

## It's Just A Phase . . . So Don't Miss It

As a parent, you want to invest your time in things that matter. Like having the right conversation with your child at the right time, with the right things to say at your fingertips. These conversation guides will help you navigate the critical issues you face at each phase, as you imagine the end for your child. They are based on research from **The Phase Project**, a collaborative, ongoing effort assembling classic and innovative research with practical application.



Preschool

# SEXUAL INTEGRITY

## PARENT CONVERSATION GUIDE

. . . for intentional conversations with kids

Wait a minute. A conversation guide about sexual integrity for toddlers and preschoolers? Do parents really need this? Actually, there are many reasons to help a child feel comfortable talking with you about their body. That's why it's important that you start the conversation early. During this phase, your role is to...

### INTRODUCE

them to  
their body



So they will . . .

**DISCOVER THEIR BODY  
& DEFINE PRIVACY**

This guide is designed to help you meet your preschooler where they are now, giving you some words to say and not to say as you navigate the critical issue of sexual integrity. As the conversation progresses through the phases, always keep this end goal for your preschooler in mind:

### SEXUAL INTEGRITY

**Guarding my potential for intimacy through appropriate boundaries and mutual respect**

## WHAT TO SAY:

"God made you. God made your elbows. God made your vagina/penis. God made your toes." *(Use correct names of body parts as you change and bathe your child)*

"Private parts are meant to be private." And also, "Sometimes Mama needs privacy when she's going to the potty." *(Help your child understand privacy)*

"You are getting so tall. I love watching you grow!" *(Point out things that are changing about your child.)*

"Boys grow up to be men like Daddy, or like Uncle Frank. Girls grow up to be women like Mommy, or like Ms. Linda." *(Answer questions about basic differences between boys and girls as the questions arise.)*

"Sometimes it's polite to look away." *(Coach them on privacy and what it means for themselves and others.)*

Check out books like *God Made Your Body* by Jim Burns to help you with the conversation.

## WHAT NOT TO SAY:

"Look at your tiny little wee wee." *(Don't tease or use fake names for their body parts that will embarrass them later.)*

"Why do you keep touching your privates!" *(Don't shame, but explain appropriate behavior)*

"Don't ask those questions; we don't talk about that." *(It is appropriate to coach them on words we use in our house with family, but not in a restaurant or with people we don't know.)*

Nothing.

Be sure to involve professional counselors as needed, as well as your ministry leader.

## JUST REMEMBER

Every PHASE is a timeframe in a kid's life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. The preschool years are the years you want to embrace their physical needs, so include lots of hugs and cuddle time as you talk. This conversation is the perfect opportunity to inspire a healthy self image about their bodies and who they are, so answer their questions honestly and encourage them to ask them. This is the beginning of great conversations in the years to come.