

# AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVE CURRIE

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Complete Transcript

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Dr. Dave Currie, a counselor and president of Doing Family Right, was interviewed by Covenant Eyes in June 2012 about how dads can start great conversations with their sons about girls, sex, and even pornography. Provided below is the complete transcript of the conversation.

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**Q: My son and I are taking a camping trip and little does he know that I have planned several conversations for him. These are conversations we've had in the past, but they are also conversations that need to continue.**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Exactly, and what a great thing to do. I actually tell parents that ideally it would be over a weekend, a dad and son, or mother and daughter. And it is not just one big slam or two-hour talk and it's all done. It's an ongoing conversation. And kind of wrap it around hunting, or fishing, or going to the races, or whatever your family's thing is. And so that's just great Sam' that's the way to do it.

**Q: I think a lot of boys get confused in today's society about what qualifies them to be a man. Do you agree with that and why so?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Yeah, matter of fact, one of my wife's friends had a son going through insecurity problems and couldn't reach out and went to a secular psychologist who told him to look at pornography and masturbate every day and he would get over his insecurities with girls and all. It just didn't feel right to this mom, so she contacted me. It was just hell to think that was what someone was telling him to do.

**Q: Why is that so dangerous?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Well it's all about what happens in the mind of a young boy, and right now I'm working with about seven or eight married men who are battling with

pornography and the effects on their marriage. But what happens is the early pairing of sexual stimulation with pornography. It becomes the norm as they continue to go back to pornography and masturbation, that becomes kind of the mold and also because of that pairing being so early and so selfish, people don't understand how it orients sexuality. We know the Bible talks about how it is better to give than to receive. And pornography and masturbation is all about receiving. It's all about creating a perfect aura; I'm never wrong, I'm always successful. It's always a win for me, it's always according to my needs, and it's always instantaneous gratification.

But what happens is that pairing creates the neurological pathway of this is the norm now. So when a person does get married down the road, this is now a new thing. What is this? You know, I don't do sex like this. Because sex has been... you know, if it's a 12-year-old boy that gets into it, it could be 12, 14 years before they're married and the pathway to sexual fulfillment is not the one that God created. It's been abdicated by this new thing called pornography and masturbation, and so it's a self-rated thing, very selfish, and its stimuli to get you into it is totally different than a three-dimensional real person, live event, and there's this problem related to that.

**Q: What does our sexualized culture and the culture of pornography teach boys about manhood or what it means to be a man?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** It's about conquest. It's not about respect. We've lost this respect of persons. When sexuality is so normalized at such a young level, they call it "the sexualization of our children" when already by age 8 and age 9 little girls are dressing kind of sexy. Why? Because they've got little dolls now, it's not Barbies now, they are getting dolls that have G-strings, and you know what I'm saying? So our children are seeing sexualization earlier and so the understanding is the 9-year-olds start to run into the Internet incidentally and accidentally and then of course with curiosity on top of it. We have this implication that well boys do it and girls receive it. And that's what it is because that of course is what the whole pornography world is built around, and it's all about the conquest and we've lost humanhood. We've lost the idea of respect. Instead of a woman being a treasure, they're seen as being a trophy or like a notch on a gun, instead of someone certainly of equal value. And of course God would want that men and women are equal and that women are not just an equation; you know like this plus this woman gives the pleasure I need so she is just part of my equation, as opposed to a real equal and someone that I respect and treasure. So that's been lost in our culture because of this push for pornography to say, you get what you can as much as you can, and the more you conquer, the more variety you have, the better it is. And of course that is just creating a completely

dysfunctional marital and family network. This generation that's getting married now, the 24- to 26-year-olds, they will be the first generation that has completely been raised on Internet porn. And we're going to see what's going to happen. It's been around for a while of course, but the people who would have picked it up part way through their life, if they got into it, they would have transitioned from other forms of videos or actual magazines or whatever. Now we have a whole generation who has had access to pornography for all of their years, and it's really going to be tell tale how it hits in the marriages. And I'm seeing it already in my counseling.

I just want to help young men and fathers have these conversations and it's interesting, I just did the talk this week in my eight-part series. Part 7 is the sex talk; how to have a great sex talk with your pre-teen. So I'm fired up about it.

**Dr. Dave Currie:** I like your question about what's the basis of being a pure guy.

**Q: You spoke about how our sexualized cultured views women as trophies. So how can a dad confront those messages head on? What should he tell his son?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Well, a father needs to first of all normalize the interest, not vilify it. All too often we sense our boys start to get interested in sexuality and we go, "Oh my goodness! Oh no! Oh boy!" You know? And we say, "Oh no, not this already, like couldn't you wait until you're 14 at least, you know, give me some time." But the danger is to vilify it, or say well you know you want to stay away from that, that's no good. But his whole body screams that it's good. And I think that we mess it up when we don't help the kids understand that this really is God's thing.

