

Christian Based Sex Education for Children

North Central District – The Christian and Missionary Alliance
Review prepared by Marv Parker, District Director for Disciplemaking Ministries

Resource: *God's Design for Sex* series – A five-book series providing a parent's guide and four age-graded books for children ages 3-14.

Authors: Stan Jones, PHD, provost and professor of psychology, Wheaton College; Brenda Jones, graduate training in biblical and theological studies; Carolyn Nystrom, author of more than 80 books for both children and adults

Need: With the “values –neutral” world we live in today, it is more important than ever for the church to help parents address the need for teaching children a **Biblical view of sexuality**. The *God's Design for Sex* series contains a thorough, well-written parents' guide, plus four age-graded books covering ages 3-14. While the parents' guide is “for parents only” the age-graded books are designed for parents to use in a one-on-one manner with their children. Each book provides straight talk about various issues of sexuality that arise at given age-levels in a respectful, appropriate manner and from a solid Christian perspective. This series provides a clear Biblical base, chapter and verse, for helping parents shape the sexual character of their children. Each book has been written with the strong belief that **Christian parents are meant to be the primary sex educators of their children**.

Book Reviews & Content:

Parents' Guide (For parents only)

How and When to Tell Your Kids About Sex . . . A Lifelong Approach to Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character

This guide is a wonderful resource for assisting parents in helping children (ages 3-14) establish a Biblical foundation for shaping sexual character. The authors address how to talk with children about specific sexual issues and what issues should be addressed at what age. Parents will find a wealth of information from what children are being confronted with in contemporary peer groups to how they can and must take the initiative to be the first and trusted source for their child's sexual information.

The authors address all appropriate sexual issues for each appropriate age-level. No issues are ignored. All issues are tactfully addressed from a Christian perspective. Sample monologues and dialogues are provided, giving parents some insightful ideas on how they can best approach their children - even with difficult issues, issues that must be addressed and are best addressed by and with parents.

Some of the issues addressed:

- Building a Christian understanding of sex and sexuality
- Handling sexual curiosity and sex play (infancy – kindergarten)
- Inoculating your child against destructive moral messages (pre-puberty)
- How and when to explain sexual intercourse (pre-puberty)
- Preparing for the physical changes of puberty (pre-puberty)
- Preparing for dating: dealing with romance and sexual attraction (puberty)
- Building moral discernment about petting (adolescence)
- Encouraging a commitment to chastity (adolescence)
- What to tell your child about contraception (adolescence)
- What to do if you are getting a late start in speaking with your child about sex

This book is an important read for parents with children between the ages of 3-14

After reading the parents' guide, it is highly recommended that parents read through each of the four age-graded books in advance of presenting them to their children. An advanced reading will: 1) Inform parents about what issues will be addressed at each age-level, 2) Help them determine the appropriate age, time and place for presenting each increasing age-level of information to their children and 3) Provide time to think through the best way to address each issue in helping their children establish a healthy Biblical view of sexuality.

Age-Graded Books (For parents & Children)

Book 1: *The Story of Me* (ages 3-5)

This book is designed to be read to children ages 3-5. Here the authors share the wonderful story of God's love and the marvelous body he has blessed us with. Using straight talk, age-appropriate language and realistic illustrations, Book 1 addresses the following:

- God's love and the goodness of all He has made
- The nurturing family as God's context for love
- Why God wants each baby to have both a mommy and daddy
- The special blessing of being made a boy or a girl
- The appropriate names for private body parts

Book 2: *Before I Was Born* (ages 5-8)

This book is designed to be read to children ages 5-8. Once again, the authors use straight talk, age-appropriate language and informative illustrations to help children see sex as a special gift from a wonderful God to a husband and wife within the context of a marriage and family relationship. Topics covered are:

- Why God made boys' and girls' bodies different
- God's plan for loving marriages and families
- The basic facts about intercourse, presented in the context of marital love and intimacy
- Conception and fetal development
- Childbirth and breastfeeding

Book 3: *What's the Big Deal? . . . Why God Cares about Sex* (ages 8-11)

This book is designed for parents and children to read through and discuss together. Each chapter introduces an age-appropriate issue and provides "written conversations" between a child and a parent. It is recommended that the child read his or her part and the parent read his or her part. This method provides an excellent way for new and challenging issues to be raised and addressed with a child. Following are some of the basic facts about sex and related issues that are addressed:

- Why God made adults so they want to have sex
- Why God designed sex to be shared only within marriage
- What God actually says in the Bible about sex
- The amazing changes ahead for you during puberty
- How to respond when you feel sexual pressure from friends, TV shows, movies and magazines

Book 4: *Facing the Facts . . . The Truth About Sex and You* (ages 11-14)

While this book is designed to be read by the child, it is highly important that each chapter/issue be followed with a personal discussion time with a parent. The book provides information to help children understand the changes they will be experiencing as they go through puberty. Issues such as the following are presented:

- The role of puberty in the development of sexuality
- How girls' and boys' bodies change, both inside and out
- Exactly how a woman gets pregnant and gives birth
- Why God wants you to save sex for marriage
- Love, dating, and how relationships mature
- Other Tough answers to some tough problems