

STARTING HONEST,
HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS
WITH YOUR KIDS



don't stress talking sex

JOHN FORT

FOREWORD BY JIM BURNS

Don't Stress Talking Sex is a gift to families—bold, grace filled, and refreshingly real. It's a master class in how to talk about sex without fear, shame, or confusion. This book isn't just a guide; it's a *breakthrough*. It doesn't just inform; it *transforms* the conversation, offering parents a clear path from confusion to confidence. I wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone serious about raising children with gospel-honoring hearts.

DR. SCOTT TURANSKY, pastor, professor, author, and cofounder of the National Center for Biblical Parenting

Raising kids in a culture that is both sexually confused and digitally connected is an immense challenge. If this weren't difficult enough, most of today's parents received very little, if any, helpful guidance about sex from their own parents. And they have lots of questions: *When do I start talking with my kids about sex? What do I say? And how on earth do I discuss topics that, frankly, are uncomfortable to talk about?* In *Don't Stress Talking Sex*, author John Fort addresses these questions and many more. With candor and wisdom, he provides the kind of guidance every parent needs, addressing topics ranging from puberty to masturbation and pornography to transgenderism. He speaks to parents of both sons and daughters and offers practical counsel for every stage of the parenting journey. His guidance is practical, realistic, encouraging, and actionable. One of the best parts about the book is that John knows how awkward and even scary it can be to talk with our kids about sex. He helps ease those fears by humbly sharing his own parenting journey, including his mistakes and missteps. It turns out that you don't need to be a child development expert, have a perfect sexual past, or know all the right words in order to lead your kids. *Don't Stress Talking Sex* is a book you'll be glad you read—and more importantly, a book your *kids* will be glad you read.

JOSH GLASER, executive director of Regeneration Ministries and coauthor of *Treading Boldly Through a Pornographic World: A Field Guide for Parents*

Some of the most common concerns I hear from parents are “I’m terrified I’m going to mess this up” and “I feel hopeless raising my kids in today’s world.” *Don’t Stress Talking Sex* meets these fears head-on with grace, humility, and a wealth of practical wisdom. John Fort shows parents that God is not asking them to be experts but to be present, humble, and relational as they walk alongside their kids, addressing their questions, their temptations, and a host of confusing cultural messages. John covers everything from early childhood conversations to teenage struggles with pornography and identity, always pointing families back to God’s good design and redeeming love. I wholeheartedly commend this book to any parent who wants to move from silence and anxiety to confident, Christ-centered conversations about sex and sexuality.

JONATHAN DAUGHERTY, president and founder of Be Broken Ministries

Accessible, well researched, and biblically grounded, *Don’t Stress Talking Sex* offers a gospel-centered and practical starting point for parents, equipping them to engage in ongoing, grace-filled conversations about God’s wonderful design for sex. This book addresses challenging topics with biblical wisdom and provides age-appropriate guidance to help parents lead their children toward sexual wholeness rooted in God’s truth.

DANNY HUERTA, PsyD, MSW, LCSW, LSSW, vice president of parenting and youth at Focus on the Family

In a culture that aggressively sexualizes children at ever-younger ages, John Fort confronts the question every parent eventually faces: *Will someone else shape my child’s understanding of sex, or will I?* With conviction, compassion, and deep faith, he calls parents to step into conversations they likely feel unprepared for but cannot afford to avoid. John makes it clear that the discussion does not begin with

rules, filters, or fear—it begins with *relationship*. He shows parents how to be the safest and most trusted voice in their children's lives, even when addressing topics like masturbation, pornography exposure, temptation, and sexual development. This book is not optional reading—it is a timely call to action. For parents who sense that their window of influence is narrowing and who long to speak biblical wisdom into their children's lives before the culture does, this book arrives as both a warning and a gift—an answer to prayer when it matters most.

EDDIE CAPPARUCCI, PhD, LPC, CSAS, therapist, speaker, director of Abundant Life Counseling, and author of *Going Deeper: How the Inner Child Impacts Your Sexual Addiction*

Every parent should read *Don't Stress Talking Sex* before their child finishes first grade. John Fort equips parents to build *relational intimacy* that welcomes future conversations with their kids. He addresses some of today's toughest questions and calms parents' fears with real-world guidance. In our hypersexualized culture, this book helps parents protect their children through frank, healthy, gospel-shaped conversations.

