

# CHAPTER 1

## TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL FACTS & VALUES: PARENTS' FEARS, HOW TO TALK, AND A PLAN.

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Why do we hesitate to talk with our children about sex? Do the following excuses sound familiar?

- We can't talk with a preschooler or primary school child about sex because 'they're too young'.
- We can't talk with a pre-teenager or a young teenager about sex because 'they might go out and try it'.
- We don't *need* to talk to a teenager or young adult about sex because 'they already know it all!'

This formula has been adopted by countless parents and adults, but it's not designed to meet the needs of today's children. In fact, it never met the needs of any children, in any era. Keeping children and young people in sexual ignorance is a recipe for unwanted and premature pregnancies; for increased transmission of sexual infections; and also, especially in today's world, for increasing the chances of the child being sexually exploited.

Children want to understand their world. Sexuality is part of the world. They also deeply appreciate having homes where anything, including sex, can be discussed. But parents have fears. One of the biggest is, 'I *don't know what to say*'. That's where this book comes in.