



## MID-MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Your public health team, connecting with our communities to achieve healthier outcomes

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### **Have you had “the talk” with your child?**

Stanton- Most parents dread having “the talk” with their child. Parents typically aren’t sure where to begin, don’t know what to say or how to say it, and are just downright uncomfortable discussing the birds and the bees with their child. But just because the conversation is uncomfortable doesn’t mean it shouldn’t take place.

The topic is sure to be uncomfortable for the child as well, but research shows that children and teens actually wish their parents would openly talk with them about sex more than they do.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Use truthful, useful and age appropriate information. If you are unsure how to answer a particular question, do some research and get back with your child when the information is found.
- Begin the discussion sooner, rather than later, because kids develop questions over time. Also, gradual conversations are less overwhelming for all involved than one big talk. Many smaller conversations also allow the parent to become a trusted source of information.
- Avoid ignoring the subject, and take advantage of teachable opportunities whenever they present themselves.
- Know when your child’s school will be covering reproductive health, and what will be taught. Be sure to ask your child what they learned and if they have any questions.
- To help relieve tension, state verbally that the conversation may be awkward before you begin.
- Listen to the child even if you disagree, and be open to all questions.
- Visit the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy’s website at [www.thenationalcampaign.org](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org) for helpful tools and tips.

Parents can’t control the decisions their children make, but they can positively influence their behavior when it comes to sexuality. Through open communication and by providing guidance about the risks and responsibilities of intimate relationships, parents can help their kids make good choices, like abstaining from sex so they can avoid unintended pregnancy, HIV, and other sexually transmitted diseases.

For those considering family planning services, keep the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) in mind. MMDHDs Family Planning program is committed to providing quality, affordable pregnancy prevention services, promotes making good choices and strives for pregnancy to happen by choice.

-more-

## 2- The talk

Family Planning clients receive abstinence education, birth control, pregnancy testing, and yearly physicals, as well as confidential and anonymous sexually transmitted infection testing. A variety of insurance plans are accepted. For those without insurance, the total charge is based on income and ability to pay.

For more information about MMDHDs family planning services, visit [www.mmdhd.org](http://www.mmdhd.org) or call your local branch office:

Clinton County: 989-224-2195

Gratiot County: 989-875-3681

Montcalm County: 989-831-5237

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.*

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