. If not, we can always talk more or I can refer you to someone that may have better insight than I do about such an important topic.**

1. **Do you masturbate?**

**As** **we discussed during our ground rules, there will be no personal questions asked of anyone in the class.**

1. **I’m so confused about virginity. Is there a real definition?**

***(Using VQP)***

**I’m glad you asked this question. A lot of kids your age have that question. The definition of the word virginity means never having sex. Virginity is an issue that is values-based because not everyone agrees with what “counts” as sex.**

**Some people believe that sex is when a** [**penis**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/penis/) **goes inside a** [**vagina**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/vagina/)**. And that having this type of sex is the only way people lose their virginity. While other people believe that vaginal, oral and anal sex all count as sex. Therefore, if you have ANY of those types of sex, then you’ve lost your virginity.**

**Defining “virginity” isn’t as important as these other things; making sure you feel good about your decision to have sex or not and if you decide to have sex, making sure you’re protected from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or an unplanned** [**pregnancy**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/pregnancy/)**.**

**The important thing is to stay true to yourself. That means taking your time to make decisions about sex that are best for you—not anyone else. Base these decisions on your own beliefs,** [**values**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/values/) **and feelings. If there are sexual things you don’t want to do until you’re older, or when you’re in a certain kind of relationship, or when you’re partnered with someone for life, those can help you determine how you define virginity**.

1. **What is Spanish fly? My girlfriend says that if you take it, you get really horny.**

**Spanish fly is a type of beetle and is sometimes claimed to have aphrodisiac properties (in other words makes you horny or aroused). However, it actually causes the urinary tract and genital area to become irritated and is poisonous. This is an illegal drug and should never be taken.**

1. **I’m going out with someone who’s much older than me. What’s the big deal?**

**We can all have attractions to people in our lives, sometimes regardless of age. However, you can be attracted to someone and not act on that feeling. These feelings can help you learn about yourself and what you’re looking for in a partner, without getting into a situation that you’re not ready for.**

**There can be a big difference in maturity levels and life experience between two people, especially when there is a big difference in age. Because of this, it can get tricky when a teen wants to become involved with someone who is much older than he or she is. Without realizing it, there is an imbalance of power in the relationship.**

**Because older partners tend to have more experience, and possibly more freedom, this can give them an unfair advantage over younger teens that have less experience and freedom. This can affect things like where you hang out, who drives and what you do sexually. It can also place pressure on the younger partner to try things they’re not ready for, simply because the older partner makes it seem like it’s no big deal.**

**Problems also crop up if the older person—who can be male or female—stops you from hanging out with friends your own age or doing things at school. This can get in the way of the normal process of growing from a teen to an** [**adult**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/adult/)**.**

**If you are having** [**sex**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/sex/) **in your relationship,** [**check the laws in your state**](http://sexetc.org/action-center/sex-in-the-states/)**. Depending on your ages, your partner could be breaking the law. In all but two states, it is illegal for anyone over 18—male or female—to have sex with someone under 16. These laws are meant to protect young people from being exploited by people who are older. It’s a good idea to know the laws in your state.**

1. **I’m 16 and I can’t seem to keep an erection. I saw some Viagra in my dad’s cabinet—can I use it?**

**Guys may have trouble getting or keeping an erection when they’re nervous, scared or worried about something. If you are concerned, you should get checked by your doctor or clinician to see whether anything physical is going on.**

**More importantly, I want to address the Viagra portion of your question. Viagra is a medication that is prescribed to people with certain medical conditions. You should never take medication if it hasn’t been prescribed to you, no matter what it is. Viagra should not be used just for fun or casually. Some teenage and** [**adult**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/adult/) **males who have abused Viagra have ended up in the emergency room. It’s just not worth it.**

