

Sex & the New You

A Guide for the Christian Family

girls **ages 12–14**

For Discussion or Individual Use
Book 4 of the Learning about Sex Series for Girls

The titles in the series:

Book 1: Why Boys and Girls Are Different

Book 2: Where Do Babies Come From?

Book 3: How You Are Changing

Book 4: Sex and the New You

Book 5: Love, Sex, and God

Book 6: How to Talk Confidently with Your Child about Sex

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life consultants who have assisted in the development, updating,
and revising of the Learning about Sex series.



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Editors' Foreword

This book is one in a series of six designed to help parents communicate biblical values to their children in the area of sexuality. *Sex and the New You* is the fourth book in the series. It is written especially for girls ages 12 to 14 and, of course, for the parents, teachers, and other concerned adults who may want to discuss the book with the children in their care.

Like its predecessor, the updated Learning about Sex series provides information about the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of human sexuality. Moreover, it does so from a distinctively Christian point of view, in the context of our relationship to the God who created us and redeemed us in Jesus Christ. The series presents sex as another good gift from God, and it helps us understand sex in the larger context of our entire life of faith. To counter cultural influences, be strong and consistent in communicating the miracle of God's design. The way God made us is just the way He knew it should be for our health and happiness.

Each book in the series is graded—in vocabulary and in the amount of information it provides. It answers the questions children at each age level typically ask. Because children vary widely in their growth rates and interest levels, parents and other concerned adults will want to preview each book in the series, directing each child to the next graded book when she is ready for it.

Ideally, this book will be used as part of a biblically based, broadly focused—yet personal—training that prepares young girls for womanhood. Young women grow and blossom into Christian womanhood through the teaching, training, and example provided by older women. A young woman can learn much from a mother, grandmother, or other adult woman who trusts in Jesus for her salvation. In the context of such a relationship, questions of a personal nature can be asked and answered, insightful discussions held, and godly behaviors modeled. Your expression of positive and God-pleasing values will likely have a greater impact on the healthy development of your daughter than any book, other than the Bible. God's plan unfolds as each generation in succession passes on the truths God imparts through His Word and the wisdom that comes as challenges are met and overcome by the power of God's grace through Christ. We pray that this will be the beginning of ongoing open, honest, and intentional communication with your child regarding God's magnificent design.

Note: The books in this series also can be used as mini units or as part of another course of study in a Christian school or church setting. Whenever the books are used in a class setting, it is important to let the parents know beforehand, since they have the primary responsibility for the sex education of their children. If used in a classroom setting, the books in this series are designed for separate single-gender groups, the setting most conducive to open conversations about questions and concerns. As the Christian home and the Christian school and church work together, Christian values in sex education can be more effectively strengthened.



Will my breasts ever
develop? Am I
normal? See page
43.

Is it wrong to look at
pictures of nude people?
What is pornography?
Why do people look at it?
See pages 64 and 65.



How does a
woman get
pregnant?
See page 55.

What does it
mean to be gay?
See page 15.



You've Heard and You've Wondered

1



You've heard questions like those on page 6 before—maybe you've asked them yourself. And maybe you haven't been quite sure about the answers.

This book has been written to help you answer some of the questions you have about your body, about getting along with others, about sexuality, and about differences between males and females.

More important, this book will remind you who gave you life and made you who you are. You are a child of God. Because God loves you, He sent His own Son to live and die for you. This kind of love means He won't ever ignore you; He'll guide you and protect you and forgive you. Because Christ died for you and paid the penalty for your sins, God is able to accept you just as you are. And because Christ became a human being, He understands everything you are feeling and wondering about right now. He understands your questions



about sex, your wonderings about your body, and your sexual daydreaming. He helps you to grow in a healthy relationship with Him, with other people, and with yourself.

He helps you to become a “new you.”