God made this happen like this...starting to get interested in girls, you know. Starting to have a little girlfriend you kind of like a little more, which means you pulled her hair a little more than the other girls. It's nothing happening yet, it just an interest right? Well kids say hey you know what, that's going to develop in time, because God put that there, that's how Dad got interested in Mom, because God put that interest in the other people in the girls and the boys. You know God did that and that's a cool thing, and it's going to grow in time. So rather than vilify it you normalize it and just talk about it in an open way and almost kind of an exciting way, and then it is something that they feel that they can talk about. But if we make it kind of dark, and sinister, and dangerous, two problems [develop]. They won't talk to us about it again. And secondly, they'll actually be drawn to it more, because they'll say, "What is this that Dad says is so dark and so dangerous, I'd better snoop," because there is that sense of discovery. Because they have this when puberty comes, there is this strong

sexual interest that comes around and they don't even know how to explain it. They don't know what is going on in their body yet and so I think it is really important to normalize it, to talk about it being just part of life, to kind of share with excitement. "You know you are growing up, and I'm real excited to be able to bring this change into the open, bring it into the light."

Don't let it be a mystery that they don't understand. Talk about it like you would say, "This is how you play baseball. You toss the ball, and you hit the ball, and you run around the bases."

What happens is we teach them about this sport of baseball or we teach them the sport of football and we don't teach them the sport of relationships. We don't teach them how to do relationships. We just say, "Well you know just basically stay away from the sport of sexuality. Don't go there. You can't do that." Instead of saying this is how we teach this sport of sexuality. It's a game that couples play in marriage. Now the culture is telling us to play it any time we can anywhere we can. The problem is it's going to cause a lot of damage. You better not play baseball on the edge of a cliff, because you might go for a foul ball, and you could fall 200 feet to your death. Well in the same way we play these games in safe ways so no one's going to get hurt as best we can and the danger is in our culture they are telling you to play with sex in a way that someone is going to get really, really hurt. And we don't want it to be used like that, so we bring it to the light, and we bring it to the open, and we talk very openly. We give them guidelines and instructions. We give them open debate, and not "Oh my goodness, don't go there."

**Q: What are some basic steps to be a pure guy? How can a boy remain a pure man for his wedding day?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Well first of all, it's such a great question. I have a sticky note posted on my desk here. I've got an article for pre-teens about pornography, and how parents can talk to their kids about this exact question. So I have a goal to write that this summer, so I think it's a fabulous question, but here's some of the things I think would be the steps of being a pure guy.

First of all we've got to teach about the fundamental truth of integrity. God commanded people to treat each other well. You know the Golden Rule was of course originally Jesus' Rule, which is do unto others as you would have them do unto you. There is something about this core of integrity that we need to teach our young men and our young women. How we treat others matters to us, it matters to

the other person, and it matters to God. That's really critical, and so I start there.

Second, it's important to help our kids grasp that God created sex and that it's a good thing. This was God's idea in the first place. This wasn't like a mistake. No, this was God's idea in the first place. What's happened of course is that our culture has perverted it, either through some sexual anorexia, which is no sex, or some kind of sexual loss of control or even addiction, where it's just out of control and there are no boundaries. Both of those are unhealthy. The enemy always takes anything God creates as good and he always tries to pervert it in one direction or another—one extreme or another. And so I think it's important for them to hear that it's God's idea, and go back to that idea to normalizing it and not vilifying it, and keeping it a positive thing.

Thirdly, respect. Treat a woman with respect and frankly treat a young man with respect. Just recently I had a young mother at one of the junior high parenting classes I was giving. She came up to me afterward and she said [her 14-year-old son] already had two girls in his class offer to give him a blowjob. He just didn't know what to do with it. They haven't even started dating yet and they walked up and said they would give him a blowjob if he would date with them. So the respect isn't just with guys to girls, it's girls to guys too.

There's no blush left in our society. What happens is the little girls are assuming that pornography is what the guys want, and so to be popular they're being drawn toward sexuality almost like, "Well I guess this is what I've got to do, because this is kind of what guys want." So both sexes have to regain the value of respect, and personal space, and honoring people.

My son in high school dated a girl for some time, and she was a real great gal. We were happy for them and they'd been dating two-and-a-half years or so by then. I said to my son, "You know what, if you end up with (we'll call her Sally), you'll end up with a great gal." I said, "Here's my prayer for you son, that if you and Sally ever break up [before getting married], that this is what Sally will say to her friends about you. 'Whoever dates Brock Currie will be a lucky woman, because we dated over two-and-a-half years and he never disrespected me once.'"