1. **How can you tell if someone might become abusive in a relationship?**

**The answer to this question isn’t clear-cut. It’s really hard to tell up front whether someone might become abusive. Abusers can often be very charming in the beginning. That’s why many people get trapped in abusive relationships. They don’t see it coming, and by the time they recognize the abuse, they feel like they’ve caused it or can’t get out of it. Abusers usually blame their partners for the abuse.**

**They might say things like, “I can’t believe you made me hit you.” That’s how abusers keep their partners afraid and dependent.**

**Here are some questions to ask yourself if you think you might be in an abusive relationship:**

**Does your partner…**

* **Constantly criticize you, your intelligence and/or your self-worth?**
* **Act jealous, especially when other people try to talk to you or spend time with you?**
* **Make threats against you or someone you care about?**
* **Try to keep you from having any friends, especially friends they might see as potential romantic competition?**
* **Have problems controlling their temper—even if it’s not directed at you?**
* **Insist that you do something sexual that you don’t want to do, even when you have told them you don’t want to?**

**If you answered “yes” to one or more of these questions, you may want to talk with a trusted adult to determine how to get out of this relationship. The fact that you are asking this question shows that you are very intuitive and you want healthy relationships if your life.**

**If you decide to leave the relationship, it’s normal to have mixed emotions about your decision sometimes. You may have developed strong feelings for his person, and feel obligated to stay. However, abuse of any kind (*physical, emotional, financial, verbal, sexual or spiritual etc.*)—is acceptable.**

1. **My penis looks smaller compared to other guys I’ve seen in the locker room. Am I normal?**

**Every young man’s penis develops differently and it’s never good to compare. At this age, young men are going through puberty and there are a number of changes that will happen-- penis growth may be one of them. Remember to respect the privacy of others—you never want to make someone uncomfortable. If you are really concerned, you should see a health care professional. However, they will more than likely tell you just as I did, as you go through puberty, you penis may grow more. And every man’s penis has a different shape and size. It’s something that makes them unique.**

1. **Are girls the only ones who worry about their body image?**

**No. Although there’s a lot more information for girls about body image, boys also experience similar pressures and worries about their bodies. The messages given to girls and boys (based on stereotypes about what males and females “should” look like) are different, too.**

**Girls get the message that they should be super thin. Guys get the message that they should be big with bulging muscles. That often leads guys to start lifting weights at a young age. When you start lifting weights before age 14 or 15 (as a general rule), the heavy exercise can damage muscles, tendons and bones that are still growing. That can lead to permanent damage.**

**Guys sometimes even take steroids, drugs that can make them larger and stronger. But these drugs are harmful and illegal. Even steroid-type supplements sold in health food stores can cause health problems.**

**Guys also worry about their hair, skin, penis size and the way they look in general, but they may feel discouraged from talking about their feelings.**

**Those who feel insecure about their bodies should talk to a parent or other trusted adult, like a teacher, relative, doctor or clergy person, for example. They can connect you with counselors or support groups that can help.**

1. **Can you get pregnant from swallowing semen?**

**No, you can’t get pregnant because the digestive system is different from the reproductive system. Pregnancy happens when sperm (found in semen) fertilizes an egg during vaginal sex. What’s most important about this question is that it is concerning oral sex. There are many risks associated with oral sex including STDs and HIV. There are also additional emotional and social consequences that should be considered. For instance, will you have oral sex, and then regret it? Or are you willing to risk a “bad” reputation if your partner shares your personal business? These consequences should also be considered.**

1. **What does LGBTQ mean?**

[**LGBTQ**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/lgbtq/) **stands for “**[**lesbian**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/lesbian/)**,** [**gay**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/gay/)**,** [**bisexual**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/bisexual/)**,** [**transgender**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/transgender/) **and** [**questioning**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/questioning/)**.” For some, the Q stands for “**[**queer**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/queer/)**.”**

