

PARENT/STUDENT DATING & RELATIONSHIPS GUIDE

6th Grade Conversation

OBJECTIVE

Have a conversation with your student about the importance of healthy dating relationships.

THE 411

Our kids are entering a world where they believe the most important thing in the world is for them to have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Many of their friends are beginning to start “going out” with boyfriends or girlfriends. Although having a “boyfriend” or “girlfriend” at a young age can seem like a harmless and cute thing, research is proving that we need to be having intentional conversations with our kids about healthy relationships. If we are trying to set our kids up to remaining pure until marriage, then we need to take these statistics seriously:

IF YOUR STUDENT STARTS DATING

12 years
13 Years
14 years
15 years
16 years

% HAVE SEX BEFORE GRADUATION

91%
56%
53%
40%
20%

SUGGESTION

Take your son/daughter out on a date. Ideally, moms would take out sons and dads would take out the daughters. This does not need to be the case but could create a fun date atmosphere. While on the date make sure you model and show your child how to behave while on a date. For example, dads should be sure to treat their daughter special from the beginning. Buy some flowers, open the car door and give her compliments. Moms should make sure they teach their sons to open doors for them and give your son the money to pay for the evening. While you are on the date you can use the discussion suggestion below to have a conversation about setting strong standards in your son/daughter's relationships.

DISCUSSION

ASK:

How important is it for kids your age to have a boyfriend or girlfriend?
How many of your friends are dating someone?
Why do the kids at your school think dating someone is so important?
On a scale from 1 to 10, how important is it for you to have a boyfriend/girlfriend?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

For some people dating in middle school and high school is the most important part of their life. In some cases, people begin going out with someone for unhealthy reasons.

ASK: Can you think of some unhealthy reasons people start dating? (For acceptance, popularity, physical reason, etc.)
What do you think are healthy reasons for people to date?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: The best place for us to look for answers or guidance to our tough questions or decisions in life is the Bible, but in the case of dating, the Bible doesn't talk about it. That is because in biblical times marriages were arranged so dating relationships were not common. Although we can't look specifically for dating, we can look to the Bible to see why God created us to live in relationships.

READ: **Genesis 2:15-22 (NIV)**

"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.'

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'

"Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So, the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

"But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So, the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man."

ASK: According to Genesis, why did God create the woman for the man?

READ: **Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)**

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: This verse also shows us the value of relationships. God created humans to live in relationship with one another to make us better. When we date someone, we should date them for making each other better. Our interest in the relationship should be for God to use us better as a couple than He could if we were two separate individuals.

ASK: Do you think most kids your age date for the reason God created relationships? Why or why not?

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Most kids think dating is just harmless fun and they don't really think about the reasons why they date. I want you to date for the right reasons and to have healthy relationships. During our date tonight, we have treated each other the right way. We have been honoring to each other and treated each other with respect. When you start dating, I want you to be in a relationship that is healthy.

ASK: What are some characteristics you want in your future spouse?
Are there any characteristics that would be nice, but are not a requirement?
Are there any characteristics you wouldn't compromise?
How old do you think you need to be before you can be mature about dating?
Parents: Use this question to set up family expectations of when your son/daughter will start dating.

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Someday you may be in a great relationship and that person will become extremely important in your life. I wanted to have a conversation with you tonight to help you realize that having a boyfriend or girlfriend right now isn't really important. If you can wait until you get older to date and if you enter the relationship for the right reason, then dating can be great. I want to help you do whatever I can to help ensure that you have great dating experiences.

PRAY

Spend some time praying that God would direct your son/daughter in their future dating relationships. Ask God to prepare your student for their future relationships and that He would help them to be God honoring in all their relationships.