I said, "Son that's what I'm praying for. I'm praying that will be the truth, that you will treat this woman with respect, so much respect that if you ever do break up, that she will speak well of you because you never disrespected her once." And I just am thrilled that my son is in his thirties and his old girlfriend is in their friendship circle and his wife actually had a shower for their baby. Why? Because, he didn't hurt her.

He didn't take advantage of her though they dated a long time. And this is the idea that we're trying to convey here that a hero, a man that is a hero today, is a man that can walk in and out of people's lives and maintain respect, keep the boundaries, and not leave a bunch of used, broken vessels behind him. So I think that's critical.

A couple other things that I would encourage to help your son to become a pure man or your daughter to become a pure daughter is talk about sex in that God said sex is a good thing, but it has its place in marriage. Talk about some of the reasons why it's good to wait until marriage. I think it's really important to teach your young people some of the scriptures like Psalm 119 where it says, how shall a young man keep his way pure; by taking heed thereto your word, by listening to your word, knowing your word. And it talks about in Psalm 119:105, Thy word have I hidden in my heart that I might not sin against you. There is something about God's word that protects us. Even like Job 31:1 says I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. And Jesus talked openly about the dangers of lusting after a man or woman and it's like adultery or pornography of the heart. And so there are warnings all over scripture and good scripture to memorize that would really help us to keep a context there.

I think some of the other things that are helpful, especially with regard to battling pornography, is just being aware of some of the dangers and coach your son on some of the dangers of pornography and its effect on [people's minds]. I think it's wonderful to challenge your young men to find a young friend, a buddy that is going to try to walk pure. They can encourage each other. He would have a pure friend that says, "I want to stay pure too, and I'm going to kick your butt at 12 not to look at pornography, and you can kick my butt, because we don't want to go there." So beyond having an influence with the dad and the son, we challenged the son to find a friend who will make a little commitment to keep you on track and you do the same for him.

And the last thing I think is to say, "You know what son, it's going to take a lot of courage to be different in this culture. Now I'm just going to pray that you will be a man of courage, because you are going to have to take stands that are just not popular in this generation, but they're things that you will never regret. You'll never regret putting your future marriage first."

And one of the things I taught teenagers and college students for years and a great truth to get into the heart of a young teen at 10, 12, 14 is that faithfulness to your spouse starts before you're married. "And right now at 12, son, right now at 11,

you can make a decision to be faithful to the woman you're going to marry, and not mess around, sleep around, or touch a woman in a sexual way. Wait for God's plan, which, of course, is having a fabulous, amazing, awesome, wild, and hot time on your honeymoon night and on."

**Q: How often have we heard good advice that tells young people to begin praying for their spouse that they have not yet met?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Exactly, well in fact that would be a great thing to reinforce, because I teach parents that now is the time to start praying for your son's wife or your daughter's husband. So it doesn't matter whether they are newborn or they're 10, start praying sooner. Start praying about it. I would really endorse that both from the parental side and to encourage the kids too.

**Q: There are times when boys find themselves in positions where pornography is shoved in front of them by boys who think that it may be funny, or think that porn is the best thing since sliced bread. If a boy says he doesn't look at porn, they may tease and tempt him all the more. How can a boy cope with that pressure? Secondly, how can he keep his eyes pure when no one else would know?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** A wise parent will actually talk through those exact scenarios. They won't say I hope it doesn't happen. They will assume that it will happen, that their son will be over to someone's house at a sleep over and someone will say, "Hey, you've got to see this."

So you have to actually discuss with your kids, what to do when these things happen, whether it's a movie or a porn site, or pictures, videos or any kind of online site that's questionable. You've got to actually tell them this is going to happen sometime and talk with them about how to handle it.

The other is also true. When you're going to be alone, son, and you think no one else is watching...integrity is who you are when no one else is watching. So, actually have that discussion in anticipation.

Let me talk about the peer pressure first and how to handle facing pornography for the first time for a young boy or a young girl. Peer pressure is interesting. I would challenge the kids [with the concept that] you're going to get lots of people coming at you with different values, and you've got to know who you are and what's important to you. You've got a right to choose what your eyes see, and what your



hands do, and where your feet go. You have a right to choose. No one can make you do that. You have to decide what's right for you, and that's why in our family we talk openly about the dangers of pornography, and talk through those effects, and what it's going to do.

And so we warn you. Whether it's illegal drugs, or warning about the dangers of smoking, or the dangers of drinking, or whatever. We're going to talk openly about the dangers of pornography, because there are some clear issues here that are really going to mess you up. But you have a right son to be who you are and to be unique, and to stand up to peer pressure.

