

# Teens' Friend Has Come Out

But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ. *Ephesians 4:15*

Encourage teens to approach this conversation with a spirit of love and truth. Remind them that our goal as Christians is not only to uphold truth but also to express it in a way that reflects Christ's love and compassion. Be sensitive to the peer pressure and fear that your teens may be feeling as they stand for their faith. A conversation about boundaries and friendship is needed as you talk about this topic. This is an opportunity to demonstrate how to engage in difficult conversations respectfully and empathetically.

## ➤ conversation starter

If you were to talk about your faith with your friend, how would you approach the conversation in a way that is loving and respectful?

What are some key things to keep in mind when discussing topics like this from a Christian perspective?

## ➤ navigating the conversation:

- **Lead with Love:** Reinforce the idea that all conversations should start and end with love, reflecting Jesus's approach to people from all walks of life.
- **Discuss Biblical Truth:** Talk about what the Bible says regarding human relationships and sexuality. Encourage them to understand and articulate these truths clearly and kindly.
- **Speak with Humility:** It's important to speak from a place of humility, acknowledging that we all need grace and are on a journey of growth.
- **Prepare for Different Reactions:** Prepare your teens for possible reactions. Their friend might be receptive, indifferent, or even upset. Discuss how to handle these responses calmly and graciously.
- **Role-Play the Conversation:** Consider role-playing the conversation with your teens to help them practice expressing their thoughts in a loving and truthful way.
- **Encourage Prayer:** Pray with your teens, and advise them to pray for wisdom and the right words before having such conversations.
- **Set Realistic Expectations:** It's important to set realistic expectations about the conversation's outcomes. The goal is to share truth lovingly, not to change someone's mind. We are not responsible for another person's response, only our willingness to be faithful.
- **Value of Friendship:** Encourage your teens to continue showing love as a friend. Their friend may not change. Their friendship may not be the same, but this is not a reason to be unkind in the future.
- **Seek Guidance When Needed:** If your teens are uncertain about how to approach the conversation, suggest seeking guidance from a youth pastor or a trusted Christian adult.

