



Why is one-on-one time with a healthcare provider important?

Information for Parents

✓ **It helps teens transition into adulthood**

As teens develop and take more responsibility for their lives, it makes sense for them to have a more active role in their own health care. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that providers begin having time alone with young people as early as age 11.

✓ **It provides a safe space to ask questions**

The AAP recommends that providers use this time to offer accurate and comprehensive sex education as well as information about risks and prevention. Teens often have questions that they may feel embarrassed to talk about in front of their parents or guardians. One-on-one time with providers helps to create a safe space for all young people to ask questions and share concerns.

✓ **It builds trust**

Keeping information confidential helps providers build trust with your child. While gaining a teen's trust, providers will still encourage young people to discuss issues with their parents or guardians.



ADOLESCENT & TEEN

Health

Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County, Inc.

What Parents Can Do:

Prepare yourself

Talk with your healthcare provider about when to start giving your child more freedom over their health care. Ask when they will start speaking to your child privately. In the beginning, the provider may ask you to step out of the room for a short time, with that time getting longer as your teen gets older and more comfortable with taking responsibility.

Prepare your teen

Ask your teen if they would be comfortable talking to the provider alone. As they get older, let them know that you will be stepping out of the room to give them privacy. Encourage them to discuss their health questions with the doctor. Continue to check in with them to see how they feel about you being in the exam room.

Work with your teen's provider

Working together as a team with your teen's healthcare provider will help make sure your child has a chance to discuss any concerning issues openly and honestly with both of you.

Talk with your teen

Have regular conversations with your teen about health-related topics, including healthy relationships, mental health, and the prevention of HIV, other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. These talks will help strengthen your teen's confidence to open up about these issues whether or not you are in the room.

Be supportive

When your teen's provider asks you to step out of the room, you can signal that you appreciate them taking the time to speak with your teen alone. Being supportive can show your teen that you trust them to make decisions and will empower them to take more responsibility for their own health care. It also makes it easier for the provider to continue to seek out time alone with your teen at future visits.

Take action

If your teen's provider does not ask you to step out of the room, you can offer to do so. Let the provider know you think it is important that your teen and the provider have time alone to talk about their health and well-being.

Look for opportunities

There is usually more time at annual check-ups to allow your teen and providers to have time alone. However, you can look for opportunities to offer to step out of the room during urgent care visits, as well.

Seek out resources

Some resources include CDC's factsheet "[Talking to Your Teen about Sex: Going Beyond the Talk](#)" and the [Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine's app THRIVE](#), which can help you begin to talk with your teen about important health topics. Visit www.TeenConnectTampaBay.org/for-parents for more information and tools for starting a conversation with your teen.