Why Wait?

I’m 19, and saving sex for marriage. I saw my friends do things they ended up regretting.

By waiting, I’ve saved myself from emotional and physical damage. Along with all the STDs I’ve avoided, I haven’t had to deal with the burden of breaking up with someone I’ve had sex with or becoming a father before I’m ready for that. Having sex before marriage would cheat me and cheat my future wife. She deserves not to have to share me with anyone in the past.

Right now it can be tough to wait, but the payoff will come when my wife and I can enjoy the gift of sex that we’ve saved for each other.

Brett V.

Just for Guys/Just for Girls
www.humanlife.org

I didn’t care about other people. I didn’t even understand that other people existed or mattered.” In 2012, he told a Forbes interviewer:

There’s an emptiness to hooking up so much. When you’re below a certain age, or a narcissist, you don’t notice it or care. But once you develop empathy, once you develop a soul, the loneliness and the emptiness become too much.

6. Share Your Faith. Faith provides moral clarity. Many parents today feel overmatched by a powerful and ever more toxic popular culture. A strong, shared faith between parents and children can level the playing field.

7. Express Disapproval of Teen Sex. In Your Child at Risk, pediatrician and family counselor Dr. Meg Meeker says parents must clearly communicate disapproval of teen sex. She cites the National Study of Adolescent Health, which found that teens “who perceive that their mother disapproves of their engaging in sex are more likely to delay sexual activity.” But the study also found that “if mothers recommend birth control, teens are less likely to perceive strong maternal disapproval of premarital sex.”

8. Keep the Home Secure. Today our daughters are pressured by their boyfriends to send them indecent photos and by their girlfriends to do all manner of improper things. Boys are steered by their friends to visit an appallingly variety of indecent websites. Parents must therefore monitor their children’s cell phone and Internet activity. TextGuard enables parents to log onto a website and monitor the content of their child’s texting, e-mailing, and browsing. iWonder Surf allows parents to monitor and control the websites their child is visiting.

9. Encourage Ambition. The great actress Helen Hayes once observed:

My mother drew a distinction between achievement and success. She said that achievement is the knowledge that you worked hard and did your best. Success is being praised by others. Always aim for achievement and forget about success.

10. Encourage Marriage. We can teach our children the beauty and blessings of marriage by showing in our own lives the everyday rewards of marriage and family. In Best Friends and Best Men, we proudly promote the value of married life. We help young people see what a good marriage looks like through married role model speakers. We help them prepare themselves for a successful marriage. We catalog the benefits of saving sex until marriage. In our survey of Best Friends and Best Men participants, 92% of girls and 95% of boys said that they hoped to be married someday.

Despite the growing threats they face, we can help our daughters survive and thrive in today’s high-risk culture. We must give them boundaries and enforce them. We must tell them to treasure their future and not waste it on behaviors that will fill them with shame the next morning and regret for many mornings to come. We must teach them not to get involved with men who don’t treat them with the highest level of respect.

We must encourage them to find a passion and pursue it. We must urge them to focus on the things that will help them be happy over the long haul—such as honor, truth, decency, faith, and family. We must remind them how complex life is but how simple are its basic truths.

We can, we must, do better for our daughters.

Adapted from Daughters in Danger: Helping Our Girls Thrive in Today’s Culture (2014) by Elayne Bennett, President and Founder, Best Friends Foundation. Email: ebennett@bestfriendsfoundation.org; website: www.bestfriendsfoundation.org/