

When it comes to dating, different people have different questions. How would you answer them?

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Church Magazines

t the *New Era* we hear a lot of questions from young people about all kinds of topics. One of the most common areas of confusion (or aggravation—we can't always tell which) is dating.

The questions about dating seem to come from three basic types of questioners: daters, waiters, and loophole creators. These three groups have different backgrounds and motivations for their questions, but all of them deserve answers so that they can find peace and guidance. And you can help.

Here are some examples of questions from these three groups, as well as a copy of the "Dating" section of *For the Strength of Youth*. See if you can match up the questions to the statements in that section that give an answer. Or, if you know other answers from the scriptures or general conference, add those. It's a good exercise to see how well you know the guidelines and how well you can answer questions for yourself or others.

# BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- · Have an attitude of faith.
- Try to see the issue from an eternal perspective.
- Go to the right sources—the scriptures, prophets, parents, and leaders, as well as asking Heavenly Father for the guidance of the Spirit.
- Be kind—a part of the answer to any question regarding how to deal with others.

HOW CAN I HOLD TO
OUR DATING STANDARDS WHEN MOST
PEOPLE I KNOW DON'T ADHERE
TO THEM——EVEN THE
I DS ONFS?

WHEN YOU'RE ON A DATE, HOW CAN YOU KEEP THE FUN AND CONVERSATION GOING SMOOTHLY WITHOUT IT GETTING AWKWARD?

I RECENTLY
TOOK SOMEONE
OUT FOR FUN, BUT
NOW SHE WANTS A
RELATIONSHIP.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

At what age can

IS IT OK TO DATE SOMEONE WHO'S NOT LDS?

## **Daters**

When these people grew old enough, they decided to try out this dating thing. They've had some experiences, and as a result, they have some questions.

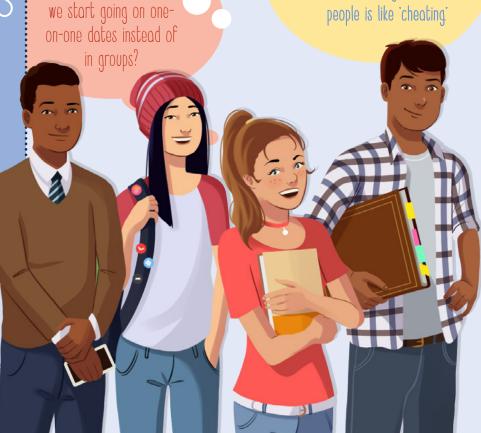
#### Here are a few of them:

For questions like these, you can sometimes find the answers right in *For the Strength of Youth*. But you may also need to talk to some people with a little experience who can offer some ideas for how to deal with people and situations both faithfully and tactfully.

#### MY ANSWERS



Everybody else does it. And they think dating different people is like 'cheating'



### WAITERS

No, these are not servers at restaurants. They're people who are old enough and are either (a) choosing to wait a while before dating or (b) waiting for someone to finally ask them out on a date.

#### Here are their questions:

Some of these questions are a little harder to answer by quoting For the Strength of Youth. You'll need compassion, understanding, and sensitivity. Those choosing not to date aren't breaking any commandments, and those not being asked out don't have anything wrong with them. But people are still feeling anxious and hurt. You may want to talk to parents, older siblings, leaders, and others who can lend a sympathetic ear and offer good advice and perspective.

BUT I DON'T REALLY

I'VE BEEN REJECTED BY GIRLS, AND I DON'T WANT TO ASK ANYONE ON A DATE ANYMORE. IS THAT OK?

# Why date as a teenager? What's the point?

The LDS young men in my area are my friends, but they aren't asking me on dates. Why?



Dating

Virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light. Doctrine and Covenants 88:40

A date is a planned activity that allows a young man and a oung woman to get to know each other better. In cultures where dating is acceptable, it can help you learn and practice social skills, develop friendships, have wholesome fun, and eventually find an eternal companion.

You should not date until you are at least 16 years old. When you begin dating, go with one or more additional couples. Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person. Developing serious relationships too early in life can limit the number of other people you meet and can perhaps lead to immorality. Invite your parents to become acquainted with those you date.

Choose to date only those who have high moral standards and in whose company you can maintain your standards. Remember that a young man and a young woman on a date are responsible to protect each other's honor and virtue.

Plan dating activities that are safe, positive, and inexpensive and that will help you get to know each other. Go only to places where you can maintain your standards and remain close to the Spirit.

Young men generally take the initiative in asking for and plan-

ning dates. Always be kind and respectful when you ask for a date or when you accept or decline one. While on a date, be courteous as you listen to others and express your own feelings.

As you enter your adult years, make dating and marriage a high priority. Seek a companion who is worthy to go to the temple to be sealed to you for time and all eternity. Marrying in the temple and creating an eternal family are essential in God's plan of happiness.

MY ANSWERS

# Loophole Creators

People in this group can be anywhere from 12 to 18 years old, and their questions are all over the map. They're definitely sincere and deserve answers. But basically, they seem to be trying to carve out an exception to the rules so that they can feel good about doing what they want to do.

#### Here's just a sampling of their many questions:

Even if your initial reaction to some of these questions is some variation of "No," "No way," or "What are you thinking?" try to have understanding. These are sincere questions from people who really want an answer, so we don't want to be brusque or dismissive. Look at *For the Strength of Youth* and see how you might begin to form an answer. The key is not to just repeat the standard but to focus on the *why* behind the standard. *Why* no frequent dates with the same person? *Why* wait until you're older to date?

HOW MANY
DATES WITH OTHER
PEOPLE DO I NEED TO GO ON
IN BETWEEN DATES WITH
THE PERSON I REALLY
LIKE?

IS IT OK TO HAVE
A BOYFRIEND OR
GIRLFRIEND AS LONG
AS YOU'RE NOT
DATING?

IS IT OK TO KISS WHEN
YOU'RE YOUNGER AS LONG
AS YOU'RE NOT DATING?

#### MY ANSWERS

✓ WHAT'S THE DEFINITION OF A "DATE"?

✓ WHAT'S THE PROPERTY OF A P

IF I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH TO DATE YET, CAN I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME WITH A PERSON AS LONG AS WE'RE NOT DATING?

If I'm old enough to date and the person I want to go with isn't, is it OK to go out as long as they're not LDS so they won't be breaking their standards?

