

## Talking to your child about sex... you can do it!

How do you find discussing the following subjects with your child?

SUBJECT	VERY DIFFICULT					VERY EASY
Conception, pregnancy and birth	1	2	3	4	5	
Name and function of the genitals	1	2	3	4	5	
Personal hygiene	1	2	3	4	5	
Boy-girl relationships	1	2	3	4	5	
Perception of body, appearance	1	2	3	4	5	
Sexual orientation	1	2	3	4	5	
Prejudice and bullying	1	2	3	4	5	
First love	1	2	3	4	5	
Sexual abuse	1	2	3	4	5	
Puberty	1	2	3	4	5	
First period	1	2	3	4	5	
First ejaculation	1	2	3	4	5	

Everyone has a different comfort level with each of these topics. Some subjects are more difficult and embarrassing than others. When talking to your child about things you find difficult, ask yourself:

- What do you find difficult or what makes you uncomfortable?
- What do you fear about your child's reaction?
- What do you want to communicate to your child about these topics?
- Will talking to your child about your own experiences help you start a discussion?

## USEFUL TIPS



- If you bring up a subject but they don't want to talk about it, don't be discouraged. They'll think about what you said. What's important is that they know you are ready to talk.
- If your child is uncomfortable talking about sex, you can say:  
*"A lot of people find it embarrassing to talk about sex. If you're uncomfortable, I understand. It makes me feel a bit awkward too, but I think it's important to talk about it. What can we do to feel more comfortable?"*
- Make sex a topic that you discuss like any other: it's part of life, it concerns everyone.
- Start the discussion by asking what your child already knows. This will give you an idea of what they need, and you can adapt to their specific experiences.
- Although sex is a serious topic, humour can ease any tension.
- Ask other parents for advice.
- If you're too embarrassed to talk about certain subjects, make sure your child can talk about these things with other important adults in their lives. If need be, help them get information from other sources (books, websites, etc.).



**Ideally, you should talk about sex and puberty before children go through these experiences.**