

marri *Findings*

FAITH & FAMILY



The Distinct But Complementary Roles of Parents on Children's Sex Education

"I don't know how old I was when I first learned about sex, but it was young. I'm sure my understanding of sex at the time was bare bones and probably inaccurate. I was filled with questions about sex and had no one to ask them to...I wish my parents had talked to me about sex. I might have made different choices if they had talked to me about sex growing up." –Kelley

Good Parenting Safeguards Adolescents' Sexual Behavior



High parental [involvement](#), parental [monitoring](#), strong parent-adolescent [emotional attachment](#), and [good communication](#), protect against early sexual debut, delay sexual initiation, reduce teenage pregnancy, [STDs](#), and sexual risk taking (despite [peer influence](#) and [poverty](#)).

Mothers and Fathers Influence Sexual Behavior Differently



Mothers and fathers influence children's attitudes and behaviors about sex in [distinct](#) but [complementary](#) ways. Evaluations of maternal and [paternal](#) centered sex-ed programs, and assessments of mothers and fathers [specific](#) impact. illustrate the considerable

Paternal Influence on Sexual Behavior



Father-son communication increases rates of abstinence and delays sexual debut among adolescent boys. Father-daughter relationship quality, level of connectedness, high comfort level talking about sex, also effectively delays adolescent girl's sexual debut. Additionally, paternal warmth protects adolescents from deviant peers and risky behaviors (especially daughters).

Parent-Child Communication is Essential



Parent- adolescent communication, in general and about sex, effectively helps teenagers to delay sexual initiation, avoid increased sexual activity, pregnancy, and sexual risk taking (including if affected by HIV/STIs). Communication is most effective when the parent-child relationship is strong and communication about sex is comfortable.



Explore more research about parental influence on children's sexual attitudes and behaviors at **Marripedia.org**.

effect parents have on teenagers.

Maternal Influence on Sexual Behavior



Mother-child connectedness decreases the odds of having sex and delays sexual initiation. Mothers also communicate with children about sex more than fathers (especially with daughters). Mother-child communication fosters conservative attitudes about sex, delays sexual debut, and decreases sexually risky behavior.

Parental Personal Example Impacts Sexual Initiation



Experiencing parental separation during childhood can increase the likelihood of early sex more than other substantial factors, such as alcoholism.

Parental Values Affect Sexual Attitudes and Behavior



Children of parents who value abstinence exhibit delayed sexual initiation and lower odds of sexual behaviors. Children of parents who support contraception display accelerated sexual initiation and greater expectations of causal sex.

BLOG: Phase 2 of the Father-Child Relationship

(years three to nine/ten):

Consolidation of Affection and Solidarity with an Eye to the Future



From age three onwards the infant gradually becomes a boy. And this is most noticeable in his play.

All children love to play. Most boys like ball games: Kicking and throwing. They love horseplay (as long as it does not get too overpowering... a judgement call by the father, child by child). The goal is confidence in Dad as source of fun and protection. The horseplay is for the enjoyment of the child— not the father. It really helps consolidate the boy's sexual identity as male when done with common sense. The observant father now will begin to spot the different inclinations of his children (and draw on his wife's observations as well). Their inclinations and strengths become occasions for father to affirm his son in these (be they quarterback-football or tiddlywinks or drawing). To be affirmed in his strengths by his father is one of life's great experiences for a boy. And it lasts a life time. [Continue reading here.](#)

For the good of the child --- the future of America,

Pat Fagan, Ph.D.

Director of the MARRI Project

Catholic University of America

