

The following are some tools and tips you can use to normalize a conversation with patients when discussing their sexual health history and help your patients outline a reproductive life goals.

- **Prepare to meet your patient:**
 1. Prepare the room; make sure health education materials are stocked and any testing supplies readily available.
 2. Find out what you can about the patient such as name, pronouns, language and reason for the visit prior to check in.

- **Help make the patient comfortable:**
 1. Greet them and introduce yourself
 2. Talk about confidentiality and mandated reporting
 - a. “Before we begin, I’d like to let you know that everything we discuss here will be kept between us and your provider_____ unless you tell me:
 Someone is hurting you
 You are hurting someone else
 You are hurting yourself
 You are having sex with someone much older than you (teen patients)
 Then I will need to share that with someone else to get help or support that you may need.”
 3. Find out what the patient needs and wants by utilizing any of the following techniques:
 One Key Question: “*Would you like to become pregnant in the next year?*”, PATH acronym, or the 5 P’s.

	PATH Questions for Reproductive Life Planning	
PA	Pregnancy/Parenting Attitude	Do you think you might like to have (more) children at some point?
T	Timing	When do you think that might be?
H	How important is pregnancy prevention	How important is it to you to prevent pregnancy (until then)?

Additional resource: RH-FPNTC Conducting Sexual Health Assessment

https://www.fpntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/supplemental/fpntc_qfp_std_5p_crd_2015.pdf

Inform the patient topics you will be discussing and explain why you are asking these questions. Below are some examples that will assist you in understanding the patient's goals to the visit.

- Ex: I will be going over a few questions that we ask everyone, the information that you provide will guide us to determine what services you may need.

Instead of reading of the assessment question by question, you can make it personable. You can start the conversation by saying...

- What are you looking for in a birth control? Can you tell me about past or current STI/STD?

How to respond to an inappropriate response from a patient?

Acknowledge their feelings, body language. Apologize and rephrase the question. It's ok to make mistakes, it's how we correct them and learn from them that is important.

- How to respond when a patient feels like you are invading their privacy: Acknowledge the patient's feelings. We ask all our patients these questions since sexual health is very important to overall health and your answers are confidential, but I can have the provider review these questions with you if you would like.
- How to respond when a patient becomes angry/upset: Acknowledge their feelings. Respond: We ask these questions since sexual health is very important to your overall health and want to make sure you are receiving the best care by reviewing your entire health.

Adolescent Population:

How to respond to Adolescent population: Your sex life is also part of how you can be healthy. We want to make sure that you know what resources are available in order for you to be able to reach your life goals and live a healthy life by making smart and healthy choices.

- Check your body language
- Use every day, easy-to-understand language
- Use open ended questions
- Listen and Observe the patient
- Do not read from the assessment like an interrogation
- Encourage family involvement (if abuse or incest is not suspected)
- Counsel on resisting sexual coercion

Additional Resources

RH-FPNTC Counseling Adolescents Seeking Family Planning Services

https://www.fpntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/supplemental/fpntc_qfp_std_5p_crd_2015.pdf

RH-FPNTC Encouraging Family Participation in Adolescent Decision Making

https://www.fpntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/fpntc_encourage_fam_part_disc_guide_2019-12-2.pdf

FPNTC The Healthy Relationship Wheel

https://www.fpntc.org/sites/default/files/resources/fpntc_hlthy_rishp_wheel_2019-03-01.pdf

NFPRHA

<https://www.nationalfamilyplanning.org/>