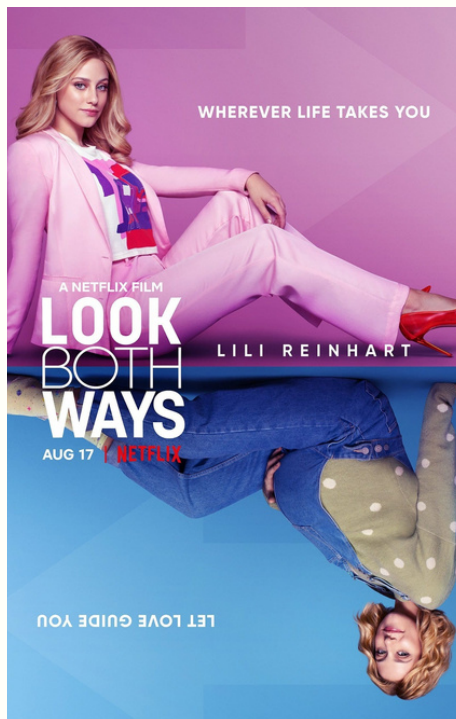


EyesOpenIowa's

# LET'S TALK MONTH

October 2022 Caregiver & Educator Toolkit



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## October is Let's Talk Month!

Every October EyesOpenIowa joins with national partners to recognize Let's Talk Month. This month encourages parents and caregivers to talk with their teens about sex. In this toolkit you'll find handy tips for starting conversations, curated clips from current TV shows and movies, and prompts to guide discussions. Additionally, we've hand picked books from trusted health educators for supplemental information and tips.

We encourage you to talk early and talk often!

### How to Use This Toolkit

Parents/Caregivers:

Review the tips on page 2, and use the questions below each pop culture clip as a guide for conversations with your teen.

Educators:

Use the pop culture clips as supplements in the classroom. We've suggested which clips would be appropriate for certain topic areas.

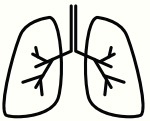
# EyesOpenIowa's Top Tips for Talking to Teens



Choose a comfortable and neutral environment, like on the couch or in the car.



Choose a time where you're not rushed, like while cooking dinner, watching TV as a family, or going for a walk.



Take some deep breaths! We know these can be awkward or uncomfortable conversations, but you can do it!



Be open to answer questions and discuss challenging topics or concerns. It's okay not to know everything; there are plenty of resources available on our Parent/Caregiver page!



Check your own baggage around the stigma of talking about sex.



Communicate your values while still allowing your teen to explore who they are and what's important to them.



# Sex Appeal

Larson and Avery communicate what feels good

Avery and Casper try out the app

Sex Appeal (2022, Hulu) is about a senior girl in high school named Avery whose long distance boyfriend wants to have sex for the first time when they're together at a STEM competition. She decides to use her science skills to develop an app to create the "optimal sexual experience". In her processes of creating the app, she asks her long time best friend to be her experiment partner. Things get a little confusing when emotions start to get thrown in the mix.

## Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. What did you notice about communication in both of these scenes?
2. In the first clip, Larson comments that love and sex are intertwined. Do you think this is true for all relationships? Can relationships be healthy without sex?
3. In the second clip, Casper notices that Avery is uncomfortable and asks if they should stop. Why was that a good idea, and what does it tell you about how consent works?

## Educator Guide

Show this clip to get conversations going around:

- Consent
- Communicating boundaries
- 3 • Sexual decision-making



# Three Months

## Three Months Trailer

Three Months (2022, Paramount Plus) follows Caleb, a recent high school graduate. He gets a message from a partner saying he had tested positive for HIV. Caleb goes to the doctor only to find out he has to wait three months before he can get an accurate result. Caleb navigates a support group, complex family dynamics, and friendships.

## Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. Did you know there was a waiting period before finding out if someone has HIV? What might that feel like to someone waiting?
2. Would you know what to do/where to go if a partner told you they had an STD?
3. What do you think about the relationship between Dara and Suzanne? What were the outcomes of the relationship?
4. Could you tell in the end if Caleb's test was positive or negative?

