

ADVICE COLUMN
**IF YOU DON'T
KNOW ... ASK!**

Q: I am an adult, but I don't have any children of my own. My adult friends always complain about how hard it is for them to talk with their children about important issues such as sex. Why is that?

A: Some parents find it hard to talk with their children about sex because they don't know where to start or what to say. Other parents are afraid that if they talk about sex it will encourage their children to start having sex or getting ready to sooner. It is easier for adults to talk with their children if they have developed a trusting relationship when their children were very young. But it is never too late. Parents just have to do it. Sit down with your children and tell them about your values, what you expect from them and what they can expect from you. Believe it or not, children want to hear the truth from their parents or an adult they trust. Don't wait for your children to come to you after something happens. And above all, adults should be ready to listen as well as to talk.

Q: What are teens most concerned about these days?

A: What we hear at the Teen Town Hall meetings we run is that other teens are really worried about gun violence and being safe at school. Nobody wants to get HIV and that makes teens concerned about sex and pregnancy, too. Teens wish they lived in safer neighborhoods and almost every teen in town wants more activities and things to do.

The Youth Leadership Task Force of DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy invites you to send your questions for its monthly Adults Only advice column. Please send in your questions to ifourth@teen-pregnancydc.org. In the subject line, please put Advice Column.

Teens interested in developing leadership and advocacy skills are invited to join the Youth Leadership Task Force, a group of teens 14-18, from across the city who give DC Campaign their perspective on issues that affect life for teens.

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