



PART 3: DATING AND RELATIONSHIPS

WIN

To parent our teenagers with intentionality in the area of dating and relationships as we prepare them for adulthood

CONNECT

How old were you when you first started dating? How does your experience shape your perspective of when and how your teenager dates?

LEARN

Before watching the video, take a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

Heavenly Father, give us a healthy perspective of dating and relationships in the teenage years and help us to guide our kids toward confidently making wise choices in this area of their lives. We love you and we trust you. In Jesus's name, amen.

After praying, watch the video (15 minutes).

APPLY

1. Research indicates that 70–80% of communication is nonverbal, meaning it happens with facial expressions and body language. In order for students to develop healthy relationships, they need lots of opportunities for face-to-face interaction. Where does your teen get practice in this area? How can you give them more opportunities to grow?
2. When teenagers feel anxious, they are prone to escape and avoidance. David talked about how parents should move toward supporting our teens ("I can tell this is hard") and challenging them with coaching and opportunities to practice ("You've got this!"). What's an area where your teenager tends to lean toward escape and avoidance? What could it look like to support and challenge, rather than supporting the pattern of escape and avoidance?
3. In the area of dating and relationships, practice is necessary, oversight is foundational, and nervous is normal. How could you offer opportunities for your teen to practice (e.g., asking someone on a date, starting conversations on a date)? What does oversight look like in your home when your teen is dating?
4. In dating and in life, teenagers will struggle and they will mess up. How can you make it safe for your teen to talk to you without fear of judgment?





PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Beginning in our middle school environment, our student ministry environments teach three biblical principles about dating and relationships:

1. Don't be mastered by anything.
2. Don't sexualize a relationship outside of marriage.
3. Honor God with your body.

Have you had (awkward but important) conversations with your teen about pornography and sex? What, if anything, holds you back from talking about these subjects? How could you leverage these three principles in discussions with your teenager? Check out *A Parent's Guide to Conversations About Sex: What to Say and When to Say It* with Jim Burns—a free digital resource for parents.

PRAY

Pray together as a group. Ask God to help you be a safe place for your student to talk about dating and relationships. Ask him to give you wisdom to know how and when to respond as you guide your student toward making wise choices in this area.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

A Parent's Guide to Conversations About Sex: What to Say and When to Say It with Jim Burns – A free digital resource for parents northpoint.org/conversations

Counseling Referrals website – If you attend a North Point Ministries campus in the Atlanta-area, counselingreferrals.org can help you connect with a professional counselor.

