

# just do it? think again...

“Having sex,” “doing it,” “making love,” “sexual intercourse,” “sex.” What is it? It is when people want to be very close to each other in a sexual way, so close that the male’s penis goes inside the female’s vagina. The decision of when to have sex for the first time is one of the most important choices that you will make. Here are some tips that will help you make a good decision. Remember, hugging, cuddling, kissing, holding hands, and touching are other ways of being sexually close to someone without having sexual intercourse.

## Respect yourself.

You don’t have to have sex just to please someone else. Sex isn’t the only thing that makes someone worth loving.

## Be confident and have a mind of your own.

No one likes a wimp. People like people who aren’t afraid to stand up for what they believe in. So don’t have sex just to follow the crowd.

## Care about the other person.

Pressure isn’t sexy. If the person you’re with isn’t ready for sex, don’t push. Taking time to find out what the other person really wants will make your relationship better.

## Don’t fall for the media hype.

Ads, TV and movies make it seem like guys and girls are having sex all the time. Don’t buy into it. They’re trying to sell products, not help you make good decisions.

## Don’t confuse sexual activity with being a man or woman.

You can be good looking, strong and popular without having sex.

**Don’t risk your whole future for a few minutes of fun now.**

Consider the benefits of NOT having sex yet:

- No getting pushed around by what other people say.
- No pressure to make commitments to someone until you want to.
- No fears about diseases and pregnancy.

That’s the kind of attitude that’s easy to fall in love with.

**Don’t confuse sexual activity with being a man or woman.**

# a smart choice

Choosing not to have sex—**abstinence**—makes a lot of sense right now. Surveys of teens your age show that many teens are choosing not to have sex. Sex too soon can get in the way of your future, friendships, school and sports. And don't think that not being ready for sex is a sign of immaturity. On the contrary, realizing you're not ready for something as big as sex is a sign of maturity. Take some time to think about how you really feel. Talk to your parents or another trusted adult, such as your doctor, about your feelings.

There may be times when waiting can be difficult; sexual feelings or thoughts are normal. But you

don't have to act on your feelings. You might feel pressure from your friends, or how your body feels might make it hard to wait, even when you know waiting is the best choice for you.

## So, when abstinence is difficult, remember what's in it for you:

- Respect from family and friends and yourself
- Time to make sure you're ready, you're with the right person, you know and trust your partner, and you've learned the difference between love and sex
- Better relationships without the confusion that can come with sex
- Freedom from worry about pregnancy and sexual diseases, including AIDS
- Freedom from regrets that you didn't wait for the right person or the right time
- A fit with your values and the way you see yourself

## It will be easier to be abstinent, if you

- Hang out with friends who feel the same way you do
- Tell your girlfriend or boyfriend about your decision before there is pressure to have sex
- Think about some ways you can say no, in case you need to
- Don't use alcohol or drugs. That can make it harder to stick with your decision.



Don't assume that "everybody's doing it."

## Here are a few ways teens are saying no:

There are lots of ways to be close without having sex. Here are things that other people your age say they do instead of having sex:

- Talk on the telephone
- Go to a concert
- Share dreams with each other
- Sit together in the park
- Write each other letters
- Take a walk together
- Whisper something nice into the other's ear
- Be best friends
- Go dancing
- Laugh
- Hold hands
- Invite them over for dinner
- Cook a meal together
- Be caring
- Watch the sunset
- Make a list of things you like about each other
- Do homework together
- Go to a movie

Realizing you're not ready for something as big as sex is a sign of maturity.

*"I like you  
but I'm not  
ready for sex."*

*"We might get  
caught."*

*"This isn't right  
for me."*

*"I don't  
want to."*

*"Not tonight.  
My coach said  
not to."*

*"Let's wait. I want  
to stop now."*

*"Please respect  
my wishes."*

*"This isn't the  
right time."*

***"No."***