

What Is An Ask-able Parent?

An "ask-able" parent is someone who:

- Encourages their kids to ask questions
- Can be easily approached for information and guidance
- Listens to their child and tries to answer questions accurately
- Knows what a child is able to understand at different ages
- Is willing to keep talking until their child is satisfied with the information
- Can admit they don't have all the answers but will try to find out

How to become an "ask-able" parent:

- Frequently ask your kids what they're thinking and if there is anything they want to talk about. Take the initiative to start a conversation.
- Verbally tell your kids that you're there for them if they ever have any questions about anything. Don't assume that they feel comfortable coming to you on personal issues.
- Recognize "teachable moments" presented to you in everyday life, such as a wedding or pregnancy of a close relative or friend, or topics discussed in school, on television or in the movies. Use these opportunities to share your values and start a conversation about personal issues like sexuality.
- If your child does approach you with questions, try to always make time for them and answer their questions to the best of your ability. Don't run them away even if you feel uncomfortable with the topic. The more conversations you have about sexuality issues, the more comfortable and confident you both will become.
- Become knowledgeable on growth and development issues for your child's age group. Buy or borrow a book on the subject or talk to your health care provider, school nurse or guidance counselor.