Of course, reading this book won’t automatically solve all your problems. You may still be disappointed with the way you look or the way you feel. But you will have the chance to look honestly at these things and to think and talk about them. You may wish you were different, but you will hear again and again that you were made by God—to be female, special, and unique!

On this page and the next are a few more of the questions people your age ask. Take a moment now to think of your own questions. If you want, write them down at the back of the book. Then, when you’ve finished the book, see whether they have been answered.

*Questions
I Wonder
About*

Why don’t I feel
good about myself?
See page 34.

How do I know
I am special to Jesus?
See page 9.

How are babies
born?
See page 56.





Remember:

- You may feel like a stranger to yourself. You may not be sure what is happening.
- You may feel embarrassed talking to others, even those your own age, especially if they're developing at a different rate than you are.
- You may feel out of place if you haven't developed as much as some of your friends have.
- You might have trouble being honest about your own feelings, even with yourself.
- You might feel pressure to conform to what others expect of you and to look and act like everyone else, even when you don't want to.
- You might find yourself wanting to be alone more than ever before.
- You might find yourself thinking more about boys, even dreaming or fantasizing about sex. You might be feeling guilty about these thoughts and the feelings that go along with them.

And as you walk the journey through this stage, remember these things:

- God loves you; He made you just the way you are.
- You need to learn to respect yourself and your body before you can start respecting other people and their bodies.
- Your parents and other adults made it through adolescence, and so will you.

Sexting

Sexting occurs when a person sends sexually explicit messages or images on his or her phone or other device. Popular culture would have us accept the notion that sexting is a normal part of dating and hooking up. But this type of conversation is not how we walk by the Spirit. It is also a serious violation of the law and has led some teenagers to be arrested for creating and distributing child pornography.

Although the body is a wonderful gift of God to be admired, sexting degrades the body, treating it as a sexual object for personal gratification. Sexting does not promote healthy conversation and communication. A relationship that centers around physical attraction and lust will not last and will only lead to emotional pain. Again, as with any sexual temptation, it is best to keep in mind what God's Word says: "Whatever is true . . . whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, . . . think about these things" (Philippians 4:8). Tell the person that you don't feel comfortable with the conversation, and switch the subject. If the person continues sexting, do not reply to the inappropriate texts and block the caller, if necessary.

Recreational Sex

Our culture, the media, and maybe even our friends would have us accept the notion that sex outside of marriage is a normal, healthy, even expected part of the teenage years and adulthood. In addition to the influences of the world around us, the devil would have us go along with this perspective, which also appeals to our natural inclinations because they are contaminated by sin. These forces—the world, the devil, and our sinful nature—work to lead us into sexual sin.

Sexual immorality, which includes sex outside of marriage and all misuses of God's gift of sex, disobeys the will of our Father in heaven, who desires only what is best for us. And it does have harmful consequences. Taking part in intimate sexual activity outside of marriage negatively influences your attitude about yourself and others. As Paul says, "Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:18–20).

Why is sex sinful before marriage but good and even commanded within marriage?

God designed sex to be the highest expression of love between a husband and a wife. Sexual intercourse in marriage unites a husband and wife into “one flesh.” Misuse of God’s gift of sex negatively influences how we think of and treat others as well as how we regard ourselves.

Doesn't almost everyone live together before they get married?

The Bible warns against fornication and adultery. **Fornication** is sexual intercourse between unmarried people. **Adultery** is sexual intercourse by a married person with someone other than his or her spouse. In both of these sins, the man or woman gives in to his or her own selfish desires and disregards God’s Law. By remaining a **virgin** (one who has not had sex) until you are married, you are obeying God’s Law and staying open to all the blessings He wants to give you.

Many people who give in to these sins, of course, claim that they can love the person they are having sex with even though they are not married to that person. But what kind of love is it that says, “My pleasure comes first. I don’t care what God says or what may happen if I hurt my husband by having sex with someone else”? That is not love; it is lust.

