



PROMOTING HEALTHY SEXUALITY

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With an Improving Understanding of MCH grant, FamilyVoices IMPACT works to develop ways to improve health and wellness for all children and families, and to encourage partnerships between families and professionals for children's good health.

www.familyvoices.org and
www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org.

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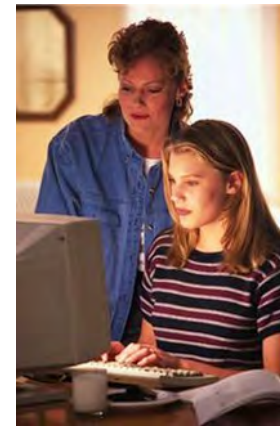
Sexuality in the Media

Sexual content in television programming is on the rise. A 2005 study by the Kaiser Family Foundation showed that the number of programs with sexual content increased from 50% in 1997/98 to 70% in 2005. (To read about the study, go to: www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia/110905nr.cfm)

Add to this the easy access to direct and often graphic references to sex on the Internet. This explosion of sexual content on television and the Internet makes a parent's job in promoting healthy sexual development more of a challenge—and much more important.

The Canadian Peel Public Health website has tips for helping parents protect their children from the negative impact of the media's portrayal of sexuality, including:

- Keep TVs, DVD players, video games, and computers where you can be involved in their use. Don't put them in your child's bedroom.
- Make media a family activity. Watch TV together. Keep an eye on your child's Internet surfing. Ask and answer



questions, and let your children know what you consider inappropriate portrayal of sex on TV.

- Use content ratings and parental advisories to alert you of potential violence, sex, language, and other adult material. Help your child choose age-appropriate shows and games.
- Use Internet-blocking programs to prevent your child from (intentionally or unintentionally) accessing adult-themed websites.
- Help your child be safe on the Internet. Children should never give out their names, addresses, phone numbers, school names, information about parents or siblings, or even favorite products.
- Watch music videos with your children—once with the sound and once without. Ask them about the stories the videos and songs tell, and how they make them feel.
- For more suggestions, go to: www.peelregion.ca/health/sexuality/parents/parents-media.htm#protect