

FEELING THE HEAT [p r e m a r i t a l s e x]

THIS WEEK

Sex is everywhere. Advertisements, TV shows, magazines, and movies all tell teenagers that premarital sex is accepted—and normal. Your kids need to hear the other side of the story in a positive, nonjudgmental way. This TalkSheet allows you to address premarital sex and sexuality in a Christian context—without lecturing or preaching at your kids.

Try to be extra careful that you, and your adult volunteers, keep a neutral stance and don't come off as judgmental during this discussion. Your goal is to discuss the meaning of sex in a healthy way, not to condemn any kids who may be sexually active.

OPEN

Whatever you do for your intro, communicate that sex is a normal, healthy part of a loving, committed relationship. Our society has warped its meaning—that's why you're going to talk about it!

Start by asking them why God created sex. What have your kids been told about sex in the church? Read in the Bible? Then ask the group to list where sex is shown, talked about, referred to, sung about, and so on in the media. Make a master list of these on a poster or whiteboard if you wish. How was sex portrayed? Was it good? Bad? Dirty? Uncomfortable? How has that media warped the meaning of sex?

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. What are the three most common sources of information about sex? Most likely, they won't include parents or church. Point out that knowledge on sex is usually based on misleading information from the media. What sources would they like to get more information from? What is the most dependable?
2. Draw up a master list of all the messages. Ask them which are true or false, which are good or bad, and which are consistent with the teachings of the Bible.
3. This tension-getter will most likely get a lot of different opinions. The questions assume the couple will have sex, so be prepared. Ask your kids if this assumption is true of their peers. In general terms, do most teenagers deal with these issues? As a Christian how would they handle the situation?
4. Let the group share their responses to these lines. These statements or lines are about using people—pressuring someone into sex for selfish reasons and not for the other person's benefit. What does this say about respecting another

person's body and beliefs? How would a Christian resisting this pressure? Is it easier? Harder?

5. Focusing on what God wants Christians to do sexually, ask them to share their thoughts. Point out the fact God isn't depriving us of sex. It's the opposite—he wants only the best for us physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. God understands their struggles, he knows, and he can keep them strong.

THE CLOSE

Summarize the points that have been covered, but focus on God's forgiveness. Many of your kids have probably already done things they regret and feel guilty about. You may wish to read a few verses about God's forgiveness and compassion—Isaiah 1:18 or 1 John 1:9. It's never too late to get right with God and start over.

Emphasize your willingness to talk to group members about sexual topics they may need to discuss privately and confidentially. If your kids are victims of inappropriate comments, touches, or sexual aggression—or suspect others are—they must get help immediately from a school counselor, parent, pastor, or you. For more information, visit the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (www.rainn.org) or National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (<http://ncasa.org>).

MORE

- You may want to take some time to talk about sexual pornography in magazines and on the Internet. Pornography is a drug—a very addictive habit—and it damages relationships. It is crucial that those within your group who struggle with pornography or have friends who do get help immediately.
- Challenge your kids to start praying for their future spouses now! Have them bring their future husbands and wives before God to have him prepare their hearts, minds, and bodies for marriage.