You know that's a difficult thing and that's a cruel thing. Especially, you know if you're really my friend you'll back off because I'm not into that. "You can be into that, that's your call, but if you're really my friend you're not going to pressure me."

And that's a great way to come back at it. And they may get into a situation where they just turn and walk away or come home from that party or sleepover.

Here is a great tip for parents to help kids handle peer pressure. We [my kids] had an agreement that we called the Ugly Dad Agreement. The Ugly Dad Agreement was this. If my daughter would get into a place where she was uncomfortable, she's at a party and she didn't know it was going to go this way, and all of a sudden there is drinking, or there are drugs or someone pressuring her or whatever, she could invoke the Ugly Dad game. She would call me in the middle of the evening, and let's just say it's 9:45 and her curfew is 11:30, and she calls me. And I go, "Hello, what's going on?" And she goes "What?!" And I knew it was time to become the Ugly Dad. That was the agreement.

The agreement was if she needed to get out of there, I would feign being an ugly dad so she would have an excuse. So once she goes "What!" then I went into [Ugly Dad mode]. "You didn't make your bed," or "You didn't finish your homework, you can't be out tonight. I'm going to come get you. I can't believe you disrespected me." And I went into like I'm some kind of unreasonable, stupid, ignorant dad. And then what happens is she actually kind of half pulls the phone away and rolls her eyes at her friends like "Can you believe my dad, he's acting up like this?" And then she says, "Oh, I have to go home."

And my agreement was any time you need to get out of a party, we can evoke the Ugly Dad anytime you need to, and I will take the blame for you getting out of there. You can say, "I've got to go and my dad is actually coming to get me, I'm so

embarrassed.” I can be the worst dad in the world if you want.

And I promise you if I have to pick you up from one of those things, I will not ask you, “Why are you there?” “What is going on?” I will just say, “I am so proud of you for calling me.”

And it was really cool. Twice in my younger daughter’s teenage life, she called and I did the Ugly Dad. She got in the car, and it was a hard thing for me to bite my lip, because I just wanted to teach and talk and find out what’s going on, but I just kept my mouth shut and all she said was “Thanks dad, I love ya.”

And that’s the Ugly Dad. And that’s one way to face peer pressure, because you’re on a team with your kids.

OK, on the second question about facing pornography when you are alone. You’re familiar with a coat rack like in the doctor’s office in the corner that you hang four different coats on. What I try to teach parents is that we need to be the ones to establish the sexual truth coat rack in our kids’ lives. We need to be the ones that actually give them the framework or the structure where everything they’re going to hear in life hangs. Frankly, you have done such a good job talking to your kids about sexuality, and you were the one to not only talk about it first, but you were the one to actually talk about the slang, but you gave your moral and ethical spin on things, and you gave them God’s perspective on things, and you gave them both the excitement about how great it’s going to be, and also the warnings. You’re the one that framed it. You’re the one that put the coat rack there for all the truth that is going to come or all the challenges that are going to come.

For instance, the kid hears or someone said, “Oh man that guy got a blowjob from that girl,” and this is a 12- or 13-year-old right? Well, he actually heard in a discussion that there is a slang word called blowjob and he now knows what it is. He knows because he heard it from you, his father, and he understands what it is and where to put it. It’s not like, “What the heck is a blowjob?” You’ve framed it, and you’ve talked about it, and anything else along the way.

What you want to do is establish solid truth with the right values attached to it before they need it. So that anything that is brought into their world, whether it is pornography or touching a girl this way, or you can have sex this way, or all of these things that they hear, [they have a place to hang it on the coat rack that you helped create]. You know you can’t control what they see online, but you’ve given them a framework, this coat rack. Everything that comes, they know where to hang it, they know where that belongs, they know whether that should even be on the

rack, because “I know what that’s about, I’ve heard that, don’t put it on there right?” But they know where everything fits, they’ve heard that before. The clearer the discussion, the more open the discussion about what is right, what is healthy, the better it’s going to be for that young man when he is alone.

“We’ve talked about pornography, my dad’s talked about the dangers, and I know about it, and it’s not simply an issue about right and wrong, but we want our lives to bring glory to God no doubt, but it is an issue about what is going to damage me.

When there is a welding torch going...kids are told don’t look at that because it will burn your eyes. The temptation is, “I just want to look at it a bit because it is so pretty.” But there are dangers in pornography just like looking at the welder’s torch, and that’s why the welder has this amazing lens that he wears, this amazing tungsten lens over his eyes, so he doesn’t burn his retina out by looking at it.

