Utilizing Technology to Engage Parents in Sex Education

Presenter:
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Workshop Objectives

After attending this session, participants will be able to:

• Describe how parents use technology in their homes and with their children;

• Identify opportunities and limitations of engaging parents with sexuality education and information through the use of technology; and

• Identify resources to inform and utilize in their own work around creating digital materials for parents.
Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Parents and the Web
- Opportunities and Challenges
- PPFA Digital Tool
- PPLM’s Get Real Mobile Website
- Reaching Parents in Your Work
- Q&A
Introductions

• Name
• Pronouns (If you want to share them)
• Where are you from? (City, State)
• Role/Title
Internet Usage
Nearly Everyone is Online

% OF ADULTS AND TEENS WHO USE THE INTERNET

90% Online

10% Not Online

Source: Pew Interactive
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Web Search Terms</th>
<th>Search Volume</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>puberty in girls</td>
<td>11,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internet safety for kids</td>
<td>8,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stranger danger</td>
<td>6,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what is cyberbullying</td>
<td>6,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>how to prevent bullying</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transgender kids</td>
<td>3,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stages of puberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>boys puberty</td>
<td>2,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 year old pregnant</td>
<td>2,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>when do boys hit puberty</td>
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<td>how to prevent cyber bullying</td>
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<td>transgender teens</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>signs of puberty in girls</td>
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<td>what age do boys start puberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>parent child relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>signs of puberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>kids playing doctor</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signs of puberty in boys</td>
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<td>human body for kids</td>
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<td>sex education for teens</td>
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<td>kids safety</td>
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<td>birds and the bees talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>teen relationships</td>
<td>880</td>
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<tr>
<td>how to be a good father</td>
<td>880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i caught my son/daughter/kid masturbating</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girls puberty stages</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my child is transgender</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>transgender 6 year old</td>
<td>680</td>
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<tr>
<td>how are babies made for kids</td>
<td>630</td>
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<tr>
<td>how to be a good mother</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 year old boys puberty</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early puberty in boys</td>
<td>390</td>
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<tr>
<td>having the talk with your son/daughter/child</td>
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<tr>
<td>inappropriate touching between children</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>how to talk to your daughter about her body</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching children about private parts</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many parents use the Internet and digital technology to:

• Get background information (medical, scientific) to support their own knowledge
• Supplement conversations with visual and interactive resources (e.g., diagrams videos)
• Share content with their kids to start discussions online and offline
• Monitor their kids’ behavior and interests

“... his voice changing opened up the conversation. We’re going deer hunting this fall — I’ll take the iPad, and we’ll go in the tent and talk about it.”

-Wayne, dad from Albuquerque, NM
Families and Devices

• Most young people have access to smartphone or tablet
• Young people heavily rely on their device(s) for entertainment
• Older youth (12 - 14ish) use social media, and prefer images and videos of real people
• Younger youth (8 - 11ish) prefer animated videos, illustrated characters and games
• SMS (Texting) is an important form of communication between parents & their children

“Kids are so into using their devices. It’s a whole world [in there].”

-Elaine, mom from Albuquerque, NM
Parents’ Wants

Parents want:

• a wide range of topics on their child’s sexual health and puberty, including
  – Extensive LGBTQ facts and support
  – Raising children of a different gender or as a single parent
• to know what to expect and when
• validation and encouragement
• unbiased and accurate information
Parents Monitor Teen Internet Usage

% of U.S. Parents

- Parents of Teens 13-14
- Parents of Teens 15-17

Source: Pew Interactive
Opportunities & Challenges
Our curriculum is proven to delay sex. Among students who received Get Real, 16% fewer boys and 15% fewer girls had sex when compared to their peers who did not receive Get Real.

Family involvement showed an additional effect on delaying sexual intercourse. Boys who completed the Get Real take-home activities with parents or other trusted adults in 6th grade were more likely to delay sex.

Get Real builds communication skills for healthy relationships
- Boys and girls who received our curriculum increased their negotiation skills, and left 8th grade more equipped to communicate within relationships about delaying sex or setting boundaries.

GET REAL Comprehensive Sex Education That Works

is in 32 states (including Washington, D.C.)

BLUE indicates that at least one school or organization within that state has selected Get Real.

As of Aug 7, 2017
PPLM’s *Get Real* for Parents Mobile Website
Welcome to Get Real for Parents!

Your child is or will be participating in the Get Real sex education curriculum in their health class, and we are here to support you as your child’s primary sexuality educator. Get Real: Comprehensive Sex Education That Works is a unique curriculum designed for middle school
Welcome to Get Real for Parents (Grade 7)!
Lessons for Hermione Granger

You are currently viewing the lessons for Hermione Granger (Grade 7). Click here to switch student.

