

# Are parents and children talking? *Depends on who you ask.*

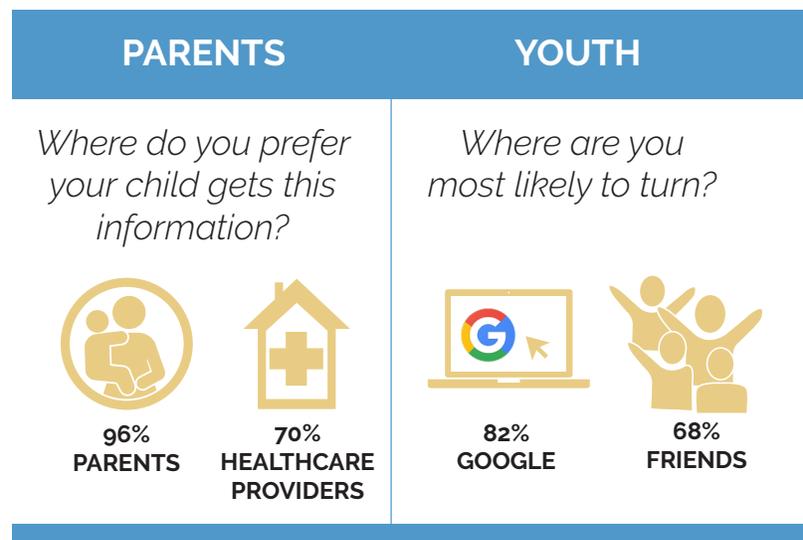


Parents are very clear on two things. They want to be the primary sexuality educators of their children, and they need some help having those conversations.

This is just one of the conclusions from a recent study conducted in Texas that included more than 500 survey responses from parents and young adults, as well as interviews and listening sessions held across the state. What emerged was a very obvious disconnect between young people and their parents when it comes to conversations about love, sex, and relationships.

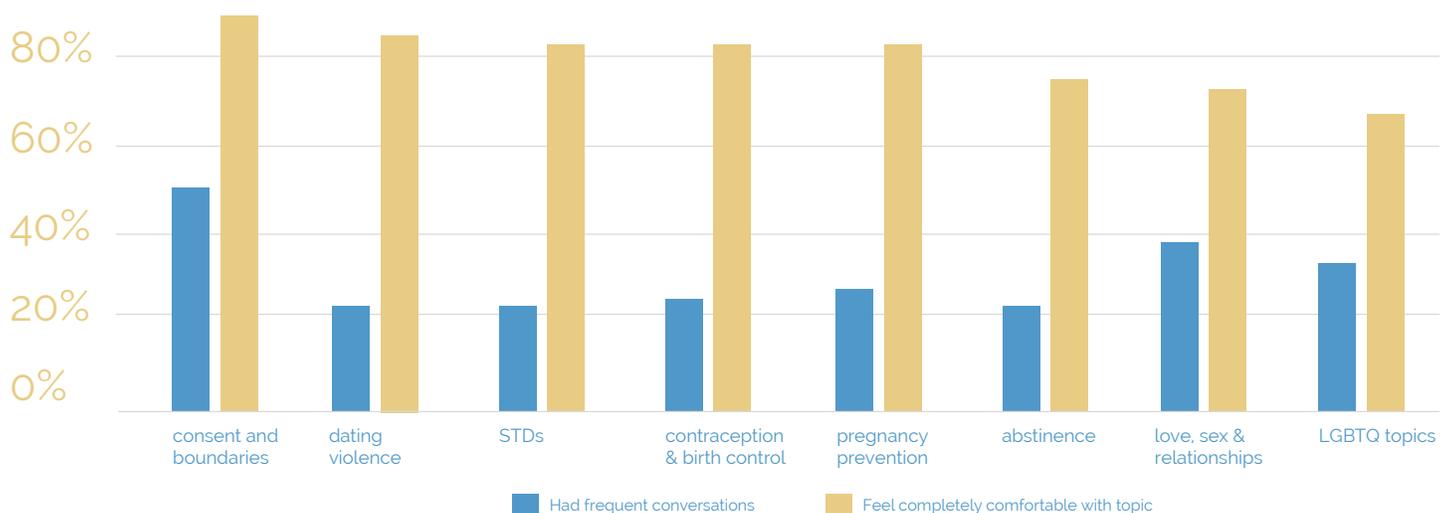
The overwhelming majority of parents would rather they be the ones their children turn to for information, along with medical professionals, but the reality is that young adults indicated they are most likely to turn to Google or their friends instead.

Clearly, we have some work to do. What is interesting is that parents say they feel “completely comfortable” discussing a wide-range of topics, from abstinence, to contraception, to consent and boundaries. But this perception of comfort doesn’t often translate to actual conversations with their children.

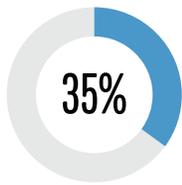


Only 14% of young adults in our survey said they “always have open and honest conversations” about topics related to sexual health with their parents. This includes an eye opening 1-in-3 who say they did not talk—or remember talking—to their parents about these topics. Whether they talked to their parents or not and no matter the content of those discussions, **only 17% say conversations with their parents were definitely helpful.**

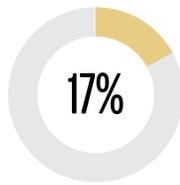
## For parents, there is a noticeable gap between being comfortable having conversations and the frequency of those conversations.



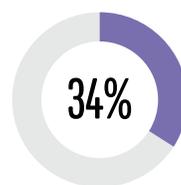
# Who is teaching our children? Is it parents?



of young adults **didn't talk or don't remember** talking about issues like sexual health with parents.



of young adults say they only talked about **abstinence** with their parents.



of young adults say they talked about **some things** with their parents.



of young adults say they always have **open and honest** conversations with their parents.

*Results from 2020 survey of Texas young adults. More than 300 youth from across the state participated, but survey is not a fully representative sample.*



**It's sort of a privilege to be able to talk to your parents about stuff like that because not all parents are willing to have those conversations.**

**I love my parents, we get along great, that's just not a conversation I would have with them.**

TEXAS YOUNG PEOPLE

Despite their comfort and preference to be their child's primary educator, parents are also clear that they need help: 99% of parents said that "more efforts are needed at home," and also in the community overall (93%) and in schools (92%). This would seem to contradict the fact that most parents (75%) also indicate "their children have all the information they need to be sexually healthy."

All of this points to a pivotal opportunity to both empower *and* support parents. These conditions are not mutually exclusive. We can help parents get better at having conversations *and* also support them through school and community-based programming.

## TIP FOR PARENTS

In national surveys conducted by Power to Decide, teens say their parents have the greatest influence over their decisions about sex—more than friends, siblings, or the media. Best practices for having those conversations suggest parents should:

- ✓ Stay informed about where their teenaged children are getting their information,
- ✓ Identify opportunities to have meaningful conversations, such as time in the car or immediately after watching a movie together
- ✓ Have frequent conversations, instead of planning "the big sex talk,"
- ✓ Be relaxed and open and avoid overreacting, and
- ✓ Provide their children with the opportunity to talk with healthcare professionals.

★ All research reported is from a 2020 Gap Analysis conducted by 1000 Feathers, LLC unless otherwise noted.

★ For more information, visit [www.txcampaign.org](http://www.txcampaign.org), or follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

