

EXCERPT



Raising Wise Kids in a Sexually Broken World
A Gospel-Centered Approach

January 13, 2026 | \$21.99, 240 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-1214-7

Parental Wisdom for One of the Most Controversial Spaces of Our Age

Currently, 28 percent of Generation Z identify as LGBTQ, compared with 10 percent of all adults. At least one study found that 87 percent of Christian singles on religious dating sites believe it is okay to have sex outside of marriage, while Christians who do not regularly watch pornography are in the minority (54 percent sometimes watch it and 49 percent are “comfortable with how much they watch”). One in five teenagers see pornography by the time they are ten years old, and roughly three out of four see it by the time they are seventeen. There has also been a 2,400 percent increase in referrals for children wanting to gender-transition between 2010 and 2019 in the UK (75 percent of whom are natal girls), while one in four women and one in ten men experience unwanted sexual touch by the time they are eighteen.

When we hear these statistics, questions pour out of our brains like:

- “How do I talk to my kids about God’s design for marriage and singleness?”
- “What do I say when my kid asks about the rainbow flags at the library?”
- “How do I talk with my five-year-old about her aunt who now identifies as her uncle?”
- “When are we supposed to talk to our kids about sex—and how?”
- “How do I keep my children’s bodies safe?”
- “How can I talk about the evils of pornography without scarring my children?”

We desperately look around for our personal parenting coach who can tell us what to say, but the coach never shows up. So our brains go straight to trauma responses. Some of us choose to fight. You see us show ourselves in rants on social media. Some of us choose flight. You can pick us out by how many jokes we make to avoid teaching our kids. Others of us fawn. We desperately try to people-please our way into peace with everyone in this conversation. And still others of us freeze. Picking up this very book was an absolute act of faith.

But then we take our fear to our kids and try to figure out how to bubble wrap them or fight the enemy of the day for them. Or we simply curl up in a fetal position while scrolling Instagram until the anxiety lessens.

Later, after our kids are in bed and the phone is tucked away, the tears start to fall. We come face-to-face with our helplessness and find ourselves begging Jesus to come back and make it all better.

Me too.

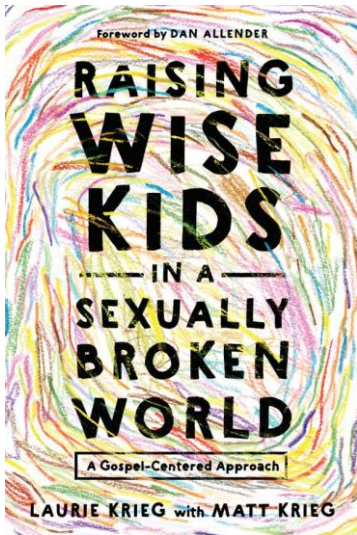
But he hasn’t come back yet. So what are we supposed to do?



Krista Clayton, Director of Publicity
kclayton@ivpress.com



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This is why we wrote this book: to help parents discover and implement gospel wisdom in one of the most controversial spaces of our age.

Kids need to bump into the world in age-appropriate ways in order to thrive. They cannot be bubble wrapped. They also should not be tossed to the world to be taught by its ideals. They should be planted in gospel soil and offered enough wind to strengthen their roots. I cannot even begin to count how many hypersheltered-kids-turned-adults are in my husband Matt's mental health office because of a sexual addiction. The research says that when kids are not taught about sex, they turn to pornography—30 percent say they learned "a lot" to "everything they know" about sex from it. That is truly disturbing when we also know that anywhere from one in three to nine in ten pornography videos depict violence, and watching such violent content can lead to real-life violent actions in a person.

The good news is kids want to talk and learn, and when they do it is beneficial. In just one secular study, researchers found that when teens talked with their parents about pornography, almost three in four (71 percent) said the talk "made [them] feel like there are helpful resources other than pornography to explore [their] sexuality." Yes. There are helpful resources. We parents, through the power of the gospel, are that helpful resource.

The goal of this book is to equip our kids so that no matter how they experience sexual brokenness within them and around them, they have the tools they need to walk in the way of Jesus no matter what.

It starts with us as parents learning it first.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will teach it to our kids in incremental ways.

Lay the foundation.

Walk it.

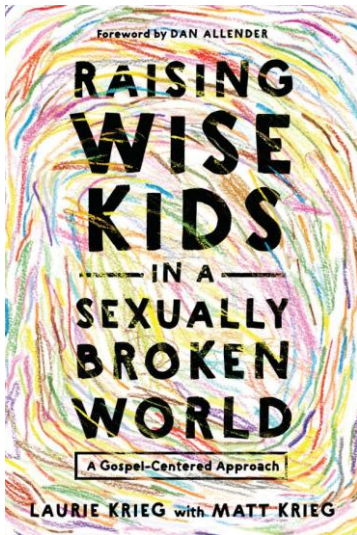
-adapted from the introduction



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kclayton@ivpress.com



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Q & A



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Christian Parents, the Talk, and a Sexually Broken World

What motivated you to write *Raising Wise Kids in a Broken World*?

