

## SEXUAL HEALTH FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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Let's pull the shade up a little bit on harmful messages about sex in our culture.

Here are a few things to jog your thinking about sexual themes we see all around us. These statements are in opposition to what is being sold to us as "normal."

1. You will not die if you do not have sex.
2. You are not more of a man or woman, girl or boy if you have sex as soon or as often as you are able.
3. You are not liberated when you have sex casually--you risk becoming trapped in a mean sexual culture.
4. Sex referred to in songs, TV, movies and ads sell things. You are being exploited for money at the end of the food chain if you "buy" the themes of a sexual culture that is promoted. Ask yourself: *Why are they promoting that item with this obviously sexual pose, action, or subtle promise?*
5. Think about who or what profits from sexually active young people/or adults--what industries?
6. Sexual thrills don't last. Without a long-term committed (marriage) relationship, sex releases connection hormones that cause grief when the connection with the sexual partner ends.
7. Body and mind want more once you, as a young person, start down the sexually-active road. Is sex what you want to spend your time pursuing? Are there other more long-term goals that you are ignoring for the more immediate gratification of sex?
8. What are your own experiences of those around you who have not been sexually and relationally faithful? What have been the results?
9. If you are "sexting," it harms your sense of who you are, cheapens your reputation, makes you an object, and puts you in a compromised position on many levels - possibly for years.

Here are some facts:

Sex is more than exciting. It is complex and intelligently designed. According to \*Dr. Freda McKissic Bush and a host of scientific studies, sex releases hormones specific to individuals in a

monogamous couple relationship which knit the two individuals of opposite sex “into one flesh.”

For the female, meaningful physical touch produces oxytocin that bonds her to a mate. Men have the same bonding reaction when vasopressin is released. These are small examples of how people are fearfully and wonderfully made for sex in a monogamous relationship. Science is exploding with data that indicate people respond deeply and profoundly with positive biological responses that grow as they continue in a faithful marriage.

Though science is informative, let us focus on the Bible for a moment. It is far more important to know that God is not just suggesting that people be faithful to one another. He has commanded covenant in marriage. This is in concert with the fact that He designed married couples in both physical and spiritual ways to be monogamous and faithful to one another.

\*Freda McKissic Bush, M.D., is the co-author of the new book: *Hooked: New Science On How Casual Sex Is Affecting Our Children*. Maintaining an active OB-GYN practice, Bush also serves on the board of the Medical Institute for Sexual Health.

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