BREAKING THE HUSH FACTOR
Ten Rules for Talking with Teenagers about Sex by Dr. Karen Rayne

Rule 1
KNOW YOURSELF
The center of a circle is its balance point. The balance of my relationships is at my center. I know my center. I can begin.

Rule 2
IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU
Discovery is such a beautiful thing, and there is so much more to find, learn, and understand!

Rule 3
STOP TALKING
The other that is mysterious continues to draw me in, and I am learning to explore gently, kindly, and with compassion.

Rule 4
START LISTENING
I listen from the quiet parts in me to the quiet parts in others.

Rule 5
YOU GET ONE QUESTION
To pause, wait, and consider is to offer the gift of the space between the stars so that the brightest one can shine.

Rule 6
DO SOMETHING ELSE
Conversation is an act of creation, and we can create together.

Rule 7
PLEASURE AND PAIN
The heights and the depths, they both hold truths, and must be welcomed.

Rule 8
BE COOL AS A CUCUMBER
I am as deep as the ocean. I am as timeless as the stones. I breathe in and I breathe out.

Rule 9
BRING IT ON
I embody bravery, inside and out. I am as unshockable as the stars. I trust in myself.

Rule 10
NEVER SURRENDER
"The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart." — Albert Camus
THE TEN RULES FOR TALKING WITH TEENAGERS ABOUT SEX
Karen Rayne (Breaking the Hush Factor)

Know yourself. What are your expectations, your hopes, and your fears about your teenager’s sexual and romantic development? You will have far more control over yourself and your interactions if you have a full understanding of these things.

Remember that it’s not about you. Your teenager is discovering sex and sexuality for the first time. She wants to talk about her current exciting, overwhelming path. Let her! That’s how you’ll find out what you can do to help your teenager walk this path—and that’s what matters most.

Stop talking! As the parent of a teenager, you are in the business of getting to know your teenager, not giving information to your teenager, or telling her what to do. If you’re talking, you can’t hear what your teenager is trying to tell you about herself.

Start listening! Stop talking. Start listening. Your primary role as a parent is to learn about your teenager’s evolving self. That can’t happen if you don’t really, really listen.

You only get one question. Since there’s only one, you’d better make it a good one that can’t be answered with a yes or a no. Spend some time mulling it over. You can ask it when you’re sure it’s a good one.

Do something—anything!—else. Find something understanding of these things to do while you’re talking. Many teenagers will have an easier time talking about sexuality and romance if you’re doing something “side by side” like driving, walking, or playing a game rather than sitting and looking at each other.

About pleasure and pain. You have to talk about both. If you don’t acknowledge the physical and emotional pleasure associated with sexuality in addition to the pain, your teenager will think you’re completely out of touch and won’t talk with you. Then you will actually be completely out of touch.
**Be cool as a cucumber.** It is only when you manage to have a calm, loving demeanor that your teenager will feel comfortable talking with you. And remember, you’re in the business of getting to know your teenager, and the only way to do that is if your teenager keeps talking.

**Bring it on!** Your teenager has tough things she wants to talk about, and some of them might even be specific and technical. If you’re able to engage in these conversations with honesty, humor, and no judgment, your teenager will feel much more at home coming to you with the increasingly difficult emotional questions that touch her heart.

**Never surrender.** There may be times you feel like quitting. Like the millionth time when you’ve tried to have an actual conversation with your teenager (about anything, much less sex!) and your teenager has once again completely avoided eye contact and has not even acknowledged your existence. But you can’t. You have to stay engaged. You’re still building your long-term relationship. Keep going. Trust me.