

A Better Way to Have “The Facts of Life Talk”

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Many parents struggle to explain the basic facts of life to their adolescent children. Many preteen boys and girls are reluctant to discuss this topic at all. A company called Great Conversations is helping families change that.

Great Conversations helps preteens and their families in conversations about body changes, sex and other growing up stuff. Their two-part classes provide practical ideas and help create conversations between parents and their children about puberty and adolescence, choices, values, friends and other concerns.

For over thirty years, Julie Metzger, RN, MSN, has been working to make the often awkward “facts of life talk” into a real conversation between preteens and their parents.

“You can picture those conversations lasting 10 seconds to 10 hours,” Metzger says. “And I thought, wouldn’t it be interesting if you actually had a class where you sit with your parents and hear these things from someone? What if that class were fun and funny and interactive?”

As the students and their parents file into the gymnasium on the first of night of the two part class, Metzger stands at the door greeting them with a warm smile and a stack of 3 x 5 cards. Each girl receives a card on which to write questions. The first half of the class is spent in a very funny and accessible lecture discussing the basic facts of puberty for girls. The second half of the evening is spent reading the questions from the 3 x 5 cards and answering them.



Hearing the questions helps parents understand what preteens are actually concerned about. In addition to providing answers to questions for preteens, this is meant to help start conversations between preteens and their families after the class is over.

The second night of the class discusses how boys experience puberty, reproduction and decision making. Again, questions are encouraged!

Great Conversations has a similar class for boys and their parents. Metzger’s partner, Dr. Rob Lehman is the creator and presenter of the material in the boys class.

Classes are offered in Seattle, Bellevue and Tacoma, Washington and in Palo Alto, California.

Julie Metzger, RN, MSN and Dr. Rob Lehman own Great Conversations. For more information about Great Conversations, please visit greatconversations.com