## Educator Guide

This movie can help start conversations around:

- Healthy versus unhealthy relationships
- Power dynamics
- STD testing and medical care



# Look Both Ways

## Look Both Ways Trailer

Look Both Ways (2022, Netflix) follows Natalie down two different timelines after college graduation. In one time line she moves to her dream city to pursue a career she's always wanted and in the other she finds out she's pregnant, so she moves back home to live with her parents and start a family. This movie explores how life doesn't always go according to plan, but that doesn't mean you have to give up on your dreams.

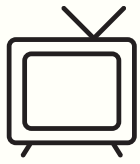
## Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. Have you ever thought about your 5 year plan? How might being involved in a pregnancy affect that plan?
2. What choices does Natalie make that help shape each timeline?
3. Do you think having a good support system, like Natalie had, makes a difference in outcomes?

## Educator Guide

This movie can help start conversations around:

- Planning for the future
- Navigating challenges
- Support systems



## First Day

### Hannah Fields Her Classmates' Questions

### Evie MacDonald speaks on trans representation

First Day (2021, Hulu) is about Hannah, a girl who's starting at a new school. Her first day isn't just any first day—Hannah is transgender and this is the first year she will attend school as her true self. Throughout seasons 1 and 2, Hannah navigates new friendships, bullies, and building confidence in her identity.

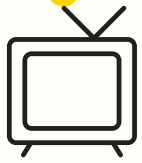
### Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. Why do you think Hannah was uncomfortable when her classmate asked about her "boy name"?
2. What can schools do to be more supportive of transgender students?
3. Evie MacDonald, who plays Hannah, is a transgender actress. How do you think a young trans person might feel seeing someone like them reflected back to them when watching a show like First Day?

### Educator Guide

This episode can be used to facilitate discussions around:

- Gender identity
- Self-esteem
- Being a supportive friend



# Heartstopper

Nick struggles to figure out his identity.

Nick comes out to his mom

Heartstopper (2022, Netflix) is about openly gay Charlie who becomes friends with rugby star Nick. The two become fast friends and soon into the relationship Charlie develops feelings for Nick. But unsuspecting to Nick, he soon starts to feel the same way about Charlie. We follow the two as they navigate this new relationship and figure out how to manage comments from classmates.

## Parent/Caregiver Guide

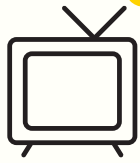
1. How do you think Nick first felt when he realized he had feelings for Charlie? Why do you think he felt that way?
2. Do you think it was hard for Nick to tell his mom he is bisexual? How do you think he felt afterward?
3. Nick's friends often pick on Charlie. What might you have done if you were Nick?

## Educator Guide

This episode can be used to facilitate discussions around:

- Sexual orientation
- Healthy relationships
- Being a supportive friend





# Never Have I Ever

## Never Have I Ever season 3 trailer

Never Have I Ever (2020-2022, Netflix) currently has 3 seasons on Netflix, but in the most recent season we really see Devi come into her own. She is dating the boy of her dreams but at the same time is struggling with her self esteem and peer pressures to have sex. Right away in episode 1 of season 3 we see how Devi manages these pressures.

## Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. What type of comments were made after Devi and Paxton started dating? How do you think that made Devi feel?
2. How could Paxton tell Devi wasn't ready to have sex?
3. Why do you think it's important to stop sexual activity if the other person seems uncomfortable?

## Educator Guide

This episode can be used to facilitate discussions around:

- Consent
- Peer pressure
- Healthy relationships



# Perks of Getting Your Period

## Perks of Getting Your Period

Ilyssa (illymation) creates autobiographical animations on her YouTube channel. In this video, she humorously describes the awkwardness she felt getting her period, how she learned to manage period pain, and how she takes care of her reproductive health as a young adult.

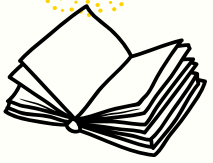
## Parent/Caregiver Guide

1. Ilyssa decided to go on birth control to manage her period symptoms. How might stigma around teen birth control use affect someone getting treatment? What can teens do to fight the stigma?
2. Ilyssa's classmate tells her to just "hold" her period. What misconceptions have you heard about periods and puberty?
3. If a friend was nervous about seeing a medical provider for their sexual health, how might you support them?

