

5 Tips for Parents

Navigating TV Shows, Sex, and Social Media With Your Teens

- 1.** Get to know your teens' favorite TV shows. Watch together or separately; follow their shows in social media, read episode recaps and get familiar with the way sex and relationships are portrayed. Ask what they like about their show and why.
 - 2.** Use TV shows and characters to start a conversation—not a lecture. Ask your teens how TV relationships compare to real life, whether the consequences of sex are realistic (or present at all), and how they would handle the risky sexual situations their favorite TV characters face.
 - 3.** Set limits on electronic media. Keep laptops and mobile devices out of the bedroom at night. Even if your teen is watching TV alone on various devices, you can still set limits about what kind of content is acceptable and help them separate fact from fiction. Ask about the role social media plays in their friendships and romantic relationships.
 - 4.** Be clear about what kind of behavior is acceptable in social media and what's off-limits. How do your family's rules compare to their friends' rules? How much texting is too much? What's OK to post and what's not? Be aware of what your teens are sharing in social media. Talk with your teens about what's private, what's public, and what constitutes a "friend" – in the real world and in the digital world.
 - 5.** Be sure your teens understand that the Internet is forever. A photo intended for one person can go global quickly. Deleting something embarrassing doesn't mean someone else hasn't already saved or shared it. Once you post, you lose control.
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