



## Guidelines for Parents

### It's Better to Wait!

The research is clear that the healthiest approach to sexual activity is to delay any involvement until marriage. The following suggestions will assist the parent and the teen in accomplishing this goal.

### How Parents Can Encourage Adolescent Sexual Abstinence\*

- ❖ Maintain a healthy marriage and loving relationship with spouse
- ❖ Get involved in a healthy religious organization.
- ❖ Hang out with other families who share your values and who have children the approximate age of your children.
- ❖ Use authoritative discipline.
- ❖ Provide your children with warmth and emotional support.
- ❖ Foster your teenager's religious involvement.
- ❖ Regulate and monitor your teen's exposure to the entertainment media including TV, videos, movies, magazine, and the internet.
- ❖ Define and explain sexual behaviors explicitly so terms sexual concepts and words are clearly understood.
- ❖ Communicate your expectations to your teen that he or she should be abstinent—but do not preach.
- ❖ Implement dating rules based upon the age and maturity of the teen.
- ❖ Monitor your teen's extra-curricular activities. Know where the teen is, what he or she is doing, and how to contact the teen.
- ❖ Teach teen refusal skills.
- ❖ Discuss potential risk of premarital sex, but do not preach or threaten.
- ❖ Encourage your teen to hang out with other teens that are abstinent.
- ❖ Prepare a precocious teen for sexual advances by friends and classmates.
- ❖ Help the teen make plans for the future beyond high school. Set goals. Discuss hopes and dreams for the future.
- ❖ Prohibit alcohol use.
- ❖ If the teen has been sexually abused in any way, get the teen into competent counseling.
- ❖ Start sex education at an early age and keep the conversation running over the years of development.

\*Source: Douglas A. Abbott & Joseph M. White, *Flying High: Helping Teens Choose Abstinence*, Synthesis Press, 2001. Available at Amazon.com and Deseret.com



## Guidelines for Teens

### A Dozen Strategies for Teens Who Want to Be Abstinent\*

1. Understand the relationship between increased commitment and increased intimacy. Hold the line on physical intimacy.
2. Make your decision now to be abstinent.
3. Set limits on physical intimacy and be assertive to keep within those limits.
4. Hang out with friends who share your values and are abstinent.
5. Keep your thoughts clean by avoiding sexually explicit music, movies, magazines, and the internet.
6. When on a date keep busy with fun activities and do not spend a lot of time alone late at night.
7. Get involved in some after school activities such as sports, theater, clubs, or part-time work.
8. Take part in meaningful religious activities such as going to church, reading scripture, praying and talking with religious leaders.
9. Realize that the risks of premarital sex are real and could happen to you. You could get pregnant, or get someone pregnant, or get a sexually transmitted disease.
10. Recognize the benefits of being abstinent including no worries about pregnancy or STDs and an unhindered future.
11. Remember you are free to make choices regarding your sexual behavior, but you are also responsible for those choices. Once you make bad choices you are not free to avoid or set aside the consequences of your behaviors.
12. If you make a mistake in your sexual behavior you can change and return to a virtuous life.

\*Source: Douglas A. Abbott & Joseph M. White, *Flying High: Helping Teens Choose Abstinence*, Synthesis Press, 2001. Available at Amazon.com and Deseret.com