MARTY MACHOWSKI, pastor and author of books for church and home, including *God Made Boys and Girls: Helping Children Understand the Gift of Gender* and the Redemption Tales series

This is the best resource for parents I've ever seen. *Don't Stress Talking Sex* checks all the boxes—insightful, thorough, practical. Author John Fort courageously addresses some of the most sensitive and practical challenges facing parents today. And as a bonus, John answers your most important questions. *Don't Stress Talking Sex* is a must-read for every parent.

DR. MARK DENISON, pastor and executive director of There's Still Hope

Don't Stress Talking Sex is a timely and much-needed resource for parents who want to teach their children about God's design for sexuality but aren't sure where to begin. John Fort combines biblical clarity with pastoral wisdom, equipping parents to move beyond silence and fear and into honest, age-appropriate, and grace-filled discussions. I'm excited to see both churches and families use this book as a practical tool to reclaim the home as the place where a healthy, Christ-centered vision of sexuality is formed.

BRUNO BORGES, PhD, director and cofounder of the Institute of Biblical Sexuality, men's minister with Living Hope Ministries, and author of *Biblical Sexuality: A Framework of God's Design from the Garden to Today*

As a pastor and father of four boys, I believe this book is a resource every parent needs. It provides a clear, biblical framework for teaching God's design regarding sexuality while helping deepen your relationship with your children. Don't put it off! *You* can and should be the primary voice in helping shape your children's understanding of sex.

MATT HICKMAN, family pastor at Calvary Chapel Fort Lauderdale

Don't Stress Talking Sex equips parents to help their children develop a healthy attitude toward and a better understanding of sexuality and their own physical development. John Fort reminds us that God's grace covers our past mistakes and takes away the shame we feel when reflecting on them. This frees parents to share openly and honestly in age-appropriate ways with our kids. John's explanations of physical development help prepare us for those conversations.

LEIGH ANN STARK, childhood ministry specialist with the Northwest Baptist Convention

Helping our children navigate the topic of sexuality can be both confusing and intimidating. We want to do what's best for them, but where to start? John Fort's book is full of wisdom and practical advice that will encourage and equip parents to guide their children based on a relationship of love, trust, and facts.

TYLER WALSH, pastor of worship and mission at Felida Bible Church

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**FOCUS
ON THE
FAMILY®**

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foreword

When I was a youth pastor and speaker, I'd say to students all the time, "The decisions you make today could affect you for the rest of your life." I'm not sure if they really understood that message, but parents get it. You likely made choices early in life that continued to shape you over the years—perhaps even in the area of sexuality. As author John Fort writes about in this insightful book, most of us didn't have healthy conversations with our parents about sex.

Research shows that when parents engage in frequent, positive, values-based conversations about sex, their children are less likely to be promiscuous and less likely to feel confused about their sexuality. Pause and consider that information for a moment. You are holding a very important book in your hands, because doing what John suggests can help you help your kids make wise decisions about their lives, faith, relationships, and sexuality. And I can almost guarantee that your discussions with them about these things will, at times, be *awkward*.

My oldest daughter, Christy, once told a group of people, "My dad thought he did a pretty good job talking to us about sex, and

now that I'm a mother, I guess he and Mom did. But what I most remember is that when we talked, his bald head would sweat, and his ears would turn red at some of the topics, and he would stutter!" This book doesn't promise that your conversations will be easy. However, it's very clear that a good parent's job includes having conversations about sexuality with our kids at each stage of their development.

Research tells us that it's better to have one hundred one-minute conversations than a single one hundred-minute conversation. John Fort makes it clear that early, open discussions about sexuality help parents become a safe and trusted presence in their children's lives. That foundation wasn't there for me; my parents never talked with me about these topics, and I never thought to turn to them.

This book is important because John not only knows what he is talking about, but he has also been helping parents navigate this issue for many years. He understands that it's really never too early to begin the conversation with our children—and if we've never talked with our kids about sex, it's probably not too late. John helps us build what I like to call a theology of healthy sexuality.

I find that many parents are surprised by how much the Bible speaks about healthy, God-created sexuality. We are created in God's image, and since He is the Creator of all things, He is also the Creator of our sexuality. In today's culture, navigating conversations around gender, sexuality, and God's authority often feels overwhelming. But parents offer their children a meaningful gift by giving them a positive, God-honoring vision of biblical sexual integrity.