And what happens is marriage is like the tungsten lens. Once we get married we can look sexually now through the lens and there is no damage, and it’s just beautiful, and we can enjoy it. I speak to young people a lot. I spoke recently to about 800 high school guys last summer, and I asked them this question, “How many of you want a great sex life after you are married?” And they don’t know what to say. “Come on you guys, I want to know.” And they don’t know what to do. Are they supposed to say, “Yeah,” or are they supposed to say, “Shut up!” They don’t know what to say, right? I finally said, “Guys, the answer is I do. You all want to have a great sex life. God gave you this thing. It’s a great thing, but you want to have a sex life *after* you’re married,” Now they’re saying, “Yeah!”

“Then stay away from pornography. Pornography will neuter you. It will take away your sexual edge. It will defile you. It will actually make you less capable of having great sex after you’re married. So guys believe me, trust me, it will mess up your sex life. So if you want to have a great sex life, want to have a great honeymoon, want to have a great long-term relationship with your wife in the bedroom, stay away from pornography right now at age 12, 14, 26, and boy you’ll be doing yourself a favor. So these are the kinds of discussions that I would want dads to be having too.

**Q: I’m not sure what age you start asking that, “Do you want to have a great sex life after you’re married.” Is that high school age?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** We know from your research that the average pre-teen is running into pornography as young as 9 years old. So if they are seeing pornography, then sex is exploding in their faces already. So when you are having your talk with your

son, that's just the truth. "Hey son, listen, here's the deal, if you want to have a great sex life after you're married—believe me son, every guy does—the more you can stay away from pornography the better it's going to be. Trust me son, that's just how it works.

**Q: How can boys express their feelings for girls at different ages?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Well, remember the context when the little 10-, 11-, 12-year-old starts to show interest. "I kind of have a special friend here, Sally, she's just so cool Dad." They're not dating, they're just showing interest. So this is where we've got to normalize it: "This is God given. God put that there and I'm kind of happy for you." And it's almost like the dad would imply, "Hey, that's so cool," kind of like a secret between you and your boy, because I remember when I started getting interested in girls too. It's the weirdest thing, one day you can't even stand them and the next day you can't live without them, you know. And especially when you run into a nice girl like Sally, she's just great. So just normalize it.

"The secret son is just learning how to be a good friend. What does it take to be a good friend? Just like you are good friends with"...you name one of his buddies. "What does it take to be a good friend to girls? You know what, they like to talk way more than guys do, so you've got to learn how to talk son, and share how you feel about stuff. Just what does it take to be a good friend, son? Do that and just be a good friend and treat her kindly. You've got to learn to make her laugh, and just be a good friend together. The more you can be a good friend to a girl, and make her laugh, and just have fun, and also make her feel special. I'll tell you what, just appreciate who she is. Help her have fun, bring a lot of smiles to her face, and you know what, you don't have to get into the affection side. Right now, it just encourages her just to let her know that you care about her, that your fun to be with, that you think she's special, that's a good thing. The affection will come in time, and of course sexuality. God wants that to wait until marriage, and of course you're really wise if you do that. But just encourage a normal growing friendship. Of course, we had our boundaries about dating and how early they could start dating. With my little girls I reminded them that a kiss from a Currie is really rare. You don't just give them to anybody, it's really special. So just those kinds of things and just normalize the interest, and encourage friendship, and just encourage going slow on the physical side.

**Q:** In today's society, unfortunately, there are a great many homes where dads are not playing an active role in their daughters' lives. Often, these young girls are looking for love, affection, and attention in some form or another from a male, and

often that can be directed toward a young man, who frankly is in a position to be very manipulative, because she may be very vulnerable. How can a dad encourage his son to be a man of courage and integrity?

**Dr. Dave Currie:** One of the greatest gifts that a little girl can get is that she is loved in a secure and healthy way by her father. I maintain that the greater strength, the greater warmth, the greater respect, the greater love between a father and daughter, the less likely she is going to be jumping in bed with a guy before she is married. Why? “Because daddy loves me and daddy respects me. Daddy’s got great boundaries, Daddy thinks I’m amazing, and I don’t need some other guy to tell me that I’m amazing.”

