

ENGAGE YOUR FAITH BY

Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

There will be times when you find yourself saying words to your child that you never dreamed you would have to say. Ask God to give you wisdom in choosing your words to help guide your toddler toward living a pure and God honoring life, without body shame. Ask God for patience in the moments that you find yourself embarrassed as your child struggles to grasp the new concepts of privacy and modesty. But bigger than that, ask God to help guide you in raising your child to know Him intimately and with a heart to live a life that is pure and pleasing to the Lord.

RESOURCES

Web

- www.focusonthefamily.com • Teaching Healthy Sexuality
- www.healthcare.utah.edu • Talking to Toddlers About Their Private Parts
- www.consumer.healthday.com • How to Talk to Your Child About Sex.
Ages 3-6

Books

- The Story of Me* by Stan and Brenna Jones

PARENTING MATTERS

PURITY

— BIRTH - 5 YEARS OLD —

LIFE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE

Your baby is growing, learning the names of their body parts and discovering what each part can do. As potty training begins and calls attention to some very specific body parts, your child is beginning to notice that their parts are not the same as others. Natural curiosity takes over and there will likely be an embarrassing moment or two that will lend themselves to conversations you never envisioned having.



YOU PARENT THEM WELL BY

KNOW

Around the age of three most kids will begin to notice the difference between boys and girls. While it is easy to be alarmed at their desire to compare and explore, keep in mind that at this age they aren't viewing it in a sexual manner, but more like a scientist researching what the various body parts do and how they feel.

EXPECT

Most parents will find themselves in an embarrassing situation where their child is either exposing themselves in public (underwear provides a whole new level of access and freedom!), or showing and comparing their parts with friends of both genders. In these moments it is important to check yourself, count to ten and stay calm. You can then have a firm but unemotional conversation with your child about why that behavior is inappropriate and explain that certain body parts are private and not to be shown to others.

PREPARE

Think about and research questions your child may ask relating to sex, babies, body parts, etc., before they ask them. There will always be the question that throws you off guard. But in general, if you can be prepared, these moments will flow much more smoothly. Before answering any questions, make sure you are clear on what they are really asking. For example, "Where did I come from?" may be about where babies come from, or they may just want to know what city and state they were born in.

TALK

When talking with your child it is best to use the real names for all body parts and name the sensitive ones in the same matter of fact tone you would name any other body part: hair, eye, knee, penis, toe, etc. If your child asks where babies come from, explain in simple terms using correct body part language. "A part of daddy and a part of mommy join together in the womb inside mommy's belly." It may be tempting, but steer away from using "the stork" story.

NEXT STEP ARE

Preemptive Conversations

Precautionary

When potty training, parents often find it helpful to allow their kids to be naked or nearly naked as it saves on laundry and seems to help the child be more intune with nature's calling. As you dress your child to leave the house or because company is coming over, share with them why they need to have clothes on. Say something like, "Some areas of our body are private and not for others to see or ever touch. When we leave the home or others come to visit, we need to always make sure that we keep our private areas private."

It is never too early to talk to your child about appropriate and inappropriate touch. When helping them wipe after using the restroom talk about who can help them and teach them as early as possible to wipe themselves. Another great opportunity is bathing. Teach them to wash and dry themselves in their private areas helps enforce that no one should touch those areas. A doctor should only look or touch with mom or dad present and only after asking the child's permission. Explain that if anyone ever touches their private areas and tells them not to tell, they should always tell you right away and should never keep that secret.

Reactionary

If the day comes when you find yourself in the middle of a crowded store and your newly potty trained child decides to flash customers, quickly get them covered, then take a deep breath and count to ten and know that you aren't alone. This is a very normal action from a toddler. Calmly remind your child that their private areas are private and never to be shown to others, but be careful not to shame or scold them. Be firm but loving in your response.

If the worst should happen and your child tells you that someone has touched them inappropriately, or they begin to exhibit sexualized behaviors, do your best to guard as much of your horrified response as possible. Prioritize making them feel loved and ask questions in a controlled and gentle tone.