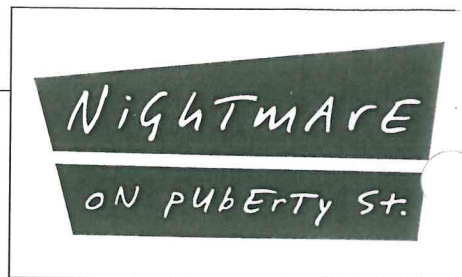


A Parent's Guide

Nightmare on Puberty St.

Educational Theatre, a Community Benefit of Kaiser Permanente



Tips for Talking with Your Child about Sensitive Topics

Starting Out

- Show your child it is okay to talk about sensitive issues. Have appropriate discussions with your spouse, partner, or friends about sensitive issues with your child present.
- Ask your child what he or she thought about *Nightmare on Puberty St.* Has your child or his or her friends experienced pressure to fit in, problems with cliques or gangs, feelings of sexual attraction, depression, or thoughts of suicide?
- Talk about yourself. Share how you felt at that age and how you now feel about these issues.
- Remember, you don't have to have all the answers. Don't worry about having to know everything. You and your child can look up answers together and talk about what you learn.



When You Talk

- Encourage questions. Statements such as, "I'm glad you asked that question" or "That's a good question," will help keep the lines of communication open with your child.
- Use active listening. Nod or say "uh-huh" when listening to your child. Make eye contact. Really listen to what your child tells you. Good listeners help children figure out how they feel instead of telling them how they should feel.
- Keep discipline separate from talking. Your child may not listen to important information if it is given in anger. Choose a time to talk when you can listen to each other.
- Don't make assumptions. Tell your child, "I trust you" through your words and actions. Just because your child is asking questions about drugs and alcohol, for example, doesn't mean your child is using those substances. Curiosity is natural.
- Keep the conversation open-ended. After answering a question, ask your child what else he or she would like to know. This lets your child know you expect more questions and it is okay to ask.

Parent and Family Resources

- Talking to your Teen, Office of Adolescent Health: hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-training/for-families
- Body and Mind (BAM!), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov/bam
- Bullying Resources and Information: stopbullying.gov
- Cyberbullying Resources and Information: nccpc.org/resources/cyberbullying
- Media and Technology Information for Families: commonsensemedia.org
- California Youth Crisis Line (24hr): 1-800-843-5200

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