

Parenting - from "Sex - More Than a Plumbing Lesson" by Amy Scheuring

Marriage is a Covenant and Forever

Teach and remind your children that marriage is a permanent promise and covenant with each other and God, and God takes covenants very seriously! The marriage knot is tied in all circumstances—for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, and is their lifelong joy in knowing there is someone always beside you. Give your children a vision of the Godly marriage that is a love growing ever better and lasting a lifetime, like Coach Wooden.

The author suggests encouraging your child to think and talk about the type of person he wants to marry someday, write a short vision statement about marriage, talk about couples you know who have gone through the good and the difficult (richer and poorer, in sickness and in health), and pray together for the person they will marry and their future marriage and families.

Relationships with Your Children

Spend as much time as possible with your teenage children, and make sure you are not on the phone or not actively ready to listen. Strive to have family mealtimes most days, meet your children at the bus, be available to chat later at night with your teens, and think of you unique children and how you can enter and be a part of their world for them.

"Spending time does not always mean there will be conversation, but it does mean you are creating a place for it to happen" (and for my boys, it can mean occasionally watching a TV program with them that they like, even though I do not like TV at all). Praise and hug your children often (they need affection even though they may seem not interested), and as Tony Dungy says, "Hug them ever chance you get!"

Entertainment Choices

Studies show that the typical American child age 8 and up spends 38 hours/week consuming media, and most report that TV is the primary source of information about sex!.. "So turn off the TV and pick up a hobby that interests your children - biking, training your pets, cooking dinner, playing ball, taking walks, making crafts, or even washing the car." Make a list of active entertainment choices for your family and do them, and schedule creative "dates" with your children on a regular basis and keep them.

Setting Rules and Guidelines

Healthy good boundaries and rules do not punish but actually protect our children. Studies show that 91% of girls who start dating at the age of twelve have sex before high

school graduation, and the number drops to only 20% when girls do not date until age 16. The author' guidelines...

1. Determine some rules for dating far in advance - like no dating until age 16, and then they can never be alone together in a house
2. Be reasonable - make sure your standards are attainable
3. Be sure of definitions - make sure you and your child have the same meaning to dating or hanging out or getting friendly, etc.
4. Be in agreement with your spouse and/or other parents
5. Find things to say yes to - such as well-chaperoned social events/dances, extending a curfew for a special concert, and open your home to be a place their friends want to come to
6. Don't apologize for the rules - setting rules is your job - you are the parent! and be confident and upbeat about them
7. Insist on and teach and model good manners - listening well when in conversation, opening doors for girls and women, leaving cell phone off or in a designated place when at home, doing chores and looking for opportunities to help each other, answering the telephone politely, shaking hands and looking in eyes of new acquaintances, no calling after 9 pm (and no calling boys unless specific purpose), appropriate clothing and appearance, etc.
8. Find others who share your family's rules and don't let other parenting styles get you down - seek others who set high standards for their kids

"Give your children our B.E.S.T."

-Build Boundaries ---have your children list 3 things they will never do and 3 places they will never go, have them always think: Where am I? What time is it? Who's in control? What is the plan? and challenge your children to show affection without touch (but especially for boys not to say "I love you" because the power these words have on a young lady and if he truly means it his next words should be, "Will you marry me?")

-Establish Emergency Exits --- plan for unexpected emergencies (most date rapes occur because kids don't have an escape route, and need to plan to avoid alcohol, drugs, speeding, sex), a ride home, a cell phone, or a strong group of friends can provide ways

of escape from potentially harmful situations- families can agree on a coded message that means they need picked up, like telling the people they are with they have to check in with their parents and then saying "What? I have to come home now?! Well. OK, let me tell you where I am."

-Set Standards --- setting high standards tells the world how you feel about yourself, and encourages your children to make a list of qualities they are looking for in a girl or boy

-teach your son that a man's strength and power are shown not when he acts on urges but when he resists those urges

-integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching, and leadership is grown through the testing of our values

-Take your Time --- postpone dating as long as possible, and "as the wisdom of His plan unfolds over the teen years, fill the place in your child's heart that longs for acceptance, intimacy, and unconditional love"

Great websites, information, programs and help for parents and teens:

True Love Waits - a national program with built-in support -
<http://www.lifeway.com/tlw/>

The Silver Ring Thing - shows abstinence in such a positive way that teens jump at the chance to wear the silver ring - <http://www.silverringthing.com/>