Activity 1
Creating the Classroom Climate

In Get Real we support parents (and other caring adults) to be the primary sexuality educators of their children.

Start Lesson

Activity 2
Media Literacy and Sexuality

This Get Real lesson focused on media literacy.

Start Lesson
Lesson 7.1
Creating the Classroom Climate

Welcome to the 7th Grade Get Real Parent App!

Your child is continuing (or perhaps beginning) their Get Real program at school. In Get Real we support parents (and other caring adults) to be the primary sexuality educators of their children. Over the course of nine lessons, you’ll have an opportunity to engage in conversation with your child about sex and sexuality.

In Get Real we talk about both parents, and other caring adults in young people’s lives. We recognize that each student has their own experiences and relationships with adults in their lives. Please note that when referencing “parents” in this app, this title extends to any caring adult that is completing these activities with their Get Real student.

Instructions

- Read the text and discuss.

Note: If it's embarrassing to discuss these issues with one another, you can decide to:
- Say so - and do the exercise anyway!
- Skip parts of it.
- Write down your answers and then read each other's answers.
- Laugh, giggle, blush, and go right on talking.
Have your child ask you the following questions!

When you were in middle school, were you someone who:

- knew the difference between sex and sexuality? Do you know the difference now?
- was taught slang words for private parts?
- was ever lied to by someone you care about?
- had a trusted adult to talk to about sexuality?

Discussion:

- Why do you think people use slang?
- How did/does it feel to be lied to?
- Why might it help to have a trusted adult to talk to about sexuality?

This Get Real lesson talked about protection methods – the things people can use to prevent sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy. Answer the following questions together or quiz one another! Discuss any answers that surprised you.

1. What is the only protection method that is 100% effective, when used correctly and consistently?

2. What does it mean to use a method perfectly?

3. Name three (or more) hormonal methods of birth control.

4. Condoms can reduce the risk of ____________________ and _____________________.

   True or False - condoms can be reused
   - True
   - False

5. Dental dams used during oral sex reduce the risk of ____________________.
Get Real for Parents: Usage Data

• Pilot
  • 1 school in MA, 25 students, Spanish speaking school
• Formative Evaluation
  • Eight (8) schools or out-of-school-time programs signed MOUs to participate.
  • States: CO, MA, VA
  • 717 students were a part of 8 classrooms or groups
    • 166 parents signed on to the mobile website.
      • 142 parents (86%) took the first (T1) survey.
        • 59 (42%) parents also took the second (T2) survey.
      • 106 teens (15%) took the first (T1) survey.
        • 51 teens (48%) also took the second (T2) survey.
Get Real for Parents: Parent-Teen Relationship

Relationship to Teen

- Mothers: 84%
- Fathers: 12%
- Other Family: 4%
Get Real for Parents: Teen Gender

Teen Gender

50% Boy-Identified
50% Girl-Identified
Get Real for Parents: Racial/Ethnic Background

Parent and Teen Racial/Ethnic Background

- **White/European American**: Parent 44, Teen 47
- **Black/African American**: Parent 28, Teen 22
- **Latino/A**: Parent 21
- **Asian American**: Parent 6, Teen 5
- **Biracial/Multiracial**: Parent 4, Teen 2

Legend: Parent, Teen
Get Real for Parents: Completed Activities

Number of activities done

- 0 activities: 24.5%
- 1 activity: 17.2%
- 2 activities: 4.6%
- 3 activities: 4.6%
- 4 activities: 2.6%
- 5 activities: 2.6%
- 6 activities: 2.0%
- 7 activities: .7%
- 8 activities: 2.6%
- 9 activities: 38.4%
Get Real for Parents: Starting & Using

How hard was it to start this app?

- Very easy: 61.1%
- Somewhat easy: 29.6%
- Not easy: 7.4%
- Hard: 1.9%

How hard was it to use this app?

- Very easy: 81.8%
- Somewhat easy: 14.5%
- Not easy: 1.8%
- Very hard: 1.8%
Get Real for Parents: Comfort with “Apps”

How comfortable using apps in general?

- **Very comfortable**: 59.3%
- **Comfortable**: 31.5%
- **A bit uncomfortable**: 7.4%
- **Not comfortable at all**: 1.9%

How comfortable were you using this app?

- **Very comfortable**: 65.5%
- **Comfortable**: 29.1%
- **A bit uncomfortable**: 5.5%
Get Real for Parents: Usefulness

How useful was this app?

- Very useful: 69.1%
- Somewhat useful: 30.9%

Would you prefer paper & pencil to app?

