

Introduce the topic by reading the opening paragraph (Student Book, page 98) with the students. In addition to the questions asked on pages 182 and 183 of the Teacher’s Guide, you might also ask them:

- What does it mean to exploit another person sexually? (In addition to the response given in the Teacher’s Guide — engage in sexual activity without a person’s clear consent; a clear YES is the only way someone can give their consent. Saying nothing, being unclear in words or body language, or saying no at any time is NOT consent; even when giving consent, sex can exploit another, especially when outside a committed marital relationship.) For more on consent and what it “looks like,” refer to the supplemental material for Theme Two, Topic 1.
- How can you prevent being sexually exploited? (the best way to prevent sexual exploitation is not to be sexually active; understand the meaning of human love and sexuality in God’s plan for our happiness; always respect the dignity of the body and treat yourself and others with care and respect; do not consent to sending sexually explicit photos of yourself; communicate clearly with each other and respect each other’s values and beliefs, including religious values and beliefs, when making decisions about sexual activity in the relationship; seek the help of a parent or trusted adult if you feel pressured to engage in sexual activity; seek the support of a parent or trusted adult if you think someone else is being pressured; speak out against sexual exploitation)

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- Do you think these decisions are easy or difficult? Why? How do people know what to do? (they talk to a friend or family member; they ask God to guide them to make the right decisions; they reflect and pray before making an important decision)
- What does it mean to exploit another person sexually? (take advantage of them; put pressure on them to do something they don't want to do; pretend to care about the person in order to get sex)

Read the description of the virtue of chastity (page 98) with the students and invite their response. You might ask them:

- Why is an intimate sexual relationship between single people morally wrong? (sexual intercourse is a sign of the committed relationship of marriage; in casual sexual relationships, people are often using each other as an object for sexual pleasure; single people, even in a loving relationship, have not made this commitment to each other and are free to end the relationship; sexual intimacy creates a bond between two people, and if the relationship fails, people get badly hurt; the possibility of pregnancy)
- Why is adolescence an important time for learning to be chaste? (sexual attraction and feelings begin during this stage; it's a time for people to learn how to manage these feelings without harming themselves or others)
- Do you think young people have a lot of temptations that make it difficult to be chaste? Why? Why not? What can you do to deal with these temptations?

People can feel pressured to do things that they know are wrong and against God's plan for the gift of sexuality. Sometimes our friends can try to convince us that we want to do something that we truly do not, or know we should not. A clear yes is the only way to communicate consent. Saying no, remaining silent, or having unclear body language are all examples of failure to give consent and should be respected as signals to stop.

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We Discover

Read the introduction to the section on healthy relationships and choose some students to role play the scenes on page 99 and 100. After each scene, invite comments and ask the students to identify the reason why this behaviour is harmful to others. Do they agree that these are examples of relational bullying? Why? Why not?

Read the rest of page 100 with the students and invite their response. You might ask them:

- Why does bullying of any kind pollute the social environment? (it creates an atmosphere of disrespect toward persons; a polluted social environment makes it difficult for people to recognize what is right and what is wrong)

Introduce the section on sexuality and decision-making by reading the opening paragraph on page 101 and inviting the students' comments on the map. You might ask them:

- What kinds of events have happened in this person's life?
- Which ones do you think were happy? Which ones were difficult?
- Do you think everyone has difficult times in life? Why? Why not?
- How does a difficult event disrupt a person's life? (a person might lose confidence after a failure of some kind; a person might experience a time of sadness or badly hurt feelings and need time to recover)

Read the first part of page 102 with the students and invite their response. You might ask them:

- What is a dead end in a person's life? (something the person did or got involved in that had very serious consequences for his or her future)
- Why is intimate sexuality during adolescence a dead end? (it can have serious consequences; it interferes with the task of growing up and becoming fully mature males and females)
- Do you think it is possible to take a short cut to maturity? Why? Why not?
- How does God's plan for sexuality protect you from harm? (it guides you toward goodness in your life as a male or female; it shows you the way to respect yourself as a male or female and offer that respect to others)

Serious consequences of intimate sexuality may include:

- sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBIs);
- unintended pregnancy;
- bullying and harassment, including the harassment and coercion that can occur with behaviours such as "sexting";
- complications to, or even destruction of, friendships; and
- emotional, psychological and spiritual pain.