John doesn't shy away from the tough topics—the ones many parents feel unsure how or unprepared to address, like pornography, masturbation, and gender issues. He comes alongside parents as a

trusted guide, offering wisdom and clarity as you navigate these sensitive topics. And throughout the book he emphasizes the importance of ongoing, age-appropriate conversations at every stage of development—because a conversation with a four-year-old looks very different from one with a fourteen-year-old.

Those early discussions help lay the groundwork for fostering trust and openness during the tween and teen years. No parent will handle every conversation perfectly, but your willingness to engage will leave a lasting impact. One day your children will thank you for your courage and your influence, and maybe you'll even laugh together about how some of those talks unfolded. (I know our family has!) I genuinely believe that when parents are brave enough to initiate such conversations, they can change the trajectory of their family for generations. I encourage you to read this book and make the course corrections necessary to get the discussion started.

You won't regret it.

Jim Burns

founder of HomeWord and author of

A Student's Guide to Sexual Integrity: God's Plan for Sex and Your Body

introduction

before you start

How did you learn about sex as a kid? Whenever I ask that question of adults, very few answer, “From my parents.” I can relate. After all, my parents were *not* the source of most of what I knew—or thought I knew—about sex as a child, as a teenager, or even as a young adult. In fact, my parents never said a single word to me about sex or sexuality growing up.

I do, however, remember my mother taking my two younger sisters to my parents’ room to talk about “girl stuff.” My mom had a book, which I was not allowed to see, that she read to them. I was maybe twelve at the time, and they were not much younger. I remember thinking that my mom was probably teaching them something about menstruation, which I had recently learned about in school during sex education classes.

I recall wondering, *Where is the book for me?* and *Why isn’t my dad talking to me about this stuff?* The mere idea of talking with my father about sex was nerve-racking, to be sure, but I actually felt bad about not getting an awkward discussion—especially when my sisters apparently got one.

When I was younger, maybe around eight, my best friend and I tried to figure out how a baby got out of a mother's tummy. He thought they came out of her belly button. Needless to say, our discussion turned into a joke-infused humor fest that led nowhere. I definitely had questions that would've been best answered by my parents.

I ended up learning more about sex from an older teenage boy in our church starting when I was nine. Each time our family visited his house, he took me to his room, where he used pornographic magazines, sexual jokes, and his own concepts of what sex was all about to teach me. His instruction led me to a very distorted view of sex as something to *get* from others for your own benefit. I understood sex to be an act of consuming.

Let me make it clear that I've loved God for as long as I can remember. I prayed every morning and every night as a child, even without my parents' encouragement. Starting in seventh grade I read my Bible every day. I was at church by my own choice every time the doors were open.

Yet at the same time I was viewing pornography regularly and had a compulsive masturbation habit. I viewed sexuality as something very dirty and associated it with shame. In my mind it was something to hide from God. That mindset followed me all the way into marriage, where I found myself completely unprepared to have any kind of healthy sexual relationship with my wife.

And yet my story is fairly typical, based on what I hear from other adults. When perceptions about sexuality are tainted in this way, it's no wonder that parents are reluctant to talk with their kids about sex.

Consider your own story: How did you first learn about sex?

What life circumstances formed your view of sexuality? How did that impact you?

I wanted something better for my children. I'm guessing that you do as well.

A Different Approach

When my children were in elementary school, it suddenly occurred to me that I had a problem: I knew I wanted my kids to have an appropriate education about God's design for sex, but no one had ever taught me how to achieve that. As a married man with two kids—a son and a daughter—I had no idea how to explain sexuality in a God-honoring way, much less how to teach it to a child.

Simply put, I was scared to death even thinking about trying to explain sex to my own children. Yet I also knew the world had changed—a lot—since I was a kid, and I knew my children had no chance of navigating the hypersexual culture around them without a lot of help. So my wife and I took a deep breath and tried to help them as best we could.

I wish I could tell you it all went quite smoothly. I can't. While we made pretty much every mistake there is to make, today our children are adults who embrace the core values we hoped they would. Despite our imperfections, something seems to have worked.

One eye-opener for me was achieving better results by focusing on my relationship with my kids rather than on somehow coming up with the best explanations about sex. I learned that children do not take on a parent's beliefs because the parent is skilled at persuasion; kids embrace the values of the ones they feel emotionally closest to.

This means it's more important for you to work on developing an emotional bond with your child than learning to explain anything else in the pages that follow. The culture around us has some radically different viewpoints on sexuality that come with their own very convincing arguments, so you'll need more than facts alone to counteract them. The primary motivation for your children to embrace the information in this book will be your *relationship* with them.