[**Heterosexual**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/heterosexual/)**, lesbian, gay and bisexual are all sexual orientations.** [**Sexual orientation**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/sexual-orientation/) **refers to our inner sense of ourselves and to whom we’re emotionally, romantically, physically and sexually attracted. People who are lesbian or gay are attracted to people of their same** [**gender**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/gender/)**. Gay means-- men who are attracted to men and women who are attracted to women. People who are bisexual people can feel attracted to people of more than one gender.**

**The term queer can sometimes apply to someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Some people call themselves queer, but not everyone feels comfortable with that term because it has sometimes been used as an insult against LGBTQ people.**

**Transgender is different from lesbian, gay and bisexual. Though these terms are often grouped together under LGBTQ, transgender is actually a** [**gender identity**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/gender-identity/)**, not a sexual orientation.**

**Gender identity is our innermost sense of whether we feel like we’re a guy, a girl or someone else altogether. Our feelings about our gender identity often match up with the bodies we have. But sometimes our feelings and our bodies don’t match. When our feelings about our gender doesn’t match our body, that’s called being transgender. Transgender people can be any sexual orientation, just like people who aren’t transgender can be any sexual orientation.**

1. **Does the pill make you gain weight?**

**No. This is a very popular myth that even sexuality educators and doctors repeat. This myth probably has stuck because people of all ages tend to gain weight over time, whether they are using birth control or not.**

**This is especially true for teen girls who are going through puberty at the same time they are taking the Pill. What seems like weight gain from the Pill is actually weight gain from normal development that happens during puberty. However, taking the pill may increase a person’s appetite due to the increase in hormones in the body. The key is to satisfy that increased appetite with healthy foods instead of junk foods.**

1. **My partner is pressuring me to take drugs or get drunk before we have sex. What should I do? What should I say?**

**Alcohol and drugs do NOT make sex better. Alcohol and other drugs affect the way we think, but they don’t make sex better. Alcohol can make someone feel less inhibited—which can be really bad in a sexual situation. It can make you do things--which you wouldn’t normally do. In a healthy relationship, people respect each other and DON’T ask their partner to do things that are harmful. This may be a good time to re-examine your relationship and to decide whether it is healthy for you to remain in it.**

**Alcohol and other drugs can also make it difficult to remember how to use a condom or make it seem like it’s no big deal to have sex. In general, alcohol and other drugs make things seem less risky, when in fact, you’re actually increasing your risk for making poor decisions.**

**Tell your partner you don’t want to take the chance of hurting yourself or getting in trouble. If the relationship is healthy, your partner will respect your decision and not push the issue. If not, you may want to evaluate if the relationship is good for you.**

1. **How do I buy a condom? What kind do I buy?**

**Condoms may be purchased at most grocery, convenience or drug stores. They are also available at most health clinics for free. The key to buying/getting a condom is to make sure it is made of latex or polyurethane, which reduces the risk of STDs. You should never buy lambskin condoms if you are concerned about protection. It is also important to always check the expiration date on the individual package BEFORE using it. And you should never keep a condom in a hot place like a glove box in a car or tear it open with your teeth. You risk tearing the condom, which makes it less effective in preventing pregnancy or STDs.**

1. **Can you get an abortion without your parents knowing if you are under 18?**

**No. In Texas and Louisiana, state law requires that the parent or legal guardian provide written permission for unmarried teens (under the age of 18) to have an abortion.**

***There are a few exceptions:***

**1) The teen can go before a judge and receive permission from the judge to have an abortion without the parent’s permission (also known as Judicial Bypass). You can visit**[**Jane's Due Process**](http://www.janesdueprocess.org/)**page for more information.**

**2) Teens who are legally emancipated do not need to have permission from a parent or guardian or**

**3) If there is a medical emergency and the pregnant teen needs an abortion, the parent does not have to give permission.**