## Educator Guide

Use this episode to supplement lessons on:

- Periods and puberty
- Birth control methods
- Talking to medical providers

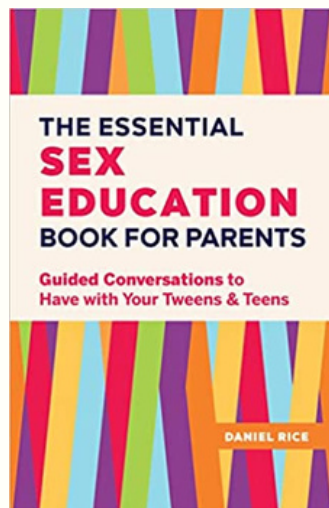


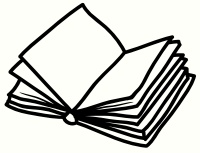
# Book Recommendations

## The Essential Sex Education Book for Parents

In this book written by Daniel Rice you will find all kinds of guided conversation starters. Broken down into two parts with a total of seven Chapters, each one taking on a new topic. A great read for anyone preparing to have kids, already raising young ones, or even those with teens who want to start having more conversations with their teens but aren't so sure where to start or how to bring certain topics up.

Exploring topics from puberty, hygiene, body image, and normalizing the changes kids face in life, both physically and socially, to the harder conversations around exploring sexual identity, masturbation, all types of sex, and so much more! Each topic comes with its own set of questions to go over with your young person, the general age to start the conversations, and tips on how you can help your young person leave the conversation feeling successful while also allowing yourself to feel like you've done your best.



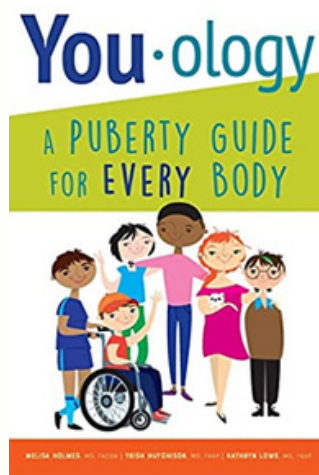


# Book Recommendations

## You\*ology.

From the most trusted name in child health, American Academy of Pediatrics, comes a new, inclusive approach to learning about puberty! Remember that awkward day in school when the boys went to one classroom and the girls to another and everyone nervously giggled, learning about taboo topics like menstruation and erections? What if your kids could learn about changing bodies in a way that isn't secretive or shameful? And what if it could even be inclusive, fun, and, well, kind of adorable? A new kind of puberty guide, You-ology embraces an inclusive approach that normalizes puberty for all kids. Traditional puberty education only contributes to a sense of isolation and often does not include all kids' experience of puberty and leaves kids with questions about how puberty will affect their friends and classmates.

For curious kids and parents looking to talk about puberty in an inclusive way, You-ology offers fact-based, age-appropriate, and body positive information about the physical, social, and emotional changes ahead for all kids. Colorful illustrations keep the tone upbeat and engaging, while short stories featuring a cast of diverse characters add relatability and humor. Helping kids understand what EVERY body goes through in puberty, grows greater compassion and empathy for all





# Resources

Here are some more great options for reliable resources to help further the conversations you are having with the teens in your life. You can also head to our [website](#) to find more resources on all kinds of topics.

- EyesOpenIowa's [TikTok](#)
- EyesOpenIowa's [Instagram](#)
- EyesOpenIowa's [BREATHE Youtube Series](#): Tips for Adults for Talking to Teens About Sex and Relationships, created by our Training Department
- [AMAZE Org](#)—bite sized videos on a range of adolescent health topics, created by [Advocates for Youth](#)

From the EyesOpenIowa [Blog](#):

- 5 Ways To Improve Communication With Your Teen
- Forget the Talk—It's an Ongoing Conversation, Part 1
- Forget the Talk—It's an Ongoing Conversation, Part 2
- How Comprehensive Sex Education Prevents Sexual Abuse
- New Rules of the Digital Age—Sexting