And I really challenge dads to be involved in their little girls lives, to be their hero, to be their affirmer, and that she is secure in your love Dad, so she doesn’t have to be looking for the arms of someone else to find that security. Every kid is going to have to sort through attraction to boys and attraction to girls and sexuality. But those that don’t have that deep security in parental love, especially of a father and daughter, those girls are going to have so few less boundaries, and a matter of fact they are going to get hurt, and matter of fact they are going to assume that skin on skin is love. “It means I’m loved if this boy is having sex with me.” One little 15-year-old that I talked to when I was working in Chicago... One visit I had with her, she was crying and she said I’ve already had sex with six different people and one was a married man. I feel like a whore already. She basically said, “What’s the point? It doesn’t matter if I have sex with anybody now because I’m already trash.” She had sex with a boy that wasn’t even her boyfriend, just because he was a good friend and he wanted to have sex with her and she let him have sex. One was a married man and she babysat for their family and he pressured her in the car, and she didn’t say anything afterwards, and the sadness that she was carrying. Here we’ve got a little girl that’s lost sense of boundaries, lost sense of perspective because of the gap between her dad and her. And it wasn’t because the dad wasn’t in the family. It wasn’t because of a broken family or divorce or something. The dad was still in the picture, but he was so busy with working and other things that he had no time for her. Maybe even a greater tragedy is it’s one thing if the dad has moved away and doesn’t live near, you only see him once in a while so you can’t get all the affirmation you need, but sometimes it’s even worse to have Dad around but he has no time for you.

**Q: How can a young boy face this obstacle well when a young girl might be expressing herself in very needy ways, being too dependent on him, and opening herself to being very vulnerable to him? How can he step up and be the man and handle that situation well?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** I think that the critical truth to get across in that boy's head is, "Are you going to be a giver or a taker?" And one of the things I challenge young people with, junior high and high school students and even beyond, is you haven't begun living your life until you live your life for other people. You haven't even begun to live yet. If you're living your life all about yourself, then you're a taker, then you're just there to take. You're coming up with your cup and you say, "Fill my cup... OK, I'm gone." You're really like a parasite.

Challenge these young men who are going to be near girls that are going to be vulnerable and needy is the greatest gift [a young man] can give them is the gift of respect. Or, you can destroy them, because they think they need to have sex with you. But you know the bigger picture, that [sex] is not going to fulfill their life. Matter of fact, when you break up or walk away from them, they're going to feel less about themselves, and you'll regret having done that.

So are you going to be a user and an abuser, or are you going to be someone who is going to be a builder? Are you going to be a giver or a taker? This is a hard thing when some 15- or 16-year-old is throwing herself on your son in her neediness. The idea is be a hero and get her the help she needs. That's a hard one though. Let's just face it, that's a big, tempting situation. But again, make sure you're a giver and not a taker. Then you can live with yourself later.

**Q:** Many people including teen girls don't always dress appropriately in media or in real life. Especially you see this on television. You see huge provocative posters at the mall, but you also so see provocatively dressed girls there too. How can a boy face this obstacle and what impact does it have on him?

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Well there are two sides to that. One is the visual media side, and one is the live person... They are different, although in one sense they are really just extensions of the same. In the whole media advertising world there has always been a push that sex is in, sex is cool, sex sells and all that. In an over-sexualized world there's actually been an bit of reaction in the marketing world that sex isn't selling as well as it used to, but it doesn't mean that it's not still a draw, and a big draw especially for young boys.

Boys really need to treat this like pornography. And they just need to be wise. I would say that all the discussions that a father would have about pornography just need to be extended to their choices in movies, and their choices in the places they visit, and the magazines that they would pick up and purchase, and those kinds of things. I think that the general context would be the same.

But specifically when there is a young girl, at 13 or 14 or whatever, that is dressing down to reveal more skin or to dress sexy, or whatever, it becomes more a little more complicated, because she is really there to reach out and touch. You know, she is right there. And this is where he can begin to learn the power of his charisma, the power of his flirting. It can be a very manipulative thing, because it appears that she is kind of ripe for the picking, as they say. I think sometimes young girls need to hear the story that if you're getting attention from the wrong source or for the wrong reasons, it's not likely going to go well for you. I coach parents to make sure they coach their girls on getting attention for the right reasons. If it is the fewer buttons you have done up, the more interest you have, it's not going to take you to a good place. You have to be loved for more than what you can expose and what you can do.

With that being said, the young man has to really come to grips with the fact that, "I have to respect." I always told young guys about temptation, because we're going to see this attractive frame and we're obviously going to see a little bit of skin and it's going to be enticing. I like to use this illustration. If you and I were walking down the street together and...a seagull flew up behind you and landed on your head, there is really nothing you and I could do about it. We didn't hear it flapping its wings behind us. We didn't see it coming. It didn't make a noise or anything. It just all of a sudden landed on your head, and there was really nothing you could do about it. But I could ask you this question, "Could you stop it from building a nest in your hair?"

