



SMART THINGS TO SAY

with Saleema Noon
Sexual Health Educators

answering questions

say this

- "Great question! Can I ask where you heard that word/term/information?"
- "That great scientific question deserves a scientific answer."
- "I didn't get this body science information when I was your age so I find it a bit difficult to talk about. But I know how important it is so I'm going to be as honest and open as I can be."
- "I'm so glad we're having this conversation because I want you to be protected and safe. But it wouldn't be a good idea to go to school tomorrow and tell your friends what we talked about. Let's wait for adults in their lives to have a chance to teach them."
- "This might be information for someone older than you but I think you're mature enough to handle it."
- "I'm so proud of you for asking such a scientific question! Let me think how best to answer it for you, let's talk about it [insert appropriate time...before bed, when our guests leave, when we get out of the grocery store...]."
- "This may be too much information but..."
- "I'm not exactly sure what the answer is. Let's figure it out together."
- "Remember this morning when I answered that question you had? Well, I think I can do a better job. Can I have a re-do?"
- "That question tells me how maturely you're thinking about this stuff. Nice work!"
- "Thank you for trusting me to answer that question for you. You can ask me anything and I will always give you an honest, scientific answer. You deserve to know the truth."

rather than this

- ✗ "You're too young to know that!"
- ✗ "We made you by kissing."
- ✗ "Where did you hear that? You've been watching way too much YouTube."
- ✗ "Kids shouldn't know about that stuff."
- ✗ "We'll talk about it when you're older."
- ✗ "I don't have time to get into it right now."
- ✗ "Why would you ask that?"
- ✗ "We prayed and hoped for you and then you came."
- ✗ "Did your older sister make you ask me this?"
- ✗ "You should be talking about that at school soon."
- ✗ "It's not polite to ask questions like that."
- ✗ "Ask your mom when she gets home."
- ✗ "Go ask your brother."
- ✗ "I don't know, why don't you look it up online?"