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***Integrity Conversation Guide***

It is wise to help an early teen establish clear boundaries before they face tempting or awkward situations. As soon as they begin taking an interest in a dating or romantic relationship, spend time together walking through the following discussion guide to create healthy expectations and goals.

**GRACE**: First off, if your teen has already made mistakes such as viewing pornography or going too far with a boyfriend/girlfriend, read John 8 and ask God to help you model Jesus’ balance with the woman caught in adultery. You must clearly call the sin a sin so that your teen can receive grace through repentance. But offer hope by challenging him/her to start fresh and “go and sin no more.” Find an appropriate time to talk rather than react in the heat of discovering the sin. Coach them through the same steps to set new boundaries and accountability for the future. Offer grace and forgiveness, but also lead them in making a commitment from this point on to live in sexual integrity avoid further risk.

If you personally made mistakes or are making mistakes in your sexual integrity, God still wants to use you to lead your child. When appropriate, be honest with your child about mistakes you have made. Lead knowing that there is forgiveness from your heavenly Father and that you can make a generational change in your family.

**THE PURPOSE OF DATING**: Use the following statements to frame discussions with your teen about when they might be ready to consider dating. Ask them what they think dating is, allow dialogue, and coach your child on what dating is and is not.

WHAT DATING IS

* Spending time with the opposite sex to discover a future spouse
* Building a friendship without the physical bonds reserved for marriage
* A process intended for those approaching the age for engagement and/or marriage

WHAT DATING IS NOT

* A time to kiss, touch or other forms of intimacy before marriage
* A status symbol among peers impressed by those with a boyfriend or girlfriend
* A way to boost your own confidence through attention from a romantic partner

**MODESTY:** Have a dialogue with your teen about what modesty means and what they think is modest or not. Coach your child that no matter what someone wears or how they act, they are responsible for their actions and how they treat that person (Romans 14:12). Remind them that though they are not responsible *for* the sins of others, they are responsible *to* others (Romans 14:13). Through dialogue with your child, create a plan on how they will be modest in how they dress and how they will respond when others may be immodest.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** In addition to you as their parent, encourage your teen to identify a close friend or an adult mentor who shares the same values to help hold each other accountable to protect their sexual integrity.

**DRAWING THE LINE:** Coach your teen to decide now what he/she will and will not do in a dating or romantic relationship. Discuss the following summary of the natural progression of physical intimacy. Decide together where to draw the line to protect their sexual integrity.

* Flirting
* Side hugs
* Frontal hugs
* Holding hands
* Arms around each other
* Cuddling
* Kissing
* French kissing
* Touching/caressing with clothes on
* Petting/groping under or without clothes
* Oral sex
* Sexual intercourse

**DANGER ZONES:** Create a list with your student of strategies that will help them avoid potentially compromising situations. Below is a list of ideas to get the conversation started.

* Never be in a house with the opposite sex without parental supervision.
* Stay in family areas of the house. No going in bedrooms.
* Doors of the room you are in remain open.
* Come straight home after a date. No “parking.”
* Limit alone time to a set amount to give the relationship breaks.
* Date only a growing Christian.
* Only group date as friends until a designated age such as16 or 17 years old.

**EXIT PLAN**: Create an easy way for your teen to flee a tempting or risky situation. Discuss possible “code language” them might use when calling or texting for a ride home such as “I’m having a great time, but I don’t feel well.” This will alert you that they need to leave without embarrassing them in front of others. If they do use you as an exit plan, be sure to not jump to judgement immediately. You want to be a safe place that they can come to in the future and if you criticize, judge, or demean because they had to contact you, they likely won’t come to you if that situation happens again.

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