



U Choose to Know

Summer 2018

Best Practices in Sexuality Education

Congratulations! You've reached the final edition of *U Choose to Know*. To celebrate, we thought it might be the perfect time to recap all of the awesome best practices for teaching sex education that you've been implementing in your classroom so far.

Let's Review!

- **Just the facts** - This sounds easy, but often it's not. We get asked lots of tricky questions in class and it's easy to get carried away with extra details or improvisations. Remember, if you don't know, it's okay. Say you don't know, but that you'll find out. Then, follow through!
- **Check your values at the door** - Our job as educators is to help our students figure out their own values and how to make healthy decisions based on them. And remember, if you ever get stuck with a values-related question, "for some, for others, for you" will get you out of a tight spot in no time.
- **Keep the personal, private** - You may get questions about your personal experience. It may seem like a good idea to share some "when I was your age stories", but remember, we're helping students navigate *their* values and current experiences. Be a sounding board, but keep your personal experiences private.
- **Be inclusive** - Remember ALL youth deserve to be in a sex education class that feels relevant to them.



There are lots of great resources out there to help you along the way, especially if you get stuck on a student's question. Sometimes websites made for teens are the best place to go:

Published by Columbia University, [Go Ask Alice](#) provides great answers to teens' hardest questions.

[Scarleteen](#) provides "sex education for the real world", including great advice for teens not only about sex education, but also relationships.

By teens and for teens, [Sex, Etc.](#) is a well-organized treasure trove of information, written in language teens can relate to.

[Amaze](#) takes the awkward out of sex ed. A collaboration between Advocates for Youth, Answer, and YTH, this online resource is geared towards adolescents ages 10-14.

- **Sex-positivity** – Say no to shame! Our job as sex educators is to help young people make healthy decisions, not to judge their decisions.
- **Be open-minded** – This goes along with saying no to shame. You're going to have lots of young people from lots of backgrounds with lots of different values. Keep an open mind to their experiences and opinions.
- **Be askable** – Being open-minded and non-judgmental will help you be an askable adult. Thank students every time they ask a question, acknowledging the bravery it can take to do so.
- **Rights of teens** – Don't forget that teens have rights too. The Palo Alto Medical Foundation outlines them nicely [here](#).
- **Consent, consent, consent** – It all comes back to consent, all the time. Bring this up in your class early and often.
- **Laughter** – Yes, helping young people make healthy decisions can be a serious business, but talking about sex is often funny and that's okay. Laughing along with students when it's appropriate helps you be relatable AND askable.

*Funding for the **U Choose to Know** series is made possible under a subcontract with the Baltimore City Health Department, Division of Maternal and Child Health, Baltimore City U Choose Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program's U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Office of Adolescent Health's Tier 1B funds Award #5 TPIAH000088-03-00.*

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For more information, visit uchoosebaltimore.org.

*Always remember: **you are not alone**. You are part of a much bigger movement to help give youth a healthier tomorrow. Here are several national organizations you can always turn to for support and resources:*

Healthy Teen Network promotes better outcomes for adolescents and young adults by advancing social change, cultivating innovation, and strengthening youth-supporting professionals and organizations.

Power to Decide provides high-quality accurate information on sexual health and contraceptive methods so young people can make informed decisions.

Answer provides high-quality training to teachers and other youth-serving professionals on sex education.

Advocates for Youth champions the efforts that help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their reproductive and sexual health.

