



"I made a mistake

once. I was involved with a very destructive guy. He was much older than me, and I wouldn't listen to my parents or anyone else when they told me this guy was bad news. I admit it—it was a mistake. What I am trying to tell my parents is that mistakes teach you. They teach you more than any lecture or book. I learned my lesson. But will my parents understand? Not a chance. Instead of hearing me admit my mistake, they use it against me. They hold it over my head and are now paranoid about every person I go out with."

Becky, 16

The Stats

Who needs sex ed. in schools?

- ☐ A third of 12-to-18-year-olds say the media influenced their decisions to have sex, with more than half claiming their birth-control training came from TV or movies.
- ☐ A third of them also say they have sex because TV and movies make it seem normal.
- ☐ A third of the girls got their birth-control and STD info from fashion magazines.
- ☐ Three-fourths of teens said at least one parent talked to them about sex.
- ☐ Nearly half (46%) said parents talked to them about birth control.

From a survey by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, in *Youthworker Update*, September 1996

By the Book...

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?
Jeremiah 17:9

Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Matthew 7:17-20

PROPHETIC PARENTS

Christa had dreamed about having a steady boyfriend for the first three years of high school—and now she had him. Terence was so cool...tall, good looking, athletic. The perfect guy, just the kind she'd like to marry. Okay, he was having some school problems (he was flunking two classes) and girl problems (he had been sexually involved with two other girls earlier in the year), but it had been a difficult year for him. His parents had split up for the umpteenth time, his mom lost her job, they had no money, and Terence had totaled his car after a party the first week of school. No wonder he was having some problems here and there.

Christa totally understood and tried to help him as much as possible. She helped him with his homework, loaned him money when he needed it, and drove him around in her car. In short, she fell hard for Terence. She wanted to spend every waking moment with him. This was no puppy-love, they told each other. It was the real thing.

Of course her parents didn't understand. They didn't like Terence, didn't trust him, and didn't think he was good for Christa. "He's going to hurt you, Christa," they warned her constantly. "He's a loser."

Their warnings made Christa go ballistic. "You don't know him! You don't know anything about him! You just don't want me to grow up. You think I'm too young for a serious relationship. Well, you're wrong!"

Christa and Terence saw each other every day for four months, even though her parents were always trying to slow them down, keep them apart, and warning of problems with trusting Terence. When Christa finally decided that Terence was the guy she was going to marry, she decided to become sexually active. She was so glad she did. She and Terence would be forever.

Christa never heard of chlamydia. All she knew is that every time she urinated it was painful, and there was some kind of discharge. The doctor at the free clinic told her chlamydia was a sexually transmitted disease. She was humiliated. When she asked Terence about it, he admitted that he knew he had the disease, but didn't want to tell her—and especially didn't want to tell her that he probably contracted while he and Christa were dating.

Her parents were right, Christa thought. How could Terence be such a creep? Christa broke up with him. It didn't matter to her what Terence had said: "Christa, please, I'm sorry, really sorry. You are just the kind of girl I've always wanted. I didn't realize what I had until now. Please take me back...I promise nothing like this will ever happen again."

1. What would you do if you were Christa?

2. Should Christa tell her parents about the chlamydia?

3. If you were Christa's parents and you found out about Terence giving your daughter an STD what would you do?

4. Do you think guys like Terence will ever change?

