

Suggested Questions to Ask

Whether you're abstinent (not having any sex), thinking about having sex, or already sexually active, it's important and okay to talk about abstinence, sex, various birth control methods, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and relationships with a trusted adult. To help you open up a conversation about these important issues, included are some suggested questions you may want to ask. Topics for discussion include...

- » Talking With Your Caregiver, Parent, Mentor, Teacher
- » Talking With Your Social Worker, Probation Officer, Attorney, and CASA
- » Talking With Medical Professionals
- » Talking With Your Partner



Talking With Your Caregiver, Parent, Mentor, Teacher

- » How do I know if I'm ready to have sex?
- » How can I show affection to my partner without having sex?
- » My boyfriend/girlfriend is jealous, is this a normal way of showing their love toward me?
- » What is consensual sex?
- » What is date rape?
- » Can I choose abstinence after I already had sex?
- » What is the difference between sex and sexuality?
- » Am I gay if I have a same sex crush?
- » I feel like my partner is pressuring me to have sex, what should I do?
- » I'm being hit, hurt, or threatened to have sex, what can I do?
- » Is touching myself wrong? Is it okay to masturbate if I'm in a private place (such as my bedroom or bathroom)?

Talking With Your Social Worker, Probation Officer, Attorney, and CASA

- » I need information about pregnancy prevention, treatment of a pregnancy, or an abortion. How can I get this information?
- » What rights do I have if I'm pregnant and in foster care?
- » What information will I need when I visit the doctor?
- » Does my caregiver have the right to take away my birth control and/or condoms from my personal property?
- » Can I personally consent to own medical care related to pregnancy testing, birth control, abortion, or HIV counseling?
- » Can I visit a Doctor on my own to get tested for an STI?
- » How does someone know they are transgender?
- » Can I sleep in a room or use the restroom based on the gender I identify with?
- » My caregiver won't take me to the doctor to get on birth control. Can you help me with this?
- » Can someone force me to go on birth control?

Talking With Medical Professionals

- » How do I know what birth control method is right for me? What are the common side effects of the different birth control methods?
- » Will birth control or condoms keep me from getting pregnant 100 percent?
- » Will my caregiver or parent know if I decide to use a birth control? Do I need approval from my social worker to obtain a birth control?
- » I had unprotected sex, should I get tested for an STI and/or pregnancy?
- » If I tested negative for having an STI or HIV, does that really mean I'm negative?
- » Is it possible to have an STI and have no symptoms?
- » Do STIs go away with medical treatment?
- » If I have oral sex, can I catch an STI?
- » What is emergency contraception and how can I get it?
- » Do I need to use birth control or condoms if I'm transgender?
- » Do condoms tear or break easily?
- » What's the correct way to put on a condom?



Talking With Your Partner

- » I choose to remain a virgin. Will you respect my decision? How do you feel about this?
- » How do you feel about using a condom when having sex?
- » Have you ever tested positive for an STI? If so, were you treated?
- » Do you have other sex partners?
- » How do you feel about abortion?
- » How do you feel about the responsibilities of parenting?
- » Are you on any form of birth control?
- » Have you had any STIs in the past six months?



Know Your Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights



Your Sexual and Reproductive Health Care and Related Rights

Do you know your rights when it comes to your sexual and reproductive health? Unfortunately, many youth and young adults in foster care don't know their rights and don't get the care or services they need because of fear, embarrassment, or misinformation. This handout was developed to inform you of your sexual and reproductive health care rights.

1. You have the right to receive medical services, including reproductive and sexual health care.
2. You have the right to personally consent to or decline medical care (without the need for consent from a parent, caregiver, guardian, social worker, probation officer, court, or authorized representative) for:
 - a. The prevention or treatment of pregnancy, including contraception, at any age, (except sterilization),
 - b. An abortion, at any age,
 - c. Diagnosis and treatment of sexual assault, at any age, and
 - d. The prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), at age 12 or older.

KNOW your RIGHTS

The information provided to you shall be appropriate based on your age and/or developmental level and shall be medically correct, factual and objective.

3. You have the right to have access to information about:
 - a. Reproductive and sexual health care,
 - b. The prevention of unplanned pregnancy including abstinence and contraception,
 - c. Abortion care,
 - d. Pregnancy services, and
 - e. The prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of STIs, including but not limited to the availability of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination.
4. You have the right to transportation to reproductive and sexual health-related services. Your caregiver should arrange for and/or provide timely transportation to medical appointments since many reproductive health services are time-sensitive (such as emergency contraception or an abortion).
5. You have the right to obtain, possess and use the contraception of your choice, including condoms.
6. You have the right to have private storage space and to be free from unreasonable searches of your belongings. Your contraception cannot be taken away from you as part of a group home discipline program or due to your caregiver's religious beliefs, personal biases and judgments.
7. You have the right to choose your own health care provider, provided that payment for the health-related service is authorized.
8. You have the right to fair and equal access to all available services, placement, care, treatment and benefits. You also have the right to not be subjected to discrimination or harassment based on your actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status.
9. You have the right to independently contact state agencies, including the Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services and the state Foster Care Ombudsperson, regarding violations of your rights. You have the right to speak to representatives of these offices confidentially, and to be free from threats or punishment for making complaints.
10. You have the right to have your personal rights explained and provided to you in a manner that you understand.



RESOURCES:

California Office of the Foster Care Ombudsperson – To file a complaint regarding an alleged violation of your rights concerning your care, placement, or services contact the Ombudsperson at www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov or call 1-877-846-1602.

California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division — To file a complaint against a licensed state residential facility call 1-844-538-8766.

www.genderspectrum.org/ — Information and resources surrounding gender sensitive topics and environments.

www.glaad.org/transgender/resources/ — Provides general information and resources for transgender people.

www.loveisrespect.org — Information and resources about sex, healthy relationships, dating basics, dating abuse, and sexting.

www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control/ — Information about birth control and effectiveness.

www.safehelpline.org — National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-HOPE (4673).

www.stayteen.org — Videos and tools on relationships, sex, love, pregnancy, waiting, and birth control.

www.teensource.org/condoms/free — Sign-up for free condoms if you are 12-19 years old and live in California.



The suggested web resources in this brochure are provided as a convenience and for general informational purposes only. California Department of Social Services bears no responsibility for accuracy, legality, or content of these external websites.

The medical services you consent to shall remain confidential between you and your health care provider under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and will not be shared with other individuals without your written consent. You are allowed to receive private examinations or treatment unless you request otherwise.