



U Choose to Know

Number 5

Positively Rock Answering Questions!

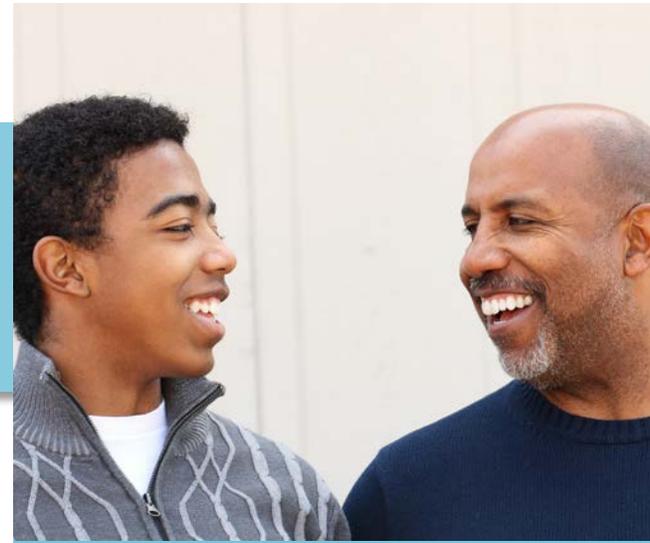
STOP talking and think about the question. It is okay to take a minute to think before you answer!

DROP your opinions and values.

ROLL the questions into a discussion.

Tips for Answering Questions:

- Having an anonymous question box is a great way to make sure young people have an opportunity to ask questions. You could leave time at the end of each class when every student must write something on a piece of paper and place it in the box. Be sure everyone writes something, even if it is only lyrics to their favorite songs, so nobody feels singled out if they are writing a question about sex or sexuality. This also gives you time to prepare to answer the questions before the next session.
- Always acknowledge the question...



Practice Questions:

Take a few moments and think through the questions below. What kind of questions are they? How would you answer them? Then, take a look at our sample answers. We've made sure to highlight what makes our answer sex positive so you can see how that plays out when you're answering questions.

"Can I get pregnant if I have anal sex?"

Thanks for asking that important question! A lot of people think that anal sex alone can cause pregnancy. But, no, you cannot get pregnant from anal sex unless the semen enters the vagina. Pregnancy **only happens** when sperm fertilize an egg and the fertilized egg implants in the uterus.

"How do you give head?"

Well, sexual expression looks different for everyone, so that's a question I can't answer for you. What I can tell you is this: if you're considering engaging in sexual behavior with a consenting partner, remember that you can still transmit or receive an STD, so be sure to wear a condom or use a dental dam. [Student's name], I really appreciate that you were comfortable asking this question.

"Can I get services without my parents having to take me?"

What a great and important question! Yes, adolescents under the (*continued...*)

- If you are not sure about the question, always clarify.
- See what the class already knows and let them talk it out. Add to or correct the discussion as needed.
- Check for understanding to make sure everyone is on the same page. These topics can be big and young people come into a sexual health class with different levels of understanding.
- Don't feel bad laughing; some of these questions are funny! Showing your sense of humor makes you honest and relatable.
- Stay current and be up-to-date on information regarding minors' rights and Maryland-specific laws pertaining to young people. This will help you feel more confident as you answer questions.
- If students have medical questions, refer them to the school's health suite and **do not** try and diagnose them.
- Remember, it is okay not to know the answer! Tell the young person you are not sure and that you'll check. Then, get back to them at the next class.

Resources

Here are a few great resources to help you answer your students' questions the best you can!

[Sex, Etc.](#) is a sex education website for teens, by teens. It is not just a great resource to send your youth to, but is also a great resource to help you answer their questions!

This [article](#) by respected sex educator Al Vernacchio shows some great examples of how he answers teens' questions.

Valerie Sedivy at Healthy Teen Network wrote a great [blog](#) post about what to do when students ask for advice, outlining helpful tips and points for reflection.

This [guide](#) published by Advocates for Youth outlines lots of additional tips for answering teens' questions.



For more information, visit uchoosebaltimore.org.

Practice Questions: *(cont.)*

age of 18 may consent to receive reproductive health services for themselves, meaning you do not need your parent's permission to get the care you need. Maryland law *does* require that if an adolescent is seeking an abortion, however, a parent must be notified. There are certain exceptions to this law for young people under special circumstances. While it's always a good idea to talk with parents or other trusted adults when consulting a doctor, it is always your right to receive these services without their permission.

“Can someone in a wheelchair have sex?”

Good question! Absolutely. People in wheelchairs or people with other types of physical disabilities are just as capable of engaging in sexual activity as folks who don't have disabilities.

“Do people choose to be trans?”

What an excellent question! Nope. Just like we don't choose our own natural hair color, we don't choose our gender identity. It's just something we're born with.

“Where can I get condoms?”

Thanks for asking that! You can get condoms at any grocery or drug store. Many medical establishments that serve adolescents also have them, like the health department or Planned Parenthood. If you are choosing to engage in sexual activity, condoms are a great option to keep you safe from sexually transmitted diseases and infections.

“What does love feel like?”

What a fantastic question! Love feels different for everyone, but many people use words like safety, caring, trusting, fun, loyal, and warm to describe their experience.