

What Are You Waiting For?

Teens on Why They're Choosing to Wait to Have Sex

By Karen Choucraallah, 17, Staff Writer

Many of us have had that health teacher who said not to have sex or you'd die. Surprise, surprise, threats and scare tactics don't usually inspire teens to not have sex. But plenty of teens make the choice to abstain.

Choosing to not engage in oral, vaginal or anal sex is the safest way to avoid getting a sexually transmitted disease (STD) or pregnant. Rather than listening to frightening stories about teen pregnancy or STDs, listen to what some teens have to say about their choice to wait to have sex.

I want to wait to have my first sexual experience with the person that I will be with forever, not somebody that might leave me the next day. Why waste such an important thing on someone that doesn't deserve it?

—Jacob, 15, Pittsburgh

After learning more about sex, I think that abstinence is the best choice for me. Being sexually active at a young age is not something I have the maturity to handle.

—Amanda, 14, Florissant, MO

I'm refraining from having sex because I think it should mean something important. And it should be something special.

—Mike, 17, Plainfield, NJ

I want to wait until I know that I'm prepared to take responsibility for my actions, no matter what happens.

—Rosaline, 16, Los Angeles

As a pretty devout Catholic, I was always taught that you're supposed to remain abstinent until marriage. It is part of my faith, and it is also something that I voluntarily choose. Because as much as people like to think that at 17 or 18 they're ready for sex, I am certainly not ready. I want sex and my first time to be something really special, and I want to be able to share that with someone I'll be spending the rest of my life with.

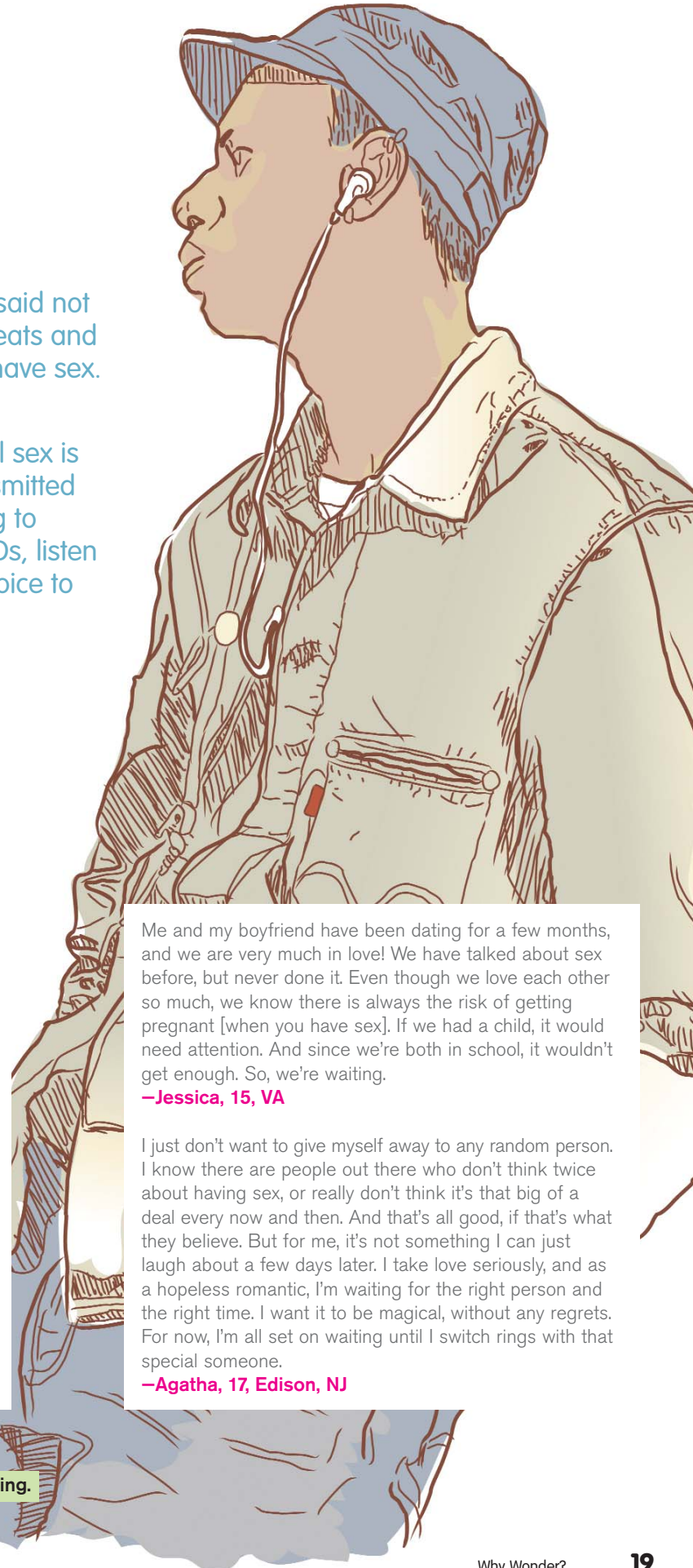
—Jillian, 18, Monroe Township, NJ

I'm waiting to have sex because I want to get married first.

—Derek, 16, Plainfield, NJ

We know lots of teens choose to wait to have sex.

E-mail us at sexetc@rci.rutgers.edu and tell us why you're waiting.



Me and my boyfriend have been dating for a few months, and we are very much in love! We have talked about sex before, but never done it. Even though we love each other so much, we know there is always the risk of getting pregnant [when you have sex]. If we had a child, it would need attention. And since we're both in school, it wouldn't get enough. So, we're waiting.

—Jessica, 15, VA

I just don't want to give myself away to any random person. I know there are people out there who don't think twice about having sex, or really don't think it's that big of a deal every now and then. And that's all good, if that's what they believe. But for me, it's not something I can just laugh about a few days later. I take love seriously, and as a hopeless romantic, I'm waiting for the right person and the right time. I want it to be magical, without any regrets. For now, I'm all set on waiting until I switch rings with that special someone.

—Agatha, 17, Edison, NJ