1. **Is it against God to have sex if you’re not married?**

***(Using VQP)***

**I’m glad you asked that question. A lot of people your age have that question and the answer actually depends on someone’s values and beliefs. Some people believe that it’s not against God as long as two people are mature and both consent to sex or a sexual relationship. While other people believe that sex should only happen within the context of marriage. This is something you should talk to someone like a family member or a pastor about. Ultimately, it will be up to you to decide what’s best for you. I hope I’ve answered your question. If you would like to talk more about it, I’m available or I can refer you to someone that may be more helpful.**

1. **Why do parents get so mad when they find out you’re having sex, even though you’re using protection?**

**Wow! That is a very good question. Parents are charged with a heavy responsibility of guiding and doing what’s best for their children. Give your parents a break! Sometimes it’s hard for parents to see their “babies” grow up! Even though you have made a very mature decision to protect yourself during sex, your parents may still be worried about all of the other consequences to sex, besides pregnancy and STDS. They may be trying to protect you from some of the negative consequences that they know about because of their own life’s experiences. It’s good that you’ve opened the door to this very important conversation. Give them a little time to “calm down”, then let them know why you made such an important decision. Hopefully, you can continue to build a relationship based on mutual respect, understanding and open communication. They might be able to offer a perspective that you have not thought about.**

1. **What if someone is touching a girl and she doesn’t like it?**

**No one has the right to touch someone if it is unwanted. If that is happening, it’s best to share this information with a parent, school nurse or school counselor. Having a caring adult to discuss the details with (i.e. age of the girl, age of the person doing the touching, circumstance) will be helpful in sorting out what to do. If you would like to share more with me now, you can. Or I can refer you to someone else that can help.**

**The bottom line, no one should ever feel uncomfortable when touched by another person. A person always has the right to say “stop it” or “no, I don’t like that”. Again, the person being touched should tell a caring adult to help sort things out. If necessary, it may be reported to the authorities for her protection.**

1. **I just had unprotected sex. What is emergency contraception? Is it the same as the “morning-after-pill?”**

**EC is a form of birth control used in instances just like this. And yes, it is also referred to as the “morning-after pill”. It is a high dosage of hormone that prevents an egg from attaching/implanting itself to the uterus. It will not stop or abort a pregnancy if fertilization and implantation has already occurred. So it is best taken as soon as you realize your BC has failed or a person has had unprotected sex. It is most effective if taken within 5 days of unprotected sex. You can purchase emergency contraception from most drugstores and is now available without age restrictions. FYI, the copper IUD can also be used to prevent pregnancy after unprotected intercourse. If you’re interested in learning more, you’ll need to ask your health care provider for more information.**

1. **Is it true that you can’t get pregnant if you do it doggy style?**

**I want to clarify your question a bit. What do you mean by “doggy style”? Whether you are talking about anal sex or a particular position of vaginal sex…there is always a possibility of pregnancy if sperm or ejaculate gets near the vaginal opening. What’s most important is that IF a person decides to have sex, they should always use protection**.

1. **Is it OK to have an abortion?**

***(Using VQP)***

**Thank you for asking that question. Just to be clear, an abortion is terminating, or ending, a pregnancy. Whether it is OK depends on a person’s values or beliefs. Some people believe that abortion is wrong in any situation because it is against their religion. Others believe that abortion is OK, only if the woman was raped, or her health is in danger. While others believe that a woman has a right to make decisions about her body, regardless of the situation.
Eventually, you will have to decide for yourself what you believe. I suggest you talk more with a trusted adult, a counselor, or a health care provider to help with your position on this matter.**

**\*Check the state laws to add additional facts about legal age and parent permission.**

1. **If someone at this school had sex with his dog what would happen?**

**Having sex with an animal is called bestiality. And practicing bestiality can be very dangerous. It will put the person at risk for serious infection or disease. And by the way, bestiality is also illegal in most states.**

1. **I’m not circumcised, is there anything special I need to do for my sexual health if I have an uncircumcised penis? Also, I’m afraid that when I have sex, my partner will be grossed out. What can I do?**

