

## Doctor shares tips for birds and bees chat

By Steve Wood

Monday, July 18, 2011

Dr. Jason Weber of Advocare South Jersey Pediatrics reflects on the right time and tone to take with kids when talking about sex and sexual health issues.

Weber has two children of his own, ages 4 and 7, and practices at both Cherry Hill and Collingswood locations.

**Q: At what age do you have the birds and the bees talk?**

A: What I tell [parents](#) is read off the child and read off their maturity level. When a 4-year-old asks stuff, don't lie to your kids . . . because kids remember everything you tell them. If you lie, it'll come back to you. . . . Give them a simple answer that has no detail. But base (that answer) on their maturity level. When you get to the maturity level of a 9- or 10-year-old, especially when their bodies change, that's a good time to bring it up.

**Q: Do you see that recommended age getting earlier and earlier with increased exposure to sex?**

A: I don't see kids asking any sooner. The younger kids won't bring it up earlier because they don't even know what they're seeing. It makes talking to them more important; you don't want them to get the wrong information on things like that.

**Q: What's the danger in waiting too long to give them the talk?**

A: You want to be the person who teaches them. Some may wait for their schools to do sex education but a lot of parents want to be the one who brings it up their kids. If you don't, if you wait until they're 14, someone will get to them first.

**Q: Danger of giving kids the talk too early?**

A: The only danger is they won't understand. You might be embarrassed, but there's no harm in that.

**Q: How would you recommend parents start a conversation with their kids about sex?**

A: The biggest thing is to let the children lead the discussion. Let them ask you what they want to know. That's a great way to not give more information than they're looking for.