When Jesus spoke in Matthew 5:28 about a “lustful” look and “adultery” in the heart, He wasn’t talking about our good, God-created interest in and attraction to people of the other sex. He meant the selfish misuse of that desire. Love cares about the other person. Lust uses the other person for its own pleasure.

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25). Remember how Christ loves you! That’s the way husbands, wives, and young people who are about to date can turn from lust and grow in love.

Birth Control

What is birth control? It is any method that people who are having intercourse use to prevent pregnancy. There are a number of birth control methods, but only one can guarantee a woman will not become pregnant. This is abstinence, or not having sex. The **birth control** methods outlined below can only reduce the chance of pregnancy, not eliminate it.

1. IUDs (or intrauterine devices) are small, T-shaped devices placed inside the uterus by a doctor. Depending on the type, they stay in the uterus for five to ten years.
2. Birth control pills, when taken regularly by a woman, prevent ovulation by making her body “think” pregnancy has taken place. Approximately one out of eleven women currently using the birth control pill will become pregnant in a year.
3. An implant is a thin rod that is inserted under the skin of a woman’s upper arm. Over three years, it continuously releases a hormone to prevent pregnancy.
4. A birth control shot can be given every three months. Approximately one out of seventeen women currently getting the shot will become pregnant in a year.
5. A birth control patch can be worn on the skin. A new one is placed each week, except the fourth week so the woman can have her period. Approximately one out of ten women currently wearing a patch will become pregnant in a year.
6. A birth control ring can be placed inside the vagina for three weeks, and then removed the fourth week so the woman can have her period. Approximately one out of ten women currently wearing a ring will become pregnant in a year.
7. A contraceptive sponge is a donut-shaped barrier placed into the vagina that kills sperm. About one out of nine women currently using the sponge will become pregnant in a year.
8. Spermicides are foams, gels, creams, or tablets that are placed inside the vagina before sex to kill sperm. Between one in three and one in four women currently using spermicides will become pregnant in a year.
9. In natural methods of family planning, a woman closely keeps track of her monthly periods and her ovulation cycles. She observes changes in her cervical mucus and better identifies peak times of fertility. Thus, she learns when it is likely that fertilization, and pregnancy, may or may not occur. This method is called natural family planning, or NFP.

Word List

Abortion	(a-BOR-shun) Ending a pregnancy by killing the preborn child (embryo or fetus).
Abstinence	(AB-stin-ens) To refrain from sexual intercourse.
Acne	(ACK-nee) Pimples, blackheads, and other redness/inflammation on the skin. Acne is a common condition during adolescence. It can be caused by an overgrowth of skin and dead skin cells, clogged pores (hair follicles), oil production, and bacteria.
Adolescence	(ad-uh-LES-sens) The period of life between childhood and adulthood; the teen years.
Adultery	(ad-UHL-ter-ee) Sexual intercourse by a married person with someone other than his or her spouse.
AIDS	(HIV/AIDS) A sexually transmitted disease that breaks down a person's immune system, damaging the person's ability to fight other diseases.
Androgynous	(an-DROJ-e-nuhs) Genderless, having neither specifically masculine or feminine characteristics.
Anus	(AY-nes) The opening where bowel movements leave the body.
Birth Control	A method people who are having intercourse use to prevent pregnancy.
Cervix	(SER-viks) The narrow outer end of the uterus.
Circumcision	(ser-kum-SIH-zhun) An operation that removes the foreskin from the end of the penis.
Clitoris	(KLIT-or-is) A small organ at the front of the vaginal opening that gives sexual pleasure when touched.
Conceive	(kon-SEEV) To start a new life through union of a sperm cell with an egg cell; to become pregnant.
Condom	(KON-dom) A thin rubberlike sheath placed over the erect penis before intercourse to prevent sperm from entering the vagina (to prevent pregnancy). Because of its high rate of failure, it does not provide a "safe sex" prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, as is often claimed.