

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO

THE SEX TALK



Connecting Parents, Teens & Jesus
in a Disconnected World

AXIS PARENT GUIDES SERIES

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Tyndale House Publishers
Carol Stream, Illinois

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A Parent's Guide to the Sex Talk

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-4964-6754-6

Printed in the United States of America

29	28	27	26	25	24	23
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

I want to be able to share God's great design for sex. . . . I want God's voice to be stronger than the voice of today's sexualized culture.

JEFF FISHER,
COVENANT EYES

Many families hope to protect their children from radical ideas by walling off the secular world—supervising what books they read, what movies they see, what music they listen to. But secular worldviews do not come neatly labeled so we can easily recognize them. Instead they mutate into forms that we hardly recognize, becoming part of the very air we breathe. The most powerful worldviews are the ones we absorb without knowing it. They are the ideas nobody talks about—the assumptions we pick up almost by osmosis.

NANCY R. PEARCEY,
*LOVE THY BODY: ANSWERING HARD QUESTIONS
ABOUT LIFE AND SEXUALITY*

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A LETTER FROM AXIS

Dear Reader,

We're Axis, and since 2007, we've been creating resources to help connect parents, teens, and Jesus in a disconnected world. We're a group of gospel-minded researchers, speakers, and content creators, and we're excited to bring you the best of what we've learned about making meaningful connections with the teens in your life.

This parent's guide is designed to help start a conversation. Our goal is to give you enough knowledge that you're able to ask your teen informed questions about their world. For each guide, we spend weeks reading, researching, and interviewing parents and teens in order to distill everything you need to know about the topic at hand. We encourage you to read the whole thing and then to use the questions we include to get the conversation going with your teen—and then to follow the conversation wherever it leads.

As Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen point out in their book *Difficult Conversations*, “Changes in attitudes and behavior rarely come about because of arguments, facts, and attempts to persuade. How often do *you* change your values and beliefs—or whom you love or what you want in life—based on something someone tells you? And how likely are you to do so when the person who is trying to change you doesn’t seem fully aware of the reasons you see things differently in the first place?”¹ For whatever reason, when we believe that others are trying to understand *our* point of view, our defenses usually go down, and we’re more willing to listen to *their* point of view. The rising generation is no exception.

So we encourage you to ask questions, to listen, and then to share your heart with your teen. As we often say at Axis, discipleship happens where conversation happens.

Sincerely,
Your friends at Axis

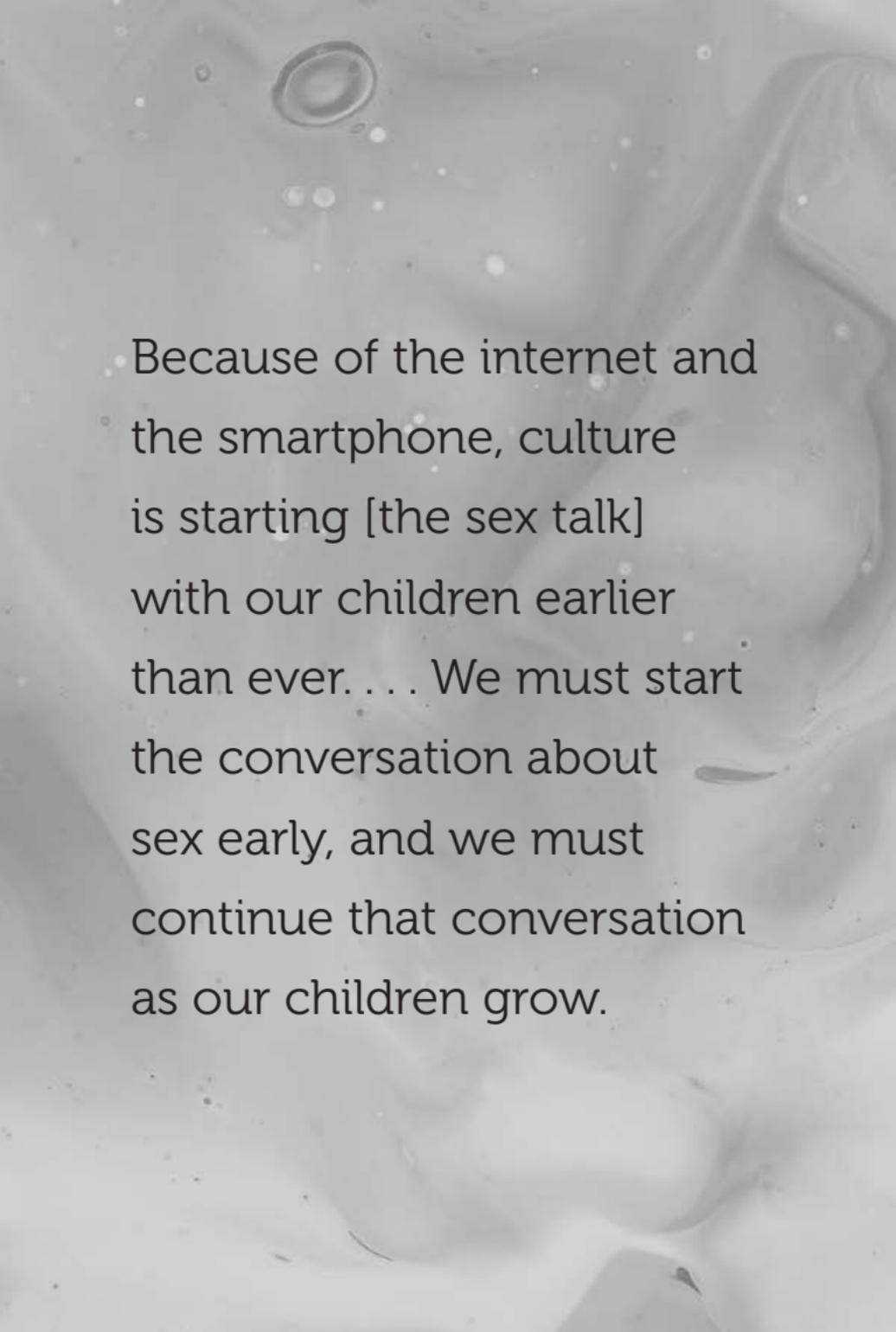
¹ Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen, *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 137.

**FORGET HAVING
JUST ONE “TALK” –
WE NEED TO TALK
TO OUR KIDS
ABOUT SEX EARLY
AND OFTEN**

AT THE TIME OF DRAFTING THIS GUIDE, Snapchat was featuring a story called "Crazy Photos of Naked Couples in Vacuum Packs" while also offering a channel called "Cosmo after Dark" that, in its own words, "is an X-rated weekly edition that goes live every Friday at 6 p.m. and is exclusively dedicated to all things hot and h*rny." In addition, if you spend enough time on Instagram, you have a very good chance of encountering sexually explicit images, even if you are exploring topics unrelated to sex. We could point to countless other examples of the hypersexualization of our culture, from advertising to the average popular song or TV show. And that's without even mentioning the ease with which porn finds people online, whether they are looking for it or not.

We mention these examples in order to emphasize the fact that culture is having a

never-ending conversation with our kids (and all of us really) about sex.¹ Because of the internet and the smartphone, culture is starting that conversation with our children earlier than ever. We parents can no longer afford to have only one sex talk with our kids or give them a book to read when they hit puberty. By then, it's too late. We must start the conversation about sex early, and we must continue that conversation as our children grow.



Because of the internet and the smartphone, culture is starting [the sex talk] with our children earlier than ever. . . . We must start the conversation about sex early, and we must continue that conversation as our children grow.



