
CLEVELAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October is Let's Talk Month

Cleveland County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition celebrates Let's Talk Month by encouraging parents to talk with their kids about sensitive issues!

(Shelby, NC)—Let's Talk Month is an opportunity for parents and children to learn to communicate in an open honest manner about sexuality and other sensitive issues. Such discussions can help young people delay sexual activity and avoid unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Research shows that adolescents prefer their parents to be their sex educators. Moreover, teens often need more information, guidance, and open discussions with their families.

Families can play a pivotal role in helping young people make healthy decisions about sex. Most parents want the opportunity to share their values and provide their children with accurate information about sexuality. But often, parents and other adults feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality. Often, they need assistance and support in starting meaningful conversations.

What parents need to know:

- ✓ You do not have to be the expert
- ✓ You should share your values and beliefs
- ✓ By talking with your child, you are assured he or she is receiving accurate messages about family values.
- ✓ By NOT talking, you are sharing values BUT not necessarily the ones you want your children to learn.

Helpful hints to having a meaningful conversation:

- ❖ **Be available** - Let your children know that you are available and willing to talk.
- ❖ **Listen** more than you talk.
- ❖ **Be honest** - Be clear and truthful.
- ❖ **Answer questions simply and directly** – Give accurate, short, and simple answers.
- ❖ **Share your morals and values** – It is very important that you communicate expectations based upon your family morals and values.

- ❖ **Teach skills** – Help your child develop skills that will assist him or her in making good and healthy choices.

Understanding sexuality is a lifelong process. Young people have many questions. Are you an approachable parent? October is Let's Talk Month. Start this very important conversation!

For more information on Let's Talk Month and additional tips on how to effectively communicate with your child(ren), visit <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/lets-talk-month>.

To learn more about the work of the Cleveland County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition, contact Katie Bryant, Cleveland County Health Department, at 704-484-5128 or katie.bryant@clevelandcounty.com.

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