

How to Start a “Bathroom Betty and Johnny” (Answers to questions posted in bathroom stalls)

Goal:

- To educate youth and answer their questions.

Have Ready:

- Youth to hang up and take down question sheets.
- Youth to answer questions and fax/email their answers back to Teen Talk if they want them to check answers.
- Access to some computers/printers so youth can look up information and email/print their answers.
- Folders for storing the questions, and also the answers on the computer.
- Folders for storing the hard copy questions and answers.
- A sign up sheet
- Tape

Instructions:

- This questions and answer service can set up in any public washroom youth might use with approval from the organization.
- This activity can be run by either youth volunteers or a service provider.
- It may be a good idea to draft up a brief letter or email to staff and others who might use the space to make sure everyone knows what the pages in bathroom stalls are for.
- In a bathroom stall, post a page where youth can write their questions. See sample on the following page.
- Each week or whenever there are a few questions on the page post an answers page.
- If youth are answering the questions, double check the answers to make sure they include the proper resources and info.

- It's a good idea to have a folder with all the questions that have been asked, so you can track what youth are wondering about, but also so the youth can easily copy and paste answers for frequently asked questions.
- Answers to many frequently asked questions can be found at www.teentalk.ca, under the FAQ tab. You can even plant a few answers to address issues you see among the youth.

Bathroom Betty and Johnny Answers

1. *How long should you know someone before having sex with them?*

When you have sex is your decision, no one can answer that for you and it's different for everyone. Some people choose to wait a certain amount of time or until they are in a relationship or in love. On the other hand, some people choose to have sex with people they just met or they have only known for a short while. Again, you get to decide. Being ready for sex usually means that you can use and talk about birth control and condoms with a partner, talk about what you are and are not comfortable with, get tested for STI/HIV with your partner, and that both people feeling ready (and not pressured).

2. *What colour should your genitals be?*

Genitals can come in different colours, and someone might find their genitals are a slightly different shade than other areas of their body. That's perfectly normal! Someone with a vagina might find that it has different shades throughout their monthly cycle. If a person notices that their genitals are becoming red and itchy, it's a good idea to get it checked out. You can always talk to a doctor or drop by a health centre.

3. *My girlfriend is pregnant and wants to keep it. What can I do to support her?*

Probably the best thing that you can do is be there for her. The fact that you are asking questions is a great start. Pregnancies, especially unplanned ones, can be stressful. Having a good support system around when you are pregnant can be the difference between coping and totally freaking out. In terms of drug and alcohol use, one thing that may help is not drinking and/or using drugs during the pregnancy alongside her. Some people feel more able to quit if they have someone else doing it with them. If you can't quit, just make sure you aren't drinking when she is around and make sure you aren't encouraging her to drink. (Some guys like it when their girlfriends drink with them, but this is not a good idea if she is pregnant.) You can also go to a teen clinic to get more information about substance use and pregnancy.

4. *What does a healthy relationship look like?*

Great question! Some qualities of a healthy relationship can be found right here. You can make your own list of what you would want in a healthy relationship (communication, attraction, fun, no abuse, honesty, etc.). You have a right to expect a healthy relationship!

These answers are brought to you by...
Come talk to us for information, answers to questions or resources!

(Post Contact Information and Address Here)

FAQ about Bathroom Betty and Johnny

Aren't some questions inappropriate?

It is very rare that an inappropriate question arises. Also, we try and turn every question (even if it might seem like a joke) into a learning opportunity. However, there certainly are instances where questions need to be edited or eliminated. Use your judgment.

Are there any problems with the sheets being ripped down?

Although rare, youth sometimes rip sheets down. More common is the problem of the sheets being ripped by teachers or by janitorial staff who don't know about the program. Ensuring that the whole school or community is aware of the activities usually alleviates this problem.

What kind of support/resources do I need for this project?

Access to the photocopier, computer, and printer to type up or copy answers and print them.