

# THE APPROACHABLE ADULT

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Be informed, *not* surprised



## Facilitator Profile

Jennifer Gibson, MA is the Coordinator of Community Education Services. Jennifer is pretty sure that she has the BEST job and does her best to provide sexual health education that is current, factual, and F-U-N! Her favourite part about being “The Sex Lady?” Answering anonymous questions—always fascinating and energizing!

## A brief intro to Approachable Adult Workshops

The Approachable Adult workshop is a 1-2 .5 hour workshop available to groups of adults who have children and youth in their lives. The goal of these workshops is to **support adults** in their role as **sexuality educators**. Due to our current COVID response, this workshop is being offered through online platforms.

Participants have the opportunity to explore positive sexuality and become more comfortable discussing sexuality with the youth in their lives.

Childhood sexual development, teaching tips, vocabulary, and resource lists are included. Additionally, participants are encouraged to understand how their own values, beliefs, religion, and culture influences sexuality education.

The format of the workshops varies according to the group and their needs. Education sessions are usually offered in an evening session to allow more community parents to attend.

This workshop can include information about child sexual development from 0-18 years of age with a focus on the ages of the children in that particular community (i.e. pre-school, K-grade 5, middle or high school).

As a non-profit agency, we request an honorarium of \$100.

## Helpful Websites

[www.islandsexualhealth.org](http://www.islandsexualhealth.org)

[www.beyondthetalk.ca](http://www.beyondthetalk.ca)

[www.amaze.org](http://www.amaze.org)



*In 2019/20, our team facilitated 1,004 workshops for 21,000+ participants.*

Beyond “The Talk” is ISH’s community education program which offers interactive workshops for participants of all ages including topics such as body science, puberty, consent, sexual decision making, positive relationships, contraception, healthy masculinity and safer sex. Workshops are built to meet the needs of each group in an age appropriate and interactive manner.

## Who is an Approachable Adult?

An approachable adult is an adult who is comfortable with sexuality and relationships and who is open to communicating openly and honestly with youth. An approachable adult is a someone who is self-aware and believes in taking a positive and preventative rather than a reactive approach to sexual health education. At ISHS, we are committed to helping you

become a more approachable adult through workshops, book and website recommendations. ISHS believes in the importance of sexual health education for youth and is dedicated to being a community resource.

To book a workshop, contact Jennifer:

**250-592-3479 x 204**

**[jgibson@islandsexualhealth.org](mailto:jgibson@islandsexualhealth.org)**



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According to the 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey,:

**“Students who had an adult in their family they could talk to if they had a serious problem were more likely to feel comfortable refusing to do something they did not want to do, such as having sex with a new partner or sexting.”**

Source: Smith, A., Forsyth, K., Poon, C., Peled, M., Saewyc, E., & McCreary Centre Society (2019). Balance and connection in BC: The health and well-being of our youth. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society.

## Workshop Feedback

“Jennifer is open, has a great sense of humour, and has a lot of information to offer.” *Parent, Elementary School*

“You certainly have a way with talking about the tough stuff. After tonight I may actually be able to talk to my kids openly about sexuality” - *High School Parent Participant*

“Your presentation was the best of all sex talks. SERIOUSLY” - *Grade 10 Participant*

“I have been coming to your workshops for at least 10 years. You have literally co-parented my children without knowing it.” *Parent, High School*

## 5 Reasons to be an Approachable Adult

### Health

Youth need to know about the straightforward science of their bodies to stay healthy and to make positive choices.

### Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Research shows that young children & youth who have been educated about sexual health are less likely to be sexually abused or exploited (i.e. know the correct names for body parts, public vs. private behaviours, that sex is a consensual activity only, setting boundaries, etc.)

### Sex Education Does Not Mean Sex Experimentation.

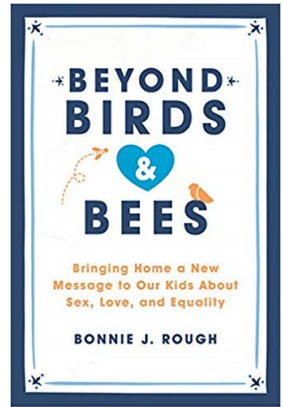
Research shows that sexually educated youth **delay** sex experimentation by **4 years or longer** as compared to their uneducated peers!

### Knowledge is Power!

Sexually educated youth have lower rates of STIs and unintended pregnancies than their uneducated peers.

### Foster a Relationship with your Children for Discussing All Sensitive Issues.

Children and youth want to feel that their parents are APPROACHABLE and ASKABLE about all of the tough issues in their lives.



### Beyond Birds & Bees

By Bonnie J Rough

This book is one of our current favourites for parents. Bonnie shares practical information and tips and heartfelt and critical observations about how parents in North America can emulate those she met in the Netherlands and teach their children to respect, question, celebrate healthy sexuality. The information share is current and relevant for all adults supporting youth with sexual development.

## Approachable Adult Workshop Outline

- ⇒ The goal of **The Approachable Adult** workshop is to provide participants with an opportunity to explore their own concept of healthy sexuality and become more comfortable discussing sexuality and sexual health issues with their children and teens. Children learn about sexuality through their daily interactions with others, from media, within social groups, and in family life. Participants are encouraged to take a **preventative approach** as opposed to a **reactive approach** to sexuality education with youth.
- ⇒ ISHS's workshops emphasize the importance of parents as the **primary sexuality educator** for their children and provides strategies to support parents in this role. Several areas of sexual health are covered including;
  - ⇒ The stages of childhood sexual development & what children should know at each stage
- ⇒ Teaching tips and specific examples of ways to explain bodies & body processes
- ⇒ Strategies for answering the tough questions children ask
- ⇒ Tips for incorporating family values, beliefs, religion, and culture into sexuality education
- ⇒ Resources for parents to review and information to take home
- ⇒ Ideas for using popular culture and media as a teaching tool

**The APPROACHABLE ADULT** workshop is adapted to meet the needs of each group. Call Jennifer 250-592-3479 x204

Workshop Outline