

Abstinence The Benefits...

- ...you can be popular and cool without having sex.
- ...choosing to wait has many positive emotional, social and physical benefits
- ...avoid triggers of early onset of anxiety or depression.
- ...any one you 'hook-up' with becomes a part of you, physically and mentally. You can avoid bringing past history into your marriage.
- ...gives you time to know yourself better.
- ...gives you time to have fun, share feelings, get to know each other.
- ...gives you time to learn about relationships without the complication of sex.
- ...abstinence has no medical or physical side effects.
- ...means you won't have a child before you are ready.
- ...takes the pressure off.
- ...helps you feel in control.
- ...means you know what's right for you.

*Once you have chosen abstinence,
hang out with people who
respect your decision.*

Express feelings

- ▼ You can show your love in creative ways, connecting through words, music, photos, calling or texting, homemade gifts and doing social activities together are ways to promote positive expressions of closeness and intimacy.

For helpful resources on abstinence visit the following resources.

- www.cdc.gov
- www.abstinenceassociation.org
- www.why-abstinence.org
- www.stayteen.org
- www.abstinenceworks.org

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Choose

Abstinence

Do you feel pressured to have sex?
From others?
From yourself?
Remember, not everyone is doing it.
Many teens have decided to wait.

Here are a few things
you should know and why
it is Okay to say no.

For
Your
future

The facts...

Abstinence means not having sex

- ◆ Both young men and women can and do choose abstinence. Recent studies show a decline in teen sexual behavior.
- ◆ Teens sometimes perceive that “everyone is doing it.” When in fact, they are not. Studies show that a majority of teens have not had sex by the time they are 17 years old.
- ◆ Studies found that most teens that have had sex wished they had waited.
- ◆ About 1,000,000 teen girls become pregnant every year.
- ◆ Boys who get a girl pregnant will be financially responsible for the baby for the next 18 years.
- ◆ Abstinence is the only 100% effective method of birth control.
- ◆ 3,000,000 teens get a sexually transmitted disease or Infection every year.
- ◆ 1 in 4 (sexually active) teen girls has an STD.
- ◆ Having an STD may cause infertility which will effect your future family planning options.
- ◆ Not having sex will lower your risk of contracting a Human papilloma virus (HPV) infection, Genital herpes (HSV) virus or an HIV (AIDS) infection.
- ◆ Most people who have genital herpes do not know it. There are often no symptoms, that is why you can easily pass it to others without even knowing, often there are no signs of the infection.

- ◆ Washing the genitals, urinating, or douching after sex will not prevent any STD's.
- ◆ You can get herpes if your genitals touch the infected skin or secretions (like saliva) of someone who has it.
- ◆ HPV is the most common STD infection. There are over 40 types that can infect both females and males. You cannot see HPV. Most people who become infected don't even know they have it and do not realize they are infected or passing the virus to a partner.
- ◆ Certain types of HPV can cause genital warts, where others can cause cervical cancer.
- ◆ 1 in 4 new cases of HIV is a teen.
- ◆ AIDS is the sixth leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds.

You Can Say No...

**Saying NO to sex now,
is saying YES to you and your future**

- ...that doesn't mean you don't have sexual feelings, it does mean you have decided not to act on your sexual feelings.
- ...you don't need a reason to be abstinent, you can choose abstinence for any reason.
- ...you always have the right to say no!
- ...saying no to sex does not cost anything!

...be up front with people you date, say that you have chosen to wait. Be clear in your message about wanting to wait, and set limits early so you won't get into tough situations.

...you can be in love and not have sex, even if your girl/boyfriend wants to have sex, you can still say no.

...you can say no, even if someone you care about is pressuring you. If your partner says “You would if you loved me”, you're reply can be “if you loved me, you would not pressure me.”

**Choosing not to have sex now,
does not mean you do not
love each other,
it means you have found other
ways to express your feelings.**

...remember that having sex will not make your partner love you.

...you can say that you care, but that you're not ready to have sex.

...it's easier to say no and stick with your decision if you avoid situations where drugs and alcohol are involved.

...it's easier to say no if you avoid or limit secluded/private time alone with a girl/boyfriend. Group activities, double dates and spending time in public places are good ways to avoid being alone.

...you can say no, even if you've had sex before.
...even if you're pregnant or have had a baby.

...it may be helpful to tell a friend, your parents or trusted adult about your decision.