IS EVERYBODY DOING IT?
your guide to CONTRACEPTION

I have.
I'm dying to!
They do NOT!
I wish we did.

HAS he?
I bet THEY are.
Should we?
Please don't ask.

They DO!
Does he?
I bet she does.

I am waiting for that SPECIAL person.
Will Mum find out?

SOB! Everybody ELSE is!
I'd LIKE to!

Will they find out I'm NOT?
Will I ever?

We do.
I have.

I get it every night.
I don't want to.

Ghuk!
EVERY year around 100,000 teenagers become pregnant. Yet despite this figure, and all the boasting that goes on, most young people are NOT having sex. The average age when people first have sex is 17, but you’re not unusual if you wait until you’re older — many people do!

IN your teens there is a lot of pressure to pair off and have a girlfriend or boyfriend. It can be hard if all your mates are going out with someone and you aren’t, but it doesn’t mean there’s anything wrong with you. Different people start having boy/girlfriends at different ages.

SEXUALITY is not the same for everyone. Some people are attracted to people of the opposite sex, some to the same sex and some to both. Most people will grow up to be heterosexual (fancy someone of the opposite sex) but this doesn’t mean that they are only attracted to the opposite sex all their lives.

IT should be your choice to have sex. It’s an important decision so don’t do it before you’re ready.

NEVER feel you have to have sex because someone is pressuring you to.

Let’s do it... We love each other... it’s only natural. Paul and Vicky do it... You’d do it if you really loved me. Don’t worry, it’s bad I’ll be very careful... frustrated.
Are YOU ready to have sex?

**PEOPLE** often find that changing a relationship to a sexual one is a bigger step than they think. You don’t have to “go all the way” to have a good time. So don’t be pushed into doing something you don’t want. Kissing and petting can be a lot of fun and are all part of sex. And knowing how your partner likes to be touched is what makes you a good lover.

**THESE are not good reasons for having sex.** If you have any doubts or you think you’ll regret it, why not wait.

Do you really want to go out with someone who is putting such pressure on you?

All my friends are having sex!

What’s right for YOU is what’s important here. Sex before you’re ready or with the wrong person can leave you feeling bad.

I’ve had sex before so it’s no big deal.

You don’t have to have sex with everyone you go out with. It is still your choice, however many times you have had sex before.

If you won’t say yes, I’ll have to find someone else.

Are you trying to pressurize me, Tina?

"MY BABY, JOE, is absolutely wonderful but it’s really hard. I miss going out and I never have any money to spend on myself. I get very lonely. At first all my friends came around and it was great showing off the baby. But now they’re all getting on with their lives and I’m lucky if I see them once a week."

Helen, 16
WHAT TO SAY WHEN PEOPLE MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT USING CONTRACEPTION

My parents might find out I'm using contraception.

Pregnancy is much harder to hide than a packet of pills or condoms. Your parents may be relieved to know that you're sensible enough to use contraception.

Contraception spoils the romantic mood.

So do babies! And lots of methods don't interfere with sex at all.

My boyfriend says he'll stick by me if I get pregnant, so it doesn't matter.

Some boys may have the best of intentions, but having a baby can put a huge strain on a relationship.

A baby will be someone to love.

See you, Jo!

Being a parent is something to think long and hard about. You can have a baby in your 20s, 30s or 40s, but you can't be a teenager again.

The number of single parents is rising and over 70,000 are teenagers.

Today's condoms are very sensitive and there are lots of different types to try. It can take a while to feel confident about using condoms. So practise using them.

Condoms take all the pleasure away.

Five seconds! A new record!
WHERE CAN I GET FREE INFORMATION AND HELP ABOUT CONTRACEPTION?

From a doctor, family planning clinic, or sexual health clinic.

HOW OLD DO I HAVE TO BE?
Any age. It doesn't matter how old you are or whether you are male or female. Many clinics run sessions for young people.

WILL I HAVE TO SEE A DOCTOR?
Not always – nurses can advise you and give you condoms. Let the staff know if you would prefer to be seen by a woman doctor.

DON'T I NEED MY PARENTS’ PERMISSION?
No, not to see a doctor or nurse, but it can be helpful to talk about things with your parents. Hiding the fact you're having sex from your parents can be very stressful, so talking to them or another adult may make life a lot easier. They may also be able to help you.

WON'T A DOCTOR OR NURSE TELL MY PARENTS I'M HAVING SEX IF I'M UNDER 16?
No. Even if you are under 16 doctors still have to keep anything you tell them private.

SO EVERYTHING IS COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL? The only reason a doctor or nurse might tell someone is if they thought you were being seriously hurt in some way. But even then, nothing should be passed on before it is discussed with you.

CAN A DOCTOR OR NURSE REFUSE TO GIVE ME CONTRACEPTION IF I'M UNDER 16?
They can, but this is unlikely. The fact that you have asked for contraception shows that you have made a mature decision. Doctors do have to follow guidelines if you are under 16 and they may ask you to talk to your parents about this. If a doctor does refuse to give you contraception you can ask why or try another doctor, family planning or young people's clinic, such as Brook.
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) aren’t just about HIV and AIDS. There are several different types of STI which are very common. Using a condom isn’t a 100% guarantee of not catching an STI but it offers good protection. Some of the common signs of an STI are:

- **pain** when you pee
- **unusual discharge** from the penis or vagina
- **rash or irritation** around your vagina or penis.

An STI can be unpleasant and sometimes harmful. It will not go away without treatment so don’t ignore it. Most STIs are easily treated, but some, like herpes and HIV, you can’t get rid of. This doesn’t mean that you will always have symptoms of them, but they will be in your body. It is very important to go for treatment because if an STI is not treated it can damage your health and may make you unable to have children. It is important to attend the clinic until you are sure that the infection has completely gone.

If you have an STI tell anyone you’ve had sex with so they can get checked out. People often don’t have any signs that they have an STI and only find out if their partner tells them they may have an infection.

You can get help and advice about STIs from your doctor, a genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinic or sexual health clinic. Most large hospitals have a clinic.

All treatment is free and is confidential. This means they won’t tell anyone you have been. You don’t have to give your real name or address.
Q How do you know if someone has got an STI?

A You don’t know. And they might not know they have an STI.

**FACT**
36% of people in the UK diagnosed HIV positive are in their 20s.

For safer sex use a condom

It can be embarrassing to suggest using condoms — particularly if you aren’t sure how your partner feels about this or you haven’t talked about it before. Perhaps you’re worried they’ll think it’s a sign that you’ve slept around — or that you think they’ve slept around! or they’re...

**CONDOMS** protect against BOTH pregnancy and STIs (sexually transmitted infections). Condoms can keep both you and your partner safe and allow you to relax and enjoy sex.