

Top Tips for talking to your child about Relationships, Sex and Health Education

1. Start early and use correct anatomical language

Open communication is the cornerstone of quality RSHE education. As with other topics, it is best to use naturally occurring 'teachable moments' to talk to your child about RSHE. It could be as simple as using correct anatomical language (penis & vulva) during bathtime instead of alternative informal names. By teaching your child correct terminology early, you are creating an environment for open, healthy and positive communication about the body.

2. Keep it simple and honest

Keep your answers simple and to the point. Avoid over-explaining. After all, if your child wants to hear more, they will ask.

3. Dealing with the 'tricky' questions

When answering 'tricky' questions, ask your child clarifying questions first to see what they already know before giving them additional information. If you're not sure how to answer straight away, tell them you will get back to them later with the answer. It's really important that you then answer their question as soon as you can afterwards.

4. Teach your child body ownership

It is important to teach your child that their body belongs to them and that they don't have to let anybody touch them in a way that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable. This is the very beginning of teaching your child about consent.

5. Talking about relationships

Talk positively to your child about your own beliefs and opinions on sexuality matters, including what makes a healthy relationship.

6. Listen to your child

Be a 'tellable' parent. The key to good communication is listening. Your child will know if you're not fully tuned into what they are saying. Take time to sit or walk with them and listen to what they have to say, particularly when they are discussing their anxieties, concerns or fears.

7. You are not alone!

Reach out and seek support. Connect with family members or friends who have children of a similar age or older. They may have useful tips to share with you. Then decide on the advice you deem most appropriate for you and your child. Connect with your child's school for support. You will be able to find your school's RSHE policy on the school website. Talk to your child's teacher if you have any particular concerns. They will be able to offer you support and signpost you to other useful resources to help.