- Yes: 16.4%
- No: 83.6%
Get Real for Parents: Additional Resources

Did you use additional resources for this app?

- Very often: 14.5%
- Sometimes: 54.5%
- Never: 30.9%
For both the 59 parents and the 51 teens who took Time 1 and Time 2 surveys, their frequency of talk about relationships and sexuality with one another increased from the start to the end of the Get Real program.
Get Real for Parents: Preliminary Findings

Large Effect:
- Parents report significantly more talk with teens about relationships and sexuality after exposure to Get Real family activities than before participating in the program.
- Parents report significantly more agreement that they use online tools to help with sexuality communication with teens after exposure to Get Real family activities than before participating in the program.

Moderate Effect:
- Parents report significantly more agreement that doing family activities as part of a sex education program is useful after exposure to Get Real family activities than before participating in the program.
- Teens report significantly more talk with parents about relationships and sexuality after exposure to Get Real family activities than before participating in the program.
There was no change in teens’ or parents’ comfort in talking about relationships and sexuality from Time 1 to Time 2.
Get Real for Parents: Preliminary Findings

Parents Report:
- The items with the biggest change from Time 1 to Time 2 were talk about:
  - How to avoid sexually transmitted infections
  - Where to get advice about contraception
  - Ways to avoid pregnancy when having sex (e.g., condoms, the pill)
  - When it’s ok to have sex

Teens Report:
- The items with the biggest change from Time 1 to Time 2 were talk about:
  - When it’s ok to have sex
  - Places they don’t want me to go
  - Whether it is a good idea to have a serious boyfriend or girlfriend at my age
  - Ways to avoid pregnancy when having sex (e.g., condoms, the pill)
Get Real for Parents: Successes

• It’s working!!
• Teens asked new questions which mom thinks wouldn’t have happened without these activities
• Activities helped bring up new conversations with their teens
• Appreciated encouragement for parents to talk with teens even if they were uncomfortable

“It was helpful to talk with my son about where to get contraceptives. I thought I had talked about this with him, but he didn’t know. I helped remind him what he was supposed to do.”

“Helped me realize a disconnect between what I want to talk about and what I actually talk about (with my son).” (e.g., saying no to sex)
Get Real for Parents: Challenges

- Participation was main challenge
  - Increased incentives
  - Changed timing of incentives
- Supporting/encouraging educators
- Push notifications or weekly emails or texts
- Too many steps to log on, log back in
- Rural areas: access to internet an issue
- Wished it was an “actual app”- download to phone
Digital Tools: Super Learnings
Students Are Still the Key

• A big piece of the puzzle is about who did NOT sign up for the mobile website or otherwise engage in the technology.
  • Why not?
  • What are their barriers?
  • Who are they?

• The link to parents is still the educator and the student.
What is coming next and how to prepare

How & when topics should be introduced / how to be age appropriate

What stage of development child is in / should be in
Objective Voice

- Clinical / fact-driven information
- Diagrams & visual aids
- Neutral third party perspective
- Conversation starters
Monitoring and Control

• Being in control of content seen by child
• Monitoring child activity / progress
• Getting on same page as child
• Learning how to monitor child in real life especially when they’re online
• Engaging in learning
• Videos
• Interactive scenarios & games
• Parent / child activities
App vs Website?

Make an app if…

- It has interactive parent / child activities and games.
- It stores information that is valuable and unique to the user.
- There’s a reason for users to interact with it regularly.
- Its value builds over time based on user engagement.
Reflection

• What’s one key takeaway or action step from the presentation that you’ll bring to your work?

• How might you apply the learnings from this presentation to your work with parents and other caring adults, even if you are not utilizing technology?

• What are some digital resources you’ve found helpful in your work with parents?

• How might you reach disengaged or less engaged parents with digital resources?

• What have you tried? What has worked and what hasn’t?
Resources

To learn more about and purchase Get Real: www.etr.org/ebi/programs/get-real/

To read more about Get Real, Training, and Online Resources:
www.getrealeducation.org

To access parent resources on PPFA’s National Website:
www.Plannedparenthood.org/parents

YouTube Videos:

Contact me:
jhart@pplm.org
617-616-1673
training@pplm.org
Parenting Tips: A Tool for Talking about Sex, Introduction – Planned Parenthood

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

TALKING ABOUT SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS MORE COMFORTABLY

HELPING YOUR TEEN WAIT

HELPING YOUR SEXUALLY ACTIVE TEEN BE SAFE
GET REAL
Comprehensive Sex Education That Works

Planned Parenthood
Care. No matter what.
Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

ETR
Advancing Science
Reducing Risk
Improving Lives