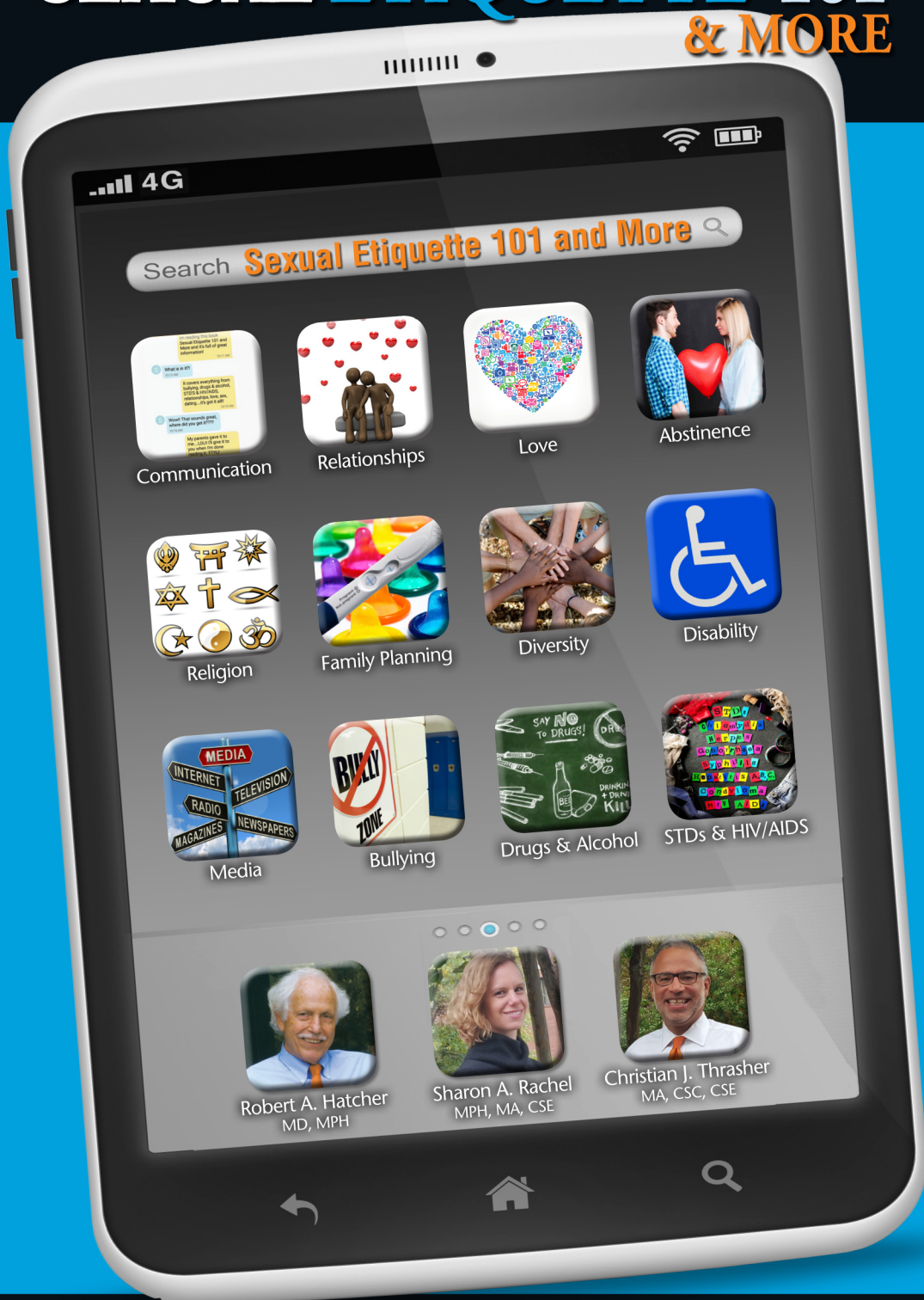


# SEXUAL *ETIQUETTE* 101 & MORE

SEXUAL ETIQUETTE 101 & MORE



Hatcher · Rachel · Thrasher

Foreword by David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D., 16th U.S. Surgeon General

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# DEDICATION

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## **This book is dedicated to you!**

This book is for every young person who has ever felt confused about growing up. We were confused once too, and we know that you might feel like there are more questions than could ever possibly be answered.



This book is for anyone who has ever felt insecure about relationships. We too have struggled with difficult relationships, and we have celebrated deep, lasting friendships. We have all been madly in love, and we have also lived through pain and heartbreak.

This book is for all of you who have ever had a tough decision to make. We have been where you are, staring deep into the unknown. We have taken the “high road,” gone down “easy street,” and chosen the “road less traveled.” You will get to where you need to go.

This book is for everyone who has ever felt hopeless. We all have been to the edge, and we managed to find the strength to come back from the darkest of places. Sometimes we had to reach deep within ourselves, and sometimes we had to reach out to someone or something else to help bring us back. You are not alone.

This book is for anyone who has ever been bullied, abused, or hurt. We’ve been hurt too. We’ve had to find ways to cope, and sometimes the choices we made weren’t the best. We’ve also managed to heal, in our own ways, on our own time.

This book is for anyone looking forward to his or her future. We’re looking forward to your future too! We are so excited to find out where life will take you, because we know you will soar!

# FOREWORD

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When I released the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Sexual Health and Responsible Behavior* in 2001, I knew that I was taking on one of the most controversial issues in this country. That report was issued almost 15 years ago and we as a nation have come a long way. But we still have a long way to go when it comes to our sexual health. Every day our young people are faced with having to make decisions that may impact their sexual health, but all too often there is no place for them to go to get accurate information or the services that they desperately need. While it may sound counterintuitive, the problem facing our young people is largely an adult issue—one that is shaped, determined and perpetuated by the attitudes and behaviors of adults. Adolescents can and should take responsibility for their sexual decision-making, but in order to do that they must be given the tools, resources, education, and information they need in order to make an informed and responsible decision.

This reality for many adults poses a problem. What type and how much information should our young people receive? Who should be the one to share that information? Perhaps at the heart of this moral dilemma remains the question, how do we encourage healthy adolescent sexuality while at the same time protecting our children and keeping them safe? It is time that we all work together and help our young people make responsible sexual decisions. The reality is that some of our young people will choose to become sexually active and some will not, but we owe it to all of them to provide the information and education based on the best available science they require to aid in that decision-making process.

Our young people need to feel valued and respected if we are to expect them to act responsibly. Culture, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, lack of religion, sexual identity, the media in all its forms, peers, and

school are just some of the things that our young people are having to navigate while growing up in an ever-evolving society. But perhaps the most important and most visibly absent influencer here is parents. Few would disagree that parents should be the primary sexuality educators for their children and that parents have the most influence on how young people shape their values and beliefs about sex. After all, education is the great equalizer. However, few would also disagree that parents encounter considerable difficulty in initiating and sustaining open communication about sexuality with their children.

In an era plagued by poor sexual health outcomes, approaches and solutions might be complex, but there is evidence of success when we work together. *Sexual Etiquette 101 and More* will help to bridge the gap between what we know and what we do. That gap left unaddressed can be lethal. But there is hope! *Sexual Etiquette 101 and More* is a resource not only for young people but parents as well. It can be used as a conversation starter or just provided as a way of conveying the message that you are aware that this is a difficult issue, but one that is worthy of discussion. I believe that the information in the pages that follow will prove to be useful to anyone that might pick up this book.

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