Laurie Krieg: I wrote this because the Lord laid a burden on my heart for fellow parents of young kids. While journaling one morning, God highlighted to me the privilege I have had of being in ministry to equip the church with a gospel vision for sexuality for the last ten years while raising our own family. Everything I teach the church I have been translating into kid-language. I felt an invitation from God to share what we have been learning with our peers. Additionally, I work as the director of parent programs and development for The Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender. We have had hundreds of emails from parents asking for a resource like this.

What is the goal of this book?

Laurie: We are equipping parents to teach their kids to engage this wild world with wisdom. It is our hope that no matter how their kids experience sexual brokenness within them or around them, they have the tools they need to wisely choose the way of Jesus no matter what.

How is this book different from other parenting books?

Laurie: To my knowledge, there are very few books out there that teach parents of young kids how to talk with their kids about all of these things in one book: gender, sexuality, marriage, body safety, and porn prevention.

Who did you have in mind as you wrote this book?

Laurie: The moms and dads who are so afraid. They want to bubble wrap their kids or rage at the world, and they know neither are right. But what do we say? How can we equip well? I want to take those moms and dads by the hand and say, "Here's what I've learned both through research and experience. You're welcome to use it. But even if you don't, just know you're not alone here."

What are parents ultimately getting in *Raising Wise Kids in a Broken World*?

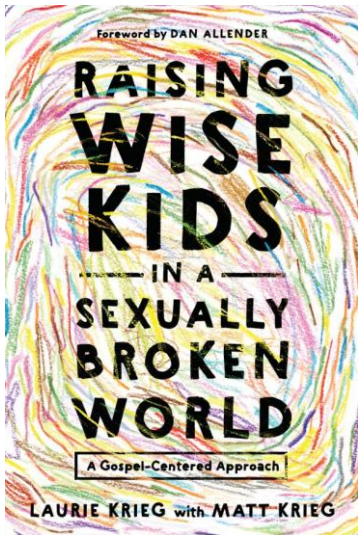
Laurie: They are not only given practical language to say about human sexuality, but they are given the gospel why. What we teach our kids is going to go so much further if it is both rooted in the gospel and we understand why we are saying it. We give an adaptable script for how to talk with your kids about God's design for sex/puberty through a gospel lens. That's a real gift, in my opinion.



Krista Clayton, Director of Publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



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Is it really necessary to talk to our kids about sex as early as 7 or 10?

Laurie: It is. I know it's shocking to some of us. Here are three reasons:

1. Girls start puberty not when they have their first period, but their body begins preparing years before between ages 7 and 12. Boys begin between ages 9 and 14. We need to give our children time to prepare for this change. When we explain puberty, we need them to understand why their bodies are turning into grown-up bodies that have the potential to make babies.
2. In this time frame of 7-10 years old, kids begin to pivot their primary allegiances from parents to friendships. Peers begin to become the top relational focus, and parents would do well to step in and guide about sex before their friends lead the way.
3. Kids are curious, and in this internet era, kids of this age can try to find answers for their natural questions in unbiblical places. It is wise for parents to get ahead of accidental stumbles into internet evil with a gospel vision for human sexuality.

With so many differing views on sexuality and gender, where do we even begin to explain any of it to our kids, especially when we as adults are still trying to understand it?

Laurie: The first place anyone learns something becomes the gold standard to which we compare everything else. This is called the "anchoring bias." When it comes to teaching our kids about sexuality, do we want the internet to be their anchoring bias? Kids on the playground? Our kids' teachers? Or do we want a gospel vision through us, our kids' loving parents, to be the gold standard to which all else is compared? It is worth understanding what we believe through a gospel lens so that we can teach our kids wisdom.

Why is it important to start with the gospel before we begin any of these conversations with our kids?

Laurie: The gospel must be the goal, the vision, and the start and end point in the human sexuality conversation because that is what sex is about. It is not about marriage as an end in itself. It is not about purity as an end in itself. Sex points to God. When we make anything else the end point, we have slipped into legalism. Then, if we "fail" in our sexual integrity we will be crushed, and if we "succeed" we will be proud. But if the gospel is the focus of human sexuality, we live in a perpetually humble posture and Jesus shines through it all.

How, for the sake of our kids, should we change the way we talk about marriage and singleness?

