Let’s Talk About Sex

Lisa Belleli

South Eastern CASA
Centre Against Sexual Assault & Family Violence
What we’re covering

- How do we make it less awkward?
- What do we need to cover?
- Where do we start?
- What is age appropriate
- Consent
- Sexting
- Sexuality
- Relationships
- Hollywood & Pornography
How do we make it less awkward?
Why is it awkward in the first place?
Strategies to make it less awkward

- Start with a book
- Become an expert
- Practice makes perfect
- Take the lead of your child
- Boundaries
What do we need to cover?
- Biology
- Sex for pleasure
- Orgasms
- Consent
- Legislation
- Sexting
- Sexual relationships
- Sexuality
- Hollywood & Pornography
Where do we start?
Let’s start at the very beginning...

- Let them know you will answer any questions they have... about anything
- Set boundaries
- Select resources (books, articles, experts, friends)
- Continue the conversation, take advantage of prompts
- Age appropriate conversations
- Find out what they already know
- Keep it simple
- Check for understanding
- Be honest, if you’re unsure then tell them
- Take your values into account
- You’re in for the long haul, this is a conversation that takes years.
What is age appropriate?
How much information is enough?

● Keep it simple
● Keeping these discussions at home and not at school
● By the age of 9 some girls are already well into puberty, it is important to talk about sex for reproduction by this age
● As they are exposed to more media it is time to talk more about consent and relationships
Consent
What is it?

- Is it actually permission?
- Agreement between two people
Age of consent for sex in Victoria

Age 16 and above:
- You can consent to sexual activities except with family members (incest) or with someone who is in a position of authority over you
- This includes people like teachers, doctors etc.

Age 12 – 15:
- You can consent to sexual activity as long as the other person is no more than 24 months older or younger than you

Under 12:
- No one can have sex with you, touch you sexually or perform a sexual act in front of you. This includes anything to do with sexually explicit images.
You need consent to have any kind of sexual activity.
Sexting
Sexting is a term made up by the media. It describes:

- Creating, sending and receiving sexually suggestive, semi-nude, nude images or text messages
- These are also called ‘intimate images’
What is a sext image?

Sext images are:
1. Nude images
2. Images of people engaged in sexual acts
3. Child pornography also includes provocative images of children that would make the average person feel offended.

In Victoria it is an offence to distribute or threaten to distribute an intimate image of another person.

In most other Australian states, sexting is illegal if you’re under 18
Legal stuff about nudes- Victoria

- **Age 18+**
  - Cannot take, keep or send a sext to or from someone under 18. Regardless of 24 months age gap. **This is classed as child exploitation material (child pornography)**
- **Age 12-17**
  - Can take, keep, send a sext of **YOURSELF**
  - Can take and keep and sext of **SOMEONE ELSE (CAN’T SEND)**
  - Must have consent
  - Must be within 24 months in age
  - Cannot send to anyone >18
- **Under 12**
  - No one can do anything sexual with, or show anything sexual to, a person under 12.
Sexuality
Challenges

- If I tell my kid about homosexuality they might become gay?
- I don’t agree with homosexuality, I don’t want my kids to think it’s ok.
- I don’t know much about it
How do I talk about it?

Depends on personal values

Be honest

Be matter-of-fact
Relationships
Goals

Respect
Equality
Happiness
Love
Intimacy
Types of Relationship Abuse

1. Physical (intimidation is also physical violence— even if there is no physical contact)
2. Verbal
3. Emotional
4. Financial
5. Social
6. Sexual
7. Cyber/technological
Hollywood & Pornography
Main Messages from the Mainstream

- Ambiguous (or complete lack of) consent
- Sexual assault
- Pressure
- Sex always looks good
- Everyone knows what to do
Problems in Porn

- No consent
- Violence
- Dominance
- List of sex acts
- Can lead to medical issues
WHAT CAN WE DO???

- Talk, talk, talk
- Model healthy relationships (the easy and the hard parts)
- Always be available
- Try to listen without judgement
- If you’re upset pause before you respond. May need to leave it and revisit.
Questions?