



Talking with your 'High Schooler' About Dating

Share your past

Take an inventory of your past and present relationships and share what worked, what didn't and what you learned.

"I love that song 'Driver's License' by Olivia Rodrigo, it's so sad! It reminds me of when I had my heart broken in high school I was dating this person and..."

Be ok with silence

Allow time to digest what you are saying and think about their response.

Later you could ask "You were really quiet when I brought that up, why was that?"

Build a foundation

It's tempting to have 'the talk' once and be done, but a better goal is to create trust so you can be a safe person to turn to. If their relationship starts to feel uncomfortable, awkward or frightening, assure them they can come to you.

"Hey you and Sam have been dating for a couple months now, have you thought about what you are comfortable doing together? How do you think they feel about it?"

Keep it low key

This doesn't have to be a weekly sit down. Instead address things as they come up, a song on the radio or a scene in a movie or TV show can be great ways to spark conversation about what is normal and healthy.

Watching Friends together "Whoa, Ross is always getting so jealous of Rachel's coworker and keeps calling and showing up there, do you think that is normal?"

Remind them to have fun

High school relationships can be painful and have lasting effects on future relationships. It's important to take these feelings seriously and not minimize them. It's also important to remind them that if their relationship isn't fun, supportive and stress free, it might be worth considering if it is healthy.

"Hey, you seem so stressed lately, I know they say relationships take work and that if you love each other you can work it out but lately it seems all stress and no fun?!"

