

Family First: Boys Brag About Sex

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KATV - Teenage boys like to talk about it and, sometimes, they

exaggerate.

"All they talk about is sex," 17 year old Tyler says. "You go walking down the hallway...sex, sex, sex. 'Hey I had sex with her, I had sex with him.'"

In a new Seventeen magazine survey of boys and young men, almost half said they were virgins and one in four said he had lied to other kids about not being a virgin. According to the survey of 1,200 boys and young men, age 15 to 22, 60 percent said they lied about something sexual, 30 percent lied about "how far they had gone," and 78 percent said that there was too much pressure from society to have sex.

17 year old Brad confirms that "guys brag all the time. I mean I've met one guy who hasn't bragged about it. "

Still there are some boys, like 17 year old Jesse, who are willing to say 'no' even when pressured by a girl.

"I was just astonished and I was like, 'no' because I like know this girl, she was my friend, but she wasn't someone I wanted to do that stuff with. She wasn't the right person for me to lose my virginity with."

Daniel Jean-Baptiste, a health educator, says he has seen a change in the attitude of young men. "The attitude is starting to become, 'I don't really care if my buddies are talking about it and this person is bragging about it. It's not really a big deal, because you can get STDs. Or you can get someone pregnant.'"

Many experts argue that in our culture, boys are pressured to have sex, or at least say they have, but that it's up to parents to talk about the seriousness of sex... and the risks. "A young person is never too young to talk about HIV, to talk about STDs, to talk about puberty," Jean-Baptiste says. "

And I think that if parents start to talk to their young people before they reach puberty... you've really seasoned them, so that in the future years... you'll be more comfortable and they'll be more comfortable talking to you."

They will be more comfortable, as he says, and there is a good chance they will listen.

"Kids, they might not say they listen to their parents but deep down inside, there's always... their parents are their little voice... anything a parent says usually does get taken to heart," says 18 year old Jesse.

Related Information

It's not uncommon to see statistics showing that girls face a great deal of pressure to have sex at an early age. But a new survey from the Kaiser Family Foundation shows that girls are not alone. Researchers found that one in three teen boys reported feeling peer pressure to have sex - often from male friends. In fact, the survey findings showed that boys were more likely than girls to feel pressure and more likely to believe that waiting to have sex is a myth.

As a parent, how can you help your child make an informed decision about sex?

It is first important to openly discuss sexual health with your child. Although it may be tough and awkward at times, open communication and accurate information that comes from you - the parent - increases the chance that your teen will postpone sex or use appropriate methods of birth control once he or she begins.

The American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry offers the following advice when talking to your child about sex:

- Encourage your child to talk and ask questions.
- Maintain a calm and non-critical atmosphere for discussions.
- Use words that are understandable and comfortable.
- Try to determine your child's level of knowledge and understanding.
- Keep your sense of humor, and don't be afraid to talk about your own discomfort.
- Relate sex to love, intimacy, caring and respect for oneself and one's partner.
- Be open in sharing your values and concerns.
- Discuss the importance of responsibility for choices and decisions.

As a parent, it is important that you give your child the necessary tools to make a decision about sex before peer pressure makes the decision for him or her.

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