These days your teenagers are bombarded by sexual imagery on the TV, films, adverts, the internet and magazines. So it’s not surprising that they can act like they know it all, even from a very early age. But under 16’s can get confidential contraception so long as the doctor or nurse believes they are mature enough to understand the decisions involved.

1. There are fifteen different types of contraception including the new long-acting implants, injections and patches for women.

2. Condoms are the only way to protect against sexually transmitted infection (STI) but other contraceptives are better at preventing pregnancy. So always use a reliable contraceptive and a condom.

3. A girl can get pregnant the first time and she can get pregnant during her period. There are hundreds of other myths about sex that your teenager might believe – including that everyone else is having sex apart from themselves.

4. Emergency contraception (sometimes called the morning after pill) can prevent pregnancy if it’s inserted up to five days after unprotected sex.

5. The age of consent is 16 for men and women. Most young people don’t have sex until they are over 16. But under 16s can get confidential contraception so long as the doctor or nurse believes they are mature enough to understand the decisions involved.

6. Chlamydia is the most common STI among young people. Girls and boys can get chlamydia and it can lead to infertility. Often there are no symptoms, but testing and treatment are simple.

Some local venues for contraception, advice and free condoms:

Contact Connexions Derby on 01246 201581 ext 281 to find your nearest registration point.

The Derbyshire C-Card Scheme is a confidential service that provides free condoms, advice and support on sexual health to young people aged 13 to 24.

It aims to reduce the number of under-16s getting pregnant and reduce sexually transmitted infections

A young person will need to register with the scheme at a registration point, which are venues like Connexions, colleges, youth clubs, health centres or chemists. Once registered the young person can get condoms, confidential advice and info from any venue that displays the C-Card logo.

Contact Connexions Derby on 01246 201581 ext 281 to find your nearest registration point.

Talking to your teenager about sex and relationships

You can also get help or advice from your GP or practice nurse. And there are more local venues and contacts listed at www.nhs.uk/worthtalkingabout
Talking about sex and relationships with your teenagers will help them to look after their sexual health as they grow into adults. It won’t make them want to start having sex.

Here are three reasons to be open with your child:

1. Your teenager wants the facts from you
2. One in four teenagers say they feel confused, worried or scared about sex and relationships. Most teens say they would like to talk to their parents or carer more than anybody else.
3. Talking helps them to wait

Evidence shows that if you talk openly to your teen, they’ll feel less pressure to have sex, which means they’re more likely to wait and less likely to get pregnant or get a girl pregnant.

Tips for parents written by teenagers at Derbyshire County Council’s Fairfield youth centre near Buxton and young mums at the Baby Spirit Group at the Peter Webster Centre in Chesterfield.

What teenagers say:

- Listen as well as talk. Don’t nag. Ask what we think about issues.
- Trust us and don’t expect us to tell you every last detail of our personal lives. Becoming more private about our life is part of us growing up.
- Don’t let us have a boyfriend or girlfriend. It makes us more secretive.
- Make sure we know about emergency contraception and where to get it from.
- Find out where we can go for extra help and support about relationships and contraception.
- Make sure you’re up to date on new sorts of contraception, like long-lasting implants and injections.
- Just because we want to find out about sex and contraception doesn’t mean we’re going to rush into anything.
- Dads should talk to boys about their responsibilities around contraception and safe sex. Boys need to know from a male role model about how important it is to respect girls.
- Get your teenager to look at www.nhs.uk/worthtalkingabout
- Just because your teenager’s mates say they’re having sex it doesn’t mean they are. It’s a fact that most young people wait until they’re over 16.
- Even if your son’s or daughter’s mates are not having sex, tell your teenager that doesn’t mean it’s right for him or her yet.
- There’s no evidence that educating young people about sex encourages them to have sex early. There is, though, evidence that it helps young people be more aware of the risks and how they can make safe choices in the future.
- Your teenager needs to know that unprotected and early sex are more likely to happen when young people are under the influence of drugs. If teens lose their virginity when drunk, they usually regret it.
- Don’t be shy about talking about condoms. They protect against STIs and pregnancy.
- Find out what they’re learning about sex and relationships at school, what they think about it and if there’s anything they don’t understand.
- You could help your teenager come up with some answers if their peers, girlfriend or boyfriend say things like “everyone else is doing it” or “you’d do it if you loved me”.
- Look at www.gotateenager.co.uk for more tips on helping your teenager and about helping you do your best as a parent.

We hope this leaflet will give you some ideas and tips and help you to find places locally that can offer more advice if you need it.