The good news is that doing the very thing you might dread—talking openly and honestly about sex—has the best potential to deepen your child's relationship with you! With both of my kids I found that our relationships grew the most during conversations about very sensitive and personal subjects like sexuality. This was especially true when I was vulnerable and, when appropriate, shared parts of my own story with them. So if you can pass on the information in this book through the lens of your own experiences, it will both deepen the bond with your children and provide them with motivation and information to help them grow in their understanding of healthy sexuality.

You will not do this perfectly. Your child will not react perfectly. You will make mistakes. Your child will make mistakes. But you will grow closer together through these conversations, flawed as they might be.

Your children will experience their own journeys with Christ, as sexual beings created by Him. Your primary role is not to stop every bad thing from happening to them (that is impossible) or to prevent them from making any mistakes with their sexuality (also impossible). Your role is to support them along that journey and be there to catch them when they fall.

What to Expect

In part 1 of this book I'll address the relational components that need to be in place so conversations about sex can feel comfortable and safe. This includes what you can do as a parent to make your conversations more effective in influencing your child's values and behavior.

In part 2 I'll discuss the topics and situations you'll need to address in order to help your child understand God's design for sexuality. In addition to what kids need to know about sex, this section includes what it means to be made in the image of God and what it means to be male or female. Before you bring up topics like sexual temptation and sin, it's good to address the positive purposes of sex.

In part 3 I'll explore how to help your child recognize and resist counterfeit versions of sexuality. This includes how to talk about temptation and how to process exposure to unhealthy content or sexualized situations when they inevitably occur.

I'll conclude in part 4 with some questions about sexuality that parents are asking today, addressing both long-standing discussions and relatively new situations.

Your Motivation

Let me tell you about a couple of dads—both real people I know, both equally devoted to their faith, and both fathers to eight-year-old boys at the time. I encouraged them that it was time to talk to their sons about God's design for sex—before the boys discovered that information from other sources.

Needless to say, the fathers were nervous about the prospect and both of them proceeded to stall.

Finally, one Sunday, one of the men came up to me with a smile and said he'd explained to his son how sex works. His son had responded, "I'm glad you told me, Dad, because now I know things my friends don't know." I'm not sure that was the best feedback for a father to receive, but at least it was a positive response!

A few weeks later, the other dad approached me at church. He said he was checking his son's iPad when he found videos of explicit sex acts. He was shocked and confronted his son, but to his surprise, his son replied, "Dad, I think it's time for you to explain some things to me." Yes, that really happened. His son had questions but didn't know where to take them.

I know firsthand how scary it feels to think about explaining sex to your kids. It's intimidating, and it will likely be awkward at first. However, when you consider these two fathers' experiences, you might ask yourself which scenario you want for your child.

I know full well that some of you reading this book have children who have already been exposed to inappropriate sexual material or information. Others might have older children and realize you missed out on some conversations you wish you'd had when your kids were younger. Still others have children who are currently mixed up in some pretty messy stuff.

No matter what situations you're presently facing, I want you to know that all hope is not lost. There are still lots of conversations you can have that will help your child. You can only do what you know to do, and you might have no idea what to say. The good news is that this book is here to help you.

So put the past behind you and embrace the present. *Now* is the time to start talking with your children. And whether or not they'll ever admit it, they'll be grateful that you did.

PART 1

laying the foundation



CHAPTER 1

making the connection

When I was a boy, my dad seemed larger than life. He was tall and physically strong with a powerful personality to match. He was also very intelligent and well educated, both in science and theology. In fact, my dad was one of the most intelligent people I have ever met. Deep discussions seemed to help my dad feel connected to others, and that's how he tried to connect with me. I truly appreciated our discussions, but what I really needed as a boy was a hug.

My dad was not big on hugs.

I certainly admired my father, but he seemed an impossible role model—someone I could never emulate. A skinny, timid kid, I knew I would never be as strong as he was. Try as I might in school, his intellect seemed unapproachable. I knew I was his son—made in his image, you might say; but I felt like a flawed version of the original.

My father was also quite stoic, someone who rarely showed his emotions. Though I now understand that this was a flaw in him, as

a child I felt like I was the flawed one. I experienced my emotions deeply, but my father didn't know how to react when I displayed them. As much as I looked up to my dad, I never felt emotionally close to him. It was only after early-onset dementia took hold of my father that I saw the fear and uncertainty long hidden beneath his bravado.