The difference is, I will notice pretty women likely until the day I die. It's just part of the way God wired men. It's one thing to say hey, there is a very interesting, pretty girl. But it's the second long look that kills. It's the building of the nest with that woman in my mind. It's the letting of that temptation to actually build a nest in my mind. So I always warn young men that it is the second long look that kills. So if you can notice a pretty girl and just accept it, that's the way it is, but don't go back to focus, re-focus, look again, take a second long look, go back again, go by, hope she bends over and all those things. Then you become an exploiter. You're actually doing the second long look. You're actually having not virtual pornography, but you're having literal or actual pornography because you're experiencing it live. So I would just challenge them about the temptation side and not to read a young girl's loose dress or sexual dress or invitation, but to feel sorry that she has been so pressed upon by the culture that she has to get love and respect through loose morals and loose dressing. You can just respect her, and eventually, she will realize that with you, she doesn't have to dress a certain way to catch your attention. And so those would be some of the things I would say.

**Q: Many dads are wondering at what age should these conversations begin.**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** I think we really have to look at what's happening with the culture. I've been sharing this particular information with parents for over 20 years, and I have in the last 18 months changed the age that I push parents to have [conversations about sex]. For years I pushed them to have it done by 10 or 11 years old. Basically before they hear about it in their health class at school, not that the teacher would be way off, depending on the source of input, but you just want to give your values and your slant on things before they get the whole biological explanation that may or may not have the values you want. So they need to hear it first from you, prior to that explanation in science or health class, if you know what I'm saying. And it's a very responsible thing that the school is doing, but often it comes along with the culture's baggage, explaining the use of the condom, and how to get a condom, and you know parents need to have that discussion before the kids get that full explanation.

Now, the problem is, if there wasn't the Internet and the accessibility, and all this information online, and the online pornography, we could maybe keep it at 10 or 11 to give that first age-appropriate discussion about sexuality. But the problem is as you know, the Internet, the accessibility, and the lack of supervision on many of the computers, and even just the constant availability and anonymity to it... The problem is that kids as young as 8, 9, 10 are seeing way more explicit stuff than would even be shown on TV or the movies because they can just go to the Internet, because there are zero filters on the Internet. There are just no regulations there as there is with movies and there is with TV, you know there is no rating system. You just go there and it's right in front of you. So in the last year or so, I've been pushing parents to have this first talk about sexual issues by age 9. And that's where you start building that coat rack that I talked about earlier, where you start giving the standard or the structure for truth on sexuality, so that when it does come up, they've been a little bit forewarned, and they can at least know what the right answers are and what the truth is about.

I had the talks with my sons the summer that they were 10 ½ turning 11. I never had that talk when I was a kid. Zero talks when I was a kid, no offense to Dad. But the point is it just wasn't talked about then, and you were just kind of left out to lunch. If you're left out to lunch right now, you're in real deep do-do. You're in a real mess, because this society has just blown wide open the doors of anything as far as modesty and privacy. Everything is so raw and real, and it's just so visual, and it's really destructive. So that talk needs to start earlier to really help your kids.



**Q: If a dad has missed this conversation when his son was 8 or 10 or 12. Maybe his son's 13 or 14, or what have you. How can he go about building that rapport knowing that his son has probably been exposed to pornography, he has likely heard the other boys talking, or heard things that he knows that mom and dad wouldn't like, but he has not yet felt comfortable talking to his dad about it. How can a dad build some rapport and make up for some of this lost time?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** [If] the parents have never talked to them (their kids) about it, [their kids] do not think that the parents are a source of help in this area. Because it's never been talked about, so why should they be a source. And so the kids are not going to come to their parents, unless the parents have introduced that discussion a lot earlier..

Now you've got a 13- or 14-year-old where you haven't talked about sex; where do you start as a dad to try to begin and approach the subject?

Well, you frankly start with an apology. You say, "Son, you're obviously a teenager now and you have already seen and experienced some things now as you would as every young man does by this time. And, I have really dropped the ball here. I would like to apologize for not talking with you more openly about sexuality and how to understand it better in our culture today. And I'm really sorry. I should have had this talk with you by the time you were 9 or 10, and so I would like to have a discussion with you. But I want to start with just asking your forgiveness. Would you forgive me for not being a better dad and talking to you about this sooner?"

Well if the kid is just kind of in shock, he is just going to say, "Well sure Dad, I forgive you." Kind of like, "Oh sure, where is he going to go with this?" And then I think you make the assumption they already have sexual understanding and experience. You have no idea how much they've seen or how much they've talked to friends or what the teachers have said. You're out of the loop here, so you're likely wiser to make an assumption that they know some things. Then just say that you'd just like to bring clarification. Because you don't want to talk to them about sex, you want to talk to them about understanding sex, and there is a huge difference. So I would approach it this way. I would say to this 13-year-old, "Listen son, obviously you've begun to get a pretty good understanding about sex. You kind of know the mechanics, and you've seen some things, and maybe you've even seen some things online. I mean there is lots of stuff we have to talk about. But son, I don't want to talk to you about sex, at least right now, unless you have questions. I want to help you understand sex. There is a huge difference between understanding the mechanics of sex and understanding the value, the beauty, and the treasure of sex."