Organize the students in groups of two or three and assign each of the five questions and answers (pages 102 – 103) to *two* groups in order to facilitate more than one opinion about each letter. Ask the groups to:

- 1) read their question and answer,
- 2) discuss it,
- 3) share their opinions as to whether it is good advice or not,
- 4) state their reasons for their opinions.

(The members of the groups do not have to come to a consensus.) Invite the groups to share their responses and encourage the other members of the class to comment or ask questions.

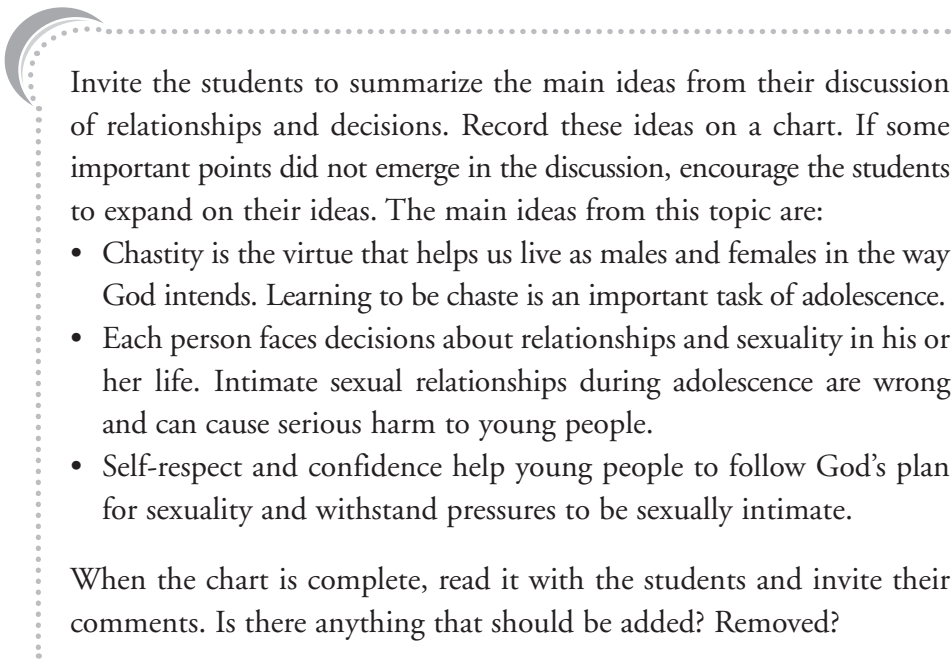
Read page 104 with the students and invite their response. You might ask them:

- Why is it important for young people to develop the qualities of self-acceptance and self-respect?
- How do you develop these qualities? (by having healthy relationships with friends; by being honest with yourself and recognizing your strengths and weaknesses; by depending on adults who care about you and learning from them)

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Background Information: The Science of Sex

Couples release bonding hormones when they are sexually intimate. Women release oxytocin and men release vasopressin. The danger of premarital sex is the possibility of bonding to the wrong person for an indefinite period of time, increasing the risk of unwanted pregnancies and STBBIs. Medical science and research document that hormones and physiological chemistry affect males and females differently, but for each, adolescence is an age when the brain is still under construction, and the part of the brain that assesses risk and consequence is still being formed, leaving adolescents vulnerable to poor decision making. The moral tradition of the Catholic Church is based on faith and reason. We want to equip our youth to make good moral judgments and that involves both faith and reason.



Invite the students to summarize the main ideas from their discussion of relationships and decisions. Record these ideas on a chart. If some important points did not emerge in the discussion, encourage the students to expand on their ideas. The main ideas from this topic are:

- Chastity is the virtue that helps us live as males and females in the way God intends. Learning to be chaste is an important task of adolescence.
- Each person faces decisions about relationships and sexuality in his or her life. Intimate sexual relationships during adolescence are wrong and can cause serious harm to young people.
- Self-respect and confidence help young people to follow God's plan for sexuality and withstand pressures to be sexually intimate.

When the chart is complete, read it with the students and invite their comments. Is there anything that should be added? Removed?

Give the students copies of Reflection Sheet #16 (Relationships and Decisions). Ask them to keep the Reflection Sheet in their Family Life notebook and to complete the questions in the next few days.

We Respond

Invite the students to create their own maps showing where they are now and their plans to reach their destination as a mature adult. What do they think will happen to them between now and then? Their maps could be displayed in the classroom.