How I wish he would have let me see that part of him when his mind was still with him! In the beginning stages of dementia, when my father's ability to conceal his feelings was the first thing to go, I saw that we weren't so different after all.

Where You Are Now

I tell you this story not because I want you to feel sorry for me or my father but because I want you to learn from our experience—not only what to do but what *not* to do. I can't know exactly what you were thinking when you picked up this book, but it's about more than just having honest conversations with your children about a sensitive subject. It's also about *connecting* with your children. Indeed, that's one of the main reasons I wrote it.

There's no question that I want to help you talk with your children about sex and sexuality in God-honoring ways. Yet if you are anything like me, that is a frightening prospect. I realize you are currently reading this book, but I doubt it's because you're excited to talk with your kids about sex.

My father and I didn't connect as well as I wished we could have. You probably want to connect more with your kid as well, but talking about sex may feel like something that could make your relationship more awkward, not more comfortable. I think you will find, however, that if you learn to talk about sex and other tough

topics with your child the way this book describes, those conversations will indeed draw you closer.

Let me describe how I felt when I was in your position, preparing myself to talk with my own kids about sex.

I've already mentioned that neither of my parents ever spoke a word to me about anything sexual. I had no role models to follow. My parents were unable to talk about sex, so I was also uncomfortable when I knew it was time to have a conversation with my children. After all, my childhood education about sex was messy, and I feared my kids might no longer respect me if they discovered that as we talked. What if they asked about my past? Even if they didn't lose respect for me, I feared they would think my past gave them permission to experiment with sexuality in unhealthy ways just like I had at their age.

To make matters worse, I had no idea how to talk with my kids in a healthy way. During my adolescence, older teenagers and even a few young adults did tell me about sex, but those conversations were anything but appropriate. As a result, the very idea of discussing sexuality with my son and daughter somehow seemed creepy to me. How were my wife and I supposed to talk in God-honoring ways about such a fraught subject? I had no idea what that would look like!

If you have similar fears or concerns, please trust me—I *get it*. I understand where you are coming from. I am in your corner, and I want to help. Instructing your children on the topic of sex can feel like a daunting task, especially considering everything they're exposed to through media and their friends nowadays.

Allow me to share with you a lesson I've learned: The secret to having honest, healthy conversations with your child is not being a

master of the topics you discuss; it's knowing how to build a positive relationship with your child through those conversations. Relationship, it turns out, is everything.

Why Kids Embrace Their Parents' Values

There is an entire field of study dedicated to helping children avoid problematic behaviors, including things like pornography use and unhealthy sexual attitudes. It's called prevention science. You might recall growing up with the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program, which was designed to keep kids away from drugs. Programs like this were admirable in advocating for teens and their well-being, but in some cases the programs led to increased drug use. You might also remember the True Love Waits campaign to help teens save sex for marriage. Much like D.A.R.E., True Love Waits wasn't consistently successful in preventing kids from having sex before marriage.

We've since learned from these efforts that, by themselves, increased information and education about negative consequences don't reliably help kids avoid negative behaviors. Neither does punishing bad behavior, sharing frightening statistics, or making the case for following a particular value system. This is where ongoing conversations come in—conversations that cast a positive vision for sexuality and help reduce shame. In other words, increased transparency through a healthy parent-child relationship is vital.

We also know that studying the Bible can't guarantee that your child won't get involved in problematic sexual behaviors. Starting as a preteen, I read the Bible and prayed every single day, yet at age thirteen I found a discarded pile of pornographic magazines and hid them in my room. In spite of my daily prayer and Bible study, I

kept those magazines until I moved out of my parents' house at age eighteen. I was a role model in my youth group and deeply loved God, yet I couldn't stop myself from indulging in pornography.

Fortunately, there *is* an answer. All prevention science studies show one clear conclusion: The top reason why children embrace their parents' values is because they have developed a deep relational bond. That's it. Your kids are more likely to follow your advice and emulate your beliefs when they feel a strong connection to you.¹

This also applies when it comes to views about sex and sexuality. The closer your relationship, the more your child is motivated to embrace your values about sexuality. To what extent do your kids feel they know you? To what extent do they believe you know them? The stronger your parent-child bond, the more the material in this book will help.