**First, I’d like to say that whether a penis is circumcised or uncircumcised, it does not affect its function. With an uncircumcised penis, special care should be taken to clean the penis by gently pulling back the foreskin to wash with mild soap and water.**

**As far as your partner being “grossed out”…that is another reason to give the decision to have sex a lot of thought. In a trusting, healthy relationship, partners should accept and appreciate each other for who they are---and that includes their bodies.**

1. **Is it possible to have a sexually transmitted disease (STD) and not have any symptoms? If so, how can I know if my partner is infected?**

**Yes, it is possible to have an STD and not have any symptoms. Some STDs have symptoms of burning, itching or blisters…but the most common symptom of an STD…is NO symptom at all. Therefore, you can’t tell if your partner is infected by just looking at them. If a person is going to be sexually active, they and their partner should visit a clinic to get tested for STDs (incl. HIV). And if a person changes partners or has more than one partner, they should get tested every 6 mos.**

1. **I’m pregnant, what should I do?**

***(Option 1)***

**Having a child is a big decision. There are 3 options that can be considered:**

1. **Parenting the baby yourself**
2. **Adoption- giving the baby to someone else more suitable to raise a child or**
3. **Abortion or terminating the pregnancy (*you have limited time and you may need parent permission for this option*)**

**The decision of what to do when faced with an unplanned pregnancy is often really hard to make, especially for a teenager. First, find someone you can trust (like a parent, older family member, counselor, or partner) to help you sort through your choices. It can also be helpful to talk with the person with whom you had** [**sex**](http://sexetc.org/sex_terms/sex/)**, to see how they feel about the situation.**

**But in the end, you are the one who needs to make this decision for yourself. No girl should keep or terminate a pregnancy based solely on what her parents or partner wants. Whatever you decide, be sure to weigh both the positive and negative consequence of your choices. And again, seeking the advice of a caring adult may be helpful.**

***(Option 2- If your organization prohibits the topic of abortion)***

**Having a child is a big decision. I’m glad you came to me to discuss this. I would like for you to consider discussing this with a trusted adult family member and your healthcare provider. They can help you determine your next steps based on your specific situation and your health.**

**But in the end, you are the one who needs to make this decision for yourself. Remember, if you determine that raising a baby at your age is not what you want, adoption may be an option for you to consider. Whatever you decide, be sure to weigh both the positive and negative consequence of your choices. And again, seeking the advice of a caring adult may be helpful.**

1. **Does having a baby hurt?**

**Every woman experiences birth differently. For those that may experience pain, there are medications available to ease the pain, if they choose to take it. If you decide to ever have a baby, your experience will be unique to you.**

1. **I’m pregnant. How do I decide what to do?**

***(Option 1)***

**Every girl is different. Therefore, she needs to look at her own life circumstances to make the decision that is best for her.**

**Here are some questions a girl who is faced with an unplanned pregnancy can ask herself. The answers can help her determine which decision is best for her.**

* **How do I feel about having a baby now? How do I feel about adoption? How do I feel about abortion?**
* **What are my goals for the next year? Five years? Ten years?**
* **How would having a baby now affect these goals?**
* **Where am I in school? Do I plan to finish high school and go to college? How would having a baby affect this?**
* **What is my financial situation? How would my choice affect me financially?**
* **What kind of social support do I have in my life?**

**Regardless of what a girl chooses to do, it’s best to make a decision as soon as possible. If you choose to place the baby with an adoption agency or to become a parent, you needs to see a health care professional for prenatal visits. If you choose adoption, you should begin the process of selecting an adoption agency. If you chooses to terminate the pregnancy by having an abortion, it should be done as early in the pregnancy as possible. Whatever you decide, it should be based on the responses to the questions above—not because someone pressured you to make a certain decision.**

***(Option 2: If your organization prohibits the topic of abortion)***

**Every girl is different. Therefore, she needs to look at her own life circumstances to make the decision that is best for her.**