And so you are going to start framing it from the side of value, of esteem, of respect, that God created it. As you frame it that way, you could actually move towards seeing where he is at with some of the information side, about the physiological side, about the pornography side, about what he knows, and what questions he might have. But start with the idea of understanding sex, not just talking about sex. And that's likely the best way to have that discussion and that would be a good place to start.

On my website, I actually have the top 40 things you can talk to your pre-teen about sex. Over a two-month or a six-month period all of these things need to be talked about. You can actually use it as a checklist to make sure I've talked about it and in doing so you create that healthy coat rack, that framework for them to hang all the information that comes at them in the years that follow. And you may want to challenge dads to just print that document and basically say to his son, "Son, here are some things that we could talk about, and I would just like for you to check off five that you would be most interested in us talking about. And then we will talk about those sometime in the next month or so."

And that way he is choosing... He is choosing what he would like to talk about, and you didn't give an option [of talking or not talking]. You're letting him choose which ones he wants to talk about, not whether or not he wants to talk about them. But of course he is going to see a long list of things, because this was something that you were supposed to have in your back pocket to make sure that you did it well, not something you were going to show your kids.

When you start from Square One at age 9, you can actually walk through [the list of topics] in age appropriate ways. Between say 9, 9 ½, 10, you will have covered all 40 of the topics. But now that he is 13 or 14, or older, you now need to go back to "Well, let's see if there is any gaps he wants to talk about." And right now you're not asking whether you're going to talk about them. You've apologized, he's forgiven you, and now you're letting him choose what topics he would like to cover based on that list.

**Q: And that is on [doingfamilyright.com](http://doingfamilyright.com)**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Yes. There are four articles about the sex talks and there will be three more by the end of summer and that will complete the e-books. And one of them is going to be an article for young pre-teens about how to talk about pornography, and [another about] how to talk about dating.

**Q: What are three conversations every dad should have with their son?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** So what are the three most important conversations a dad should have with a son? I'm going to frame that by saying that No. 1 is teaching them how to get connected to God by faith and why and what difference does Jesus have in a person's life. That would be the No. 1 discussion a father should have with a son. That being said, in the context of the dating and sexuality world, there are three things that I would want to make sure my son heard and conversations I would have.

No. 1 is: "Son, remember that God created sex. It's a good thing, and it's a God thing. The culture has perverted it, twisted it, and sidetracked us away from healthy sex. Just remember that it was God's idea, and it's a good thing son.

No. 2 is: "Son, if you want a great sex life down the road after you're married, stay away from porn and here's the reason why, etc., but just stay away from porn. It will destroy your future.

And No. 3: "Son, respect the girls you date. Work hard to keep honor between you and them even after you break up. Live in such a way, as you date these girls, that if you ever break up with them, they don't have hard feelings [or feel that you have ever] used and abused them."

So those would be the three lessons I would want the fathers overall teach their sons about dating and sexuality in a broad sense.

**Q: How can men find ways to help boys who are lacking a father figure?**

**Dr. Dave Currie:** Whether it's just absent fathers or whatever, I think that you have to be willing to step into the lives of young men in a world where a father may be absent, away, gone. And just to be a sounding board. Often a youth worker or a youth sponsor who works with kids will be able to have good talks with these kids. I know that I encourage all the youth workers that work in churches to have at least one talk per year about sexuality from God's perspective, and how to balance sex and dating issues, both in junior high and senior high. That would be an every year thing, because if we didn't do it every year, we'd really be off track. When I was working with youth for 20-plus years, I often did it two to three times a year, have at least one talk, or have a series, on balancing sexuality, or God's perspective on dating or whatever. Why? Because, it's their everyday thing. That's what they face every day, and if I talk about it once a year for an hour, that's supposed to answer all their questions? I mean give your head a shake. So I think we need to encourage

our youth pastors and youth workers and the youth staff to speak into the lives of our kids, both individually and also as a group. We should make ourselves available to be sponsors almost like Big Brothers or Big Sisters to kind of half adopt kids. And be available for your nephews, because sometimes dad gets pretty stupid when the kid is 13 or 14, and Dad is stupid until the kid gets 20 or 21, and then all of a sudden dad starts to get pretty smart again. And during that time, uncles and close friends can often speak into a kid's life. I know for my wife and I, we used to pray that God would bring quality people into our kids' lives that would speak to them during the time that we are playing stupid. I think that was critical, because I saw God answer that prayer and bring key people into their lives that could come along side them, and frankly, say likely the same things we'd say, but at a time where they're not really listening to us, because they are trying to become that autonomous person, which all of us have to go through as well.