Dear scared,

So, you want to open up to your mother about your relationship with your boyfriend? It may be helpful to first take a little time to determine how much she already knows and decide what it is you would like to share with her. Does your mother know that you’ve been dating your boyfriend for two and a half years? Do you want her to know that, or would you prefer that she only know you have a boyfriend now? Would you like to tell your mother that you’re in love? Or would you like to discuss with her that you’re sleeping with your boyfriend and have started taking birth control? Similarly, it may be helpful to consider if there is information you don’t want to share with her — that’s okay, too. Are there any questions she might ask that you wouldn’t feel comfortable answering? If so, you may want to plan ahead for how you might respond. You may want to say something like, “I understand why you’re curious about [fill in the blank], but I’m just not comfortable sharing this with you right now.” Whatever you decide, there are some considerations you can make that will help you determine how much you choose to disclose and why.

Next, you may want to think more deeply about why you would like to talk to your mother about your boyfriend. Do you have a close relationship and wish to fill her in on this other part of your life? Are you hoping that your boyfriend might be able to spend more bonding time with your family? Are you seeking advice or perspective of any sort? Has she asked in the past about your relationship and you’ve chosen not to disclose details until now? Thinking about the reasons why you want to tell your mother more about your romantic life may help you decide how to frame the
You also mentioned that your family is “very religious.” How do you see this impacting the situation if you choose to tell your mother some or all of the information you provided in your question? Are there any risks you face by telling her? Will she be upset? Will she punish you in any way? It might be helpful to first talk to a trusted sibling or relative for support and to help share their perspectives on how to approach sensitive topics with her.

You might choose to tell your mother about your relationship little by little. Perhaps you can first tell her about the strong feelings you have for your boyfriend. Then, based on her reaction and feedback, you can choose to share more details with her. Keep in mind that you can choose what to disclose and what not to disclose with your mother with regards to your relationship — it’s your life. Furthermore, if you’re in a place where being 18 means you’re no longer a minor, you likely have the right to keep your medical information private, such as birth control use or other sexual health details. If you’re in the US, under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (more commonly known as HIPAA) [2], your permission is required to share health information with family or friends once you reach the age of majority (18 in most U.S. states). Other countries have similar laws as well.

Talking to your parents can be hard — especially when the subject relates to sex, love, and relationships. It might be helpful to talk to a trusted friend, family member, or mental health professional to sort this out and help you carefully plan out what to say. The Go Ask Alice! question My mom found my contraceptives! [3] deals with some similar decision-making considerations as well and may inform how you’d approach a conversation with your mother. While it can be scary to share personal information in this way, there’s another side to this: you’re also opening yourself up to the potential for a stronger, closer, and more transparent relationship with your mom. Good luck with whatever you decide to do!

Alice!

Category: Relationships [4]
Talking With Parents [6]

Related questions

Parental consent for abortion? [6]
How do I tell my parents I’m pregnant? [7]
Need to see a doctor, but I don’t want my parents to know I’ve had sex [8]

Resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside) [9]
Mental Health Services (CUIMC) [10]

Published date:
Mar 13, 1998
Last reviewed on:
Aug 30, 2019
Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/telling-mom-about-my-boyfriend-and-our-birth-control-0

Links
[8] https://goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/need-see-doctor-i-dont-want-my-parents-know-ive-had-sex-0