**Here are some questions a girl who is faced with an unplanned pregnancy can ask herself. The answers can help her determine which decision is best for her.**

* **How do I feel about raising a baby now?**
* **What are my goals for the next year? Five years? Ten years?**
* **How would raising a baby now affect these goals?**
* **Where am I in school? Do I plan to finish high school and go to college? How would raising a baby affect this?**
* **What is my financial situation? Do I have enough financial support to help me raise a baby?**
* **How do I feel about adoption?**
* **What kind of social support do I have in my life?**

**Regardless of what a girl chooses to do, it’s best to make a decision as soon as possible. If you choose to place the baby with an adoption agency or to become a parent, you need to see a health care professional for prenatal care as soon as possible. If you choose adoption, you should also begin the process of selecting an adoption agency. Whatever you decide, it should be based on the responses to the questions above—not because someone pressured you to make a certain decision.**

1. **I have a smell and slight discharge coming out of my vagina. What is it and is it normal?**

**A slight vaginal smell and discharge are perfectly natural. But it could also be a sign of infection, especially if the woman is sexually active. To be safe, it’s best to see a medical professional to determine the reason for the condition.**

1. **What if my partner doesn’t want to use condoms?**

**In a perfect world, it would be easy to have an honest conversation about safer sex with your partner before you include sexual behaviors in your relationship. Unfortunately, many people find themselves trying to convince a partner to use a condom at the moment when they are feeling turned on, emotionally or physically vulnerable or even drunk.**

**If you take the time beforehand to have this important conversation, then you can anticipate any potential problems and take steps to avoid situations where it will be hard to get what you need. For example, if you let your partner know that you want to use a condom, and he or she feels defensive about it, then you can take time to let him or her know that you want to use a condom because you care about him or her, your sex life together and the future of your relationship.**

1. **How can you avoid getting a sexually transmitted disease (STD)?**

**The only 100% way to avoid getting an STD is NOT to have sex (or abstain from sex). If a person chooses to have sex, they can reduce the risk of getting an STD be using a condom every time they have sex AND getting the HPV vaccination.**

1. **All my partner wants is sex, and I consider myself a little too young. How can I tell him or her that I don’t want to have sex without embarrassing my partner or hurting the relationship?**

**It sounds like you have decided a rule for yourself regarding sex…and that’s to wait until you’re older. If you and your partner are in a healthy and respectful relationship, you should be able to share your rule or decision with your partner without hurting the relationship. Tell your partner your reasons for making the decision and discuss whether it is something you both will be happy with. If your partner does not support your decision to wait…it’s a sign that you are in an unhealthy relationship and you should end it. If you need help with how to end it, or you feel like you can’t do it safely you can always ask a trusted adult.**

1. **My partner and I had sex, but now I’m not sure I want to keep having sex. Is it okay to say no?**

**Absolutely. You need to do what is right for you, no matter what you’ve done in the past.**

**When it comes to sex, part of the decision-making process is evaluating the decision after it happens. Some people realize that, for whatever reason, they weren’t ready for a sexual relationship. You are entitled to decide whether you want to have sex again, even if you’ve had sex before. You can change your mind, and your partner must respect your choice.**

**The bottom line is it doesn’t matter if you’ve never had sex, done it 10 times or 100 times; you still get to decide each and every time whether sex is what you really want.**

1. **What if a girl is 25 and isn’t married, is it O.K. for her to have sex?**

***(Using VQP)***

**That’s a very good question. The fact is-- a lot of people have that same question. The response to that question actually depends on a person’s values and beliefs. Some people believe that no matter the person’s age, sex should only happen within a marriage. Others believe that as long the person is mature and can take responsibility for the consequences of their decision to have sex, then it is O.K. to have sex, regardless of marital status. What’s most important is that the person makes safe and healthy decisions that prevent them from getting an STD or having an unplanned pregnancy.**