Sometimes adults don’t always do a great job of talking to tweens and teens. They can lecture, be dismissive, or even seem too busy. But talking with an adult you trust about life and growing up is important. Sex, dating, drugs, suicide…there is so much going on around us that we need people to talk to in order to help us make healthy decisions for ourselves. Check out these tips for talking to your parents (or another adult you trust)!

1. Be **PATIENT**. While your question is very important, your parents or guardians might not be prepared to answer it. In fact, it might surprise them that you asked. Give them a second to gather their thoughts.

2. **TALK**…a lot. These conversations can be awkward for both of you. Sometimes our parents still see us as little kids and have a hard time thinking about “their baby” dating or asking questions about sex. Open communication about these challenging topics is important and the more you do it, the easier it will become.

3. Do your **RESEARCH**…**TOGETHER**. Neither you nor your parent have all the answers. Check out centerstone.org/teen for information on everything from sex and relationships to body image, depression, addiction and more.

4. **KNOW** when you (or a friend) are in over your head. Sometimes bad things happen to you or your friends. Unfortunately, teens and tweens also face issues like assault, addiction, or suicide. This makes it important for you to realize when you need help. Not only can a parent or guardian be helpful, but a school counselor, older sibling, auntie, best friend’s mom, youth leader, neighbor (you get the picture) can help you figure out how to handle something really unsafe or dangerous.

5. **PICK** another adult. Not everyone has a parent or guardian that they can have a great conversation with. In fact, for some tweens and teens the adult they can trust is not even related to them. Families come in all shapes and sizes and its okay to talk to an ANOTHER adult you can trust if your parent is not an option. If you are 13 or over you can even make your own appointment at the local Health Department for information on STDs, pregnancy prevention or contraception.

6. In an **EMERGENCY**, if you need someone to talk to, and don’t want to talk to anyone you know, reach out to us at: centerstone.org/get-help-now. You can CALL or TEXT. It is FREE and PRIVATE.