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Ready: Ask yourself if you are really ready to have sex? Is this what you want? There is no rush to have sex, you have plenty of time. Why not get to know the person first?

2

Relationships: There are lots of ways to get close to someone and get to know them before you decide to have sex. How can you show someone you like them apart from having sex with them?

3

Respect: Respect yourself; people should respect the choices you make. If your boyfriend/girlfriend really cares for you, they should respect your decision not to have sex.

4

Rights: You have the right to say no and make your own choices. If you are feeling under pressure to have sex, ask yourself 'why do I let other people make choices for me?'. It's your right to wait until you're really ready.

5

Regret: Having sex now is something you may regret later. Many people say they regret having sex so young and wish they had waited.

6

Reality: Most young people in Northern Ireland under 17 have not had sex. Do you want to do something just because your mates say they've done it?

For further information and contact details of local Genito Urinary Medicine (GUM) clinics, go to www.thinkitthrough.org.uk



www.publichealth.hscni.net

02/10

Risks: Consider the risks before you have sex. Do you want to get pregnant, or get someone else pregnant? Do you want to risk catching a sexually transmitted infection (STI) or being disappointed and not enjoying it?

Realise: Alcohol and other drugs can affect the choices you make. Many people have sex because they were drunk at the time and then regret it.

Responsible: Be responsible: the best way to protect yourself is not to have sex. But if you choose to have sex, remember to use a condom – this will help protect you from an unwanted pregnancy and STIs. Why put your health at risk?

Remember: Just because you have had sex before, it doesn't mean that you can't say no in the future. Is it really right for you?

READY OR NOT?
Let's leave it 'til later

10 things to think about before having sex...