It's Not Too Late

Right now I imagine some of you are thinking, *But I don't think my child is very bonded to me at all!* I want you to know that it is not too late to change that, and I will show you how. Even if your child is older now and you have seen your relationship diminish, do not fear. That situation can change.

You might discover that you have been operating on some misconceptions about what a healthy relationship between parent and child looks like. But even if that is true, don't assume that you've missed the boat or blown it forever. Even if a rift has formed between you and your child, that rift can be repaired.

Here's the exciting news about when we parents blow it with our kids: When a parent takes the time to repair a damaged relationship with their child, the resulting relationship is often stronger than

it was before the rift. Simply putting in the effort to repair your relationship, especially when done in a spirit of humility on your part, can speak volumes to your child. The key is *demonstrating* to your children how much you care for them.

Just so you know, my wife and I made lots of mistakes with our kids. Both of us did things that I will tell you *not* to do in this book. Despite trying as hard as we could, we still blew it on a regular basis and sometimes hurt our kids as a result.

One example was my own complete lack of knowledge when it came to guiding my children in the area of dating.

In my infinite wisdom, I decided that nothing good could come from my children dating in high school. My wife was not entirely on board with this idea, but she let me lead anyway. (I have since learned that she is right more often than I am in these areas and that I should have listened to her.) I told my kids as they entered high school that I thought dating was a bad idea for teenagers and even gave them long lectures on why I was convinced this was true. No dating for my kids.

My daughter was incensed that I was so rigid and wouldn't even consider her thoughts or feelings. I remember the day not long after her graduation when she reminded me that she never agreed with me on dating yet also admitted she'd never met a boy at school or church worth dating. She wanted to be clear that she did not agree with me overall but did agree that teenage boys are generally immature.

My son, however, was a different story. He wanted to date a girl almost immediately during his freshman year of high school. I talked him out of that one, but as a junior he again asked to date a girl he really liked. She attended his school and participated in the youth group at our church. It was one of my worst parenting

moments when I held my ground and did not invite him to share more about his feelings.

About a year later, I was talking with our church's youth pastor when he mentioned my son's girlfriend. When I said he didn't have a girlfriend, the youth pastor just grinned and informed me that my son was regularly seen around town with his arm around a girl. Yes, that same girl.

Since I had never initiated a conversation that honored my son's feelings and opinions, he simply went behind my back. That led to a nasty confrontation at home, but he would not stop seeing her. Now he was being openly defiant to me. I was sure they were too young to date and would get too carried away physically.

This caused a rift between my son and me. I won't detail exactly how ugly it got, but it got really ugly. I was convinced that my son's hormones were clouding his judgment. He was *way* too serious about a high school girlfriend. I was certain that they would tire of each other after high school and they would both end up marrying other people. And if they engaged in sexual activity, it would surely come back to bite them. Most of all, he was my youngest, and I was trying to protect my son!

Eventually I realized I was going to drive him away by constantly reminding him why I was right and he was wrong. So one day I told him I was done mentioning my concerns. He'd heard them countless times already, and honestly, I was afraid of damaging my relationship with him. We had always been very close, and I told him my greatest fear was losing our relationship. I realized it didn't matter who was right if I drove him away.

That conversation changed everything. He cried and hugged me. He did not end the relationship, and I still worried. Yet from

that point on my focus was on rebuilding our relationship so we could talk openly again. That process started with me listening more and talking less.

It turns out that my son married his first and only girlfriend. She is a valued part of our family, and she and I are now quite close. And today I have grandchildren who are more special to me than I could have ever imagined! My daughter-in-law is an amazing mother—almost certainly better at parenting than I ever was.

I understand that every strained parent-child relationship doesn't get the same happy ending we did, but we'll never get the chance unless we try. We've all made some mistakes along the way, but that is how life works. We make mistakes and learn from them.

My past was messy, and my son's was too, but we got through it, and God redeemed our mistakes. The same can be true for you and your children. You almost certainly did not live out your sexuality perfectly, and neither will your kids. That doesn't mean you're not the best person for the job. Your children don't need a perfect parent—they need a parent who understands what it feels like to be confused, tempted, and imperfect.

I've made mistakes. You'll make mistakes. And that's okay. In fact, it will be a relief to your kids when you make mistakes! Otherwise, they would worry that you can't relate to how messed up they feel sometimes. Please hear me as I wrap up this chapter:

Your child *is* in the right home to learn about sex.

You are the right parent to teach your child about sex.

This is *not* too hard.

You really *can* do this.