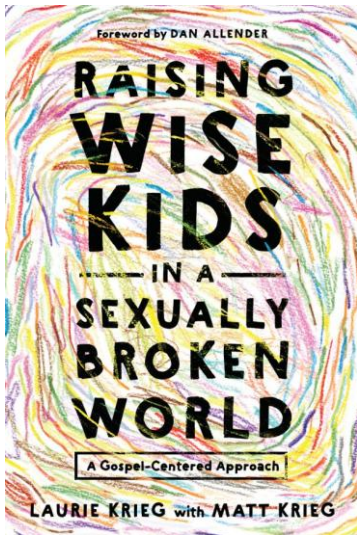
Laurie: We need to pivot from saying "When you get married . . ." to "If God calls you to marriage . . ." Marriage is not a guarantee or the goal of life. Jesus is. Enjoying God and advancing his kingdom is. When we move the pressure off marriage and back onto the gospel, it will make it easier to help our kids understand sexual sin. Because no matter how our kids struggle with sexual sin, it will not change their purpose in life. They experience attractions toward the same sex? Then surrender those attractions to Jesus and advance the kingdom of God. They struggle with heterosexual lust in their heterosexual marriage? Then surrender and repent of that lust and advance the kingdom of God. They are straight but called to singleness? Great, advance the kingdom of God. That mission never changes no matter our marital status.



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How do you determine the time to talk with kids about rainbow flags, same-sex relationships, etc.?

Laurie: Our general rule of thumb when it comes to discerning what is age-appropriate for our kids to learn is:

1. Are they going to run into it in the next six months to one year? If yes, I want to teach them and have time to process what I teach.
2. Can I share in a way that shapes the brokenness of the world within the light of the gospel? If yes, then I will share. If not, then I will wait and study until I can do that.

Our kids encounter rainbow flags very young, and there are ways to talk about them that shape it not in an explicit, angry, or fearful way but winsome, helpful, and in light of the gospel.

Why is belonging so important to the gender discussion?

Laurie: Every gender-wrestling person I know has struggled with feeling like they belong. They do not fit the stereotype of male or female, and although it's not always the primary or original source of their struggles with gender, a lack of belonging does not help them in their journey. To mitigate the potential of feeling isolated from their gender, we try to help our kids belong with their gender by saying often, "I love your version of boy" or "I love your version of girl."

If you could only offer three pieces of advice for parents having the "sex talk," what would they be?

Laurie: Research tells us that sex talks go best when the parents are receptive (able to listen to the child), informal (not taking oneself too seriously and not reading from a script), and composed ("I know what I am talking about; I am not anxious"). The words matter, but what matters most is the posture with which we deliver the message.

What are the five main things you want readers to take away from your book?

Laurie: I want readers to understand what the purpose of life is and how to teach our kids, the purpose of marriage/singleness and how to teach our kids, what gender is and isn't and how to teach our kids, why and how we can protect our kids' bodies, and why and how we can prevent porn addiction.

What do all of these issues—sexuality, gender, sexual sin, marriage, singleness—have to do with pushing back the darkness and ushering in the light?

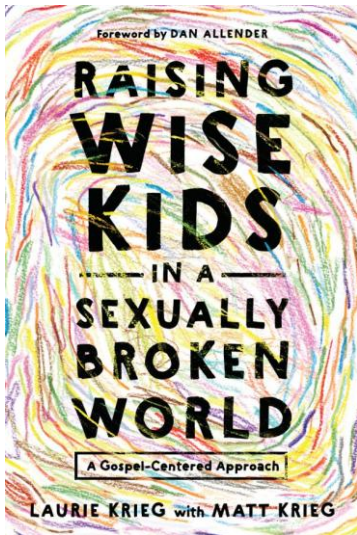
Laurie: That's the vocational purpose of our lives in kid-speak: To push back the darkness and usher in the light. Or, to promote God's rule and reign everywhere. Or, to advance the kingdom of God until everyone everywhere is living in joyful submission to King Jesus. These conversations only make sense when we place them into the context of what God is doing in the world. May we only teach the next generation out of such a heart for God's rule and reign to flourish everywhere.



Krista Clayton, Director of Publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



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BIO



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Laurie and Matt Krieg, Providing a Gospel-Centered Approach to Marriage and Sexuality



“Laurie and Matt Krieg offer a rich, biblical framework for parents navigating the complicated terrain of talking about sexuality with children. The Kriegs provide a breadth of wisdom from their own parenting journey and incorporate key insights from psychology, all the while helping parents feel more effective and less alone. There is no shortage of parenting books available today, but Raising Wise Kids in a Sexually Broken World is one that sifts through the noise and offers concrete, practical guidance and modeling of critical conversations around human sexuality.”

—**Julia Sadusky**, licensed clinical psychologist and author of *Start Talking to Your Kids about Sex: A Practical Guide for Catholics*

Laurie Krieg is the director of Parent Programs & Discipleship at *The Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender*, where she also served as a founding board member. Laurie has a master’s in evangelism and leadership from Wheaton Graduate School, and she and her husband Matt are the cohosts of the *Hole in My Heart Podcast*, coauthors of *An Impossible Marriage* (IVP, 2020), and together wrote the forthcoming parenting book, *Raising Wise Kids in a Sexually Broken World* (IVP, 2026). Laurie and Matt live in West Michigan with their three kids.

Matt Krieg, MA, LPC, is a licensed mental health therapist and a site director at Second Story Counseling in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His primary focus is on helping people wrestling with issues related to sexuality (trauma, addiction, infidelity, LGBT+) in order to eliminate shame and grasp practical hope.



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kclayton@ivpress.com



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