It’s always the right time to communicate openly and honestly with your kids.

The timeline + tips* below were developed to help you build a foundation of trust + mutual respect with your kids + start an ongoing conversation with them as they develop + grow.

**Connection + Discovery**
- Role model healthy relationships—your child is learning about love, safety and how to trust others.
- Positively acknowledge your child’s exploration of their body. Discuss that this is a private, not public, behavior.
- Always use correct terms to refer to your child’s body parts.

**Curiosity + Exploring Differences**
- Be prepared to answer more mature questions about reproduction.
- As children become more independent, reinforce the importance of open communication in your family.
- Explain puberty and what to expect. Share resources early and often.
- Promote healthy body image.

**Reproduction + Privacy**
- As your child’s gender identity develops, encourage them to respect themselves and others.
- Let them know they can talk to you or other trusted adults about anything.
- Teach them about appropriate touch and how to say no to unwanted touch.
- Be ready to give a simple description of where babies come from.

**Puberty + Preteen Development**
- As your child goes through puberty, emphasize that all bodies develop differently and at their own pace.
- Reinforce that masturbation is natural and healthy, but should be done privately.
- Share personal experiences or use examples from popular media to discuss what healthy relationships look and feel like.
- Discuss your family’s expectations and values about dating and sexual activity.

**Adolescence + Healthy Relationships**
- Talk about the benefits of delaying sexual activity.
- Discuss birth control and STD prevention to help them avoid risky sexual behavior.
- Encourage your child to evaluate their relationships. Reinforce that healthy relationships are built on trust and equal power.
- Ensure that they know how to say “no.” Explain what mutual consent means and why it is important.
- Share where they can access sexual and reproductive health care services.

This resource was developed by Essential Access Health + Planned Parenthood of Los Angeles.

*These tips are based on evidence-informed recommendations from experts in the field.

Learn more @ talkwithyourkids.org