

GROWING UP



Centre
for Sexuality





This book belongs to:

This book is for you to use!
Colour! Write-in!

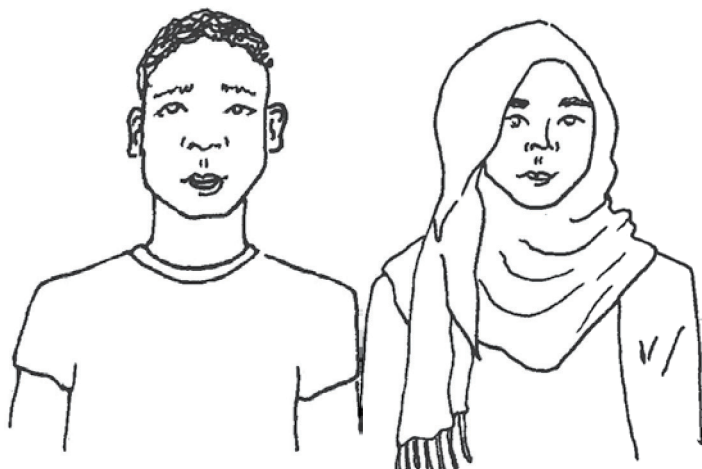


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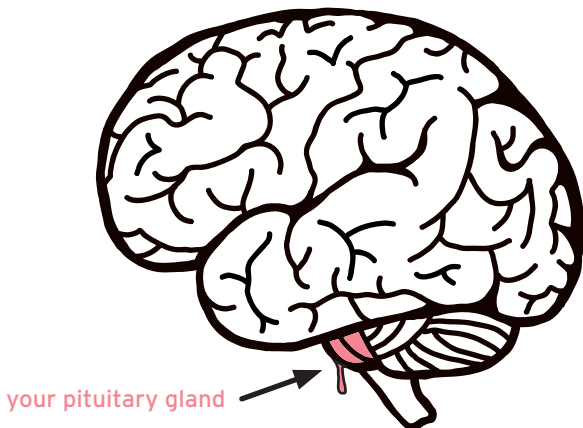
EveryBODY

goes through puberty

Sometime between the ages of 8 and 16 is when you will begin puberty. It takes a different amount of time for everyone and you likely won't begin puberty at the same time as some of your friends. Try not to compare yourself to others. Everyone goes through puberty, so you could talk to close friends or family about it. You will grow and mature in your own way and at your own pace. By the time you reach your early 20's, puberty will be over.

The next few years are going to be interesting. All this change might even seem scary. Just remember that as you change and grow you will still always be you!

Your brain



During **puberty**, you're going to grow faster and develop an adult body. **Hormones** in your body are what start these changes. Hormones are chemicals made by organs called **glands**.

The most important gland is the **pituitary gland**; it creates Human Growth Hormone in everyone. It makes bones and muscles grow faster during puberty. The pituitary gland tells bodies with **testicles** to make the sex hormone **Testosterone** and bodies with ovaries to make the sex hormones **Estrogen** and **Progesterone**. This all starts at puberty. Let's look at some of the changes in the body that these hormones cause, and how you can take care of your body as you go through puberty.

Puberty

The key word when it comes to puberty is CHANGE. Your body is changing, your feelings are changing and your relationships are changing. You're growing up and becoming an adult. The scientific name for this is puberty, and it is also a time that is celebrated and recognized by many cultures. In some families, this change is celebrated through parties, naming ceremonies, religious ceremonies, different clothing choices, and being given more responsibilities. Talking to elders, religious leaders and family may help to know what this time could mean for you.

What does puberty mean to you?

Is there anything your family does to celebrate or recognize puberty?

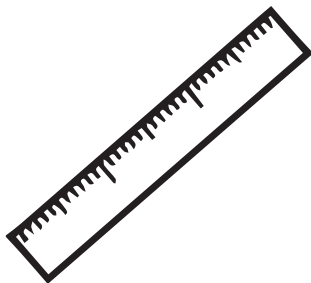
What would you like to know about puberty?

Puberty can bring up a lot of feelings. Not everyone feels comfortable with the changes described in this book. How a person sees themselves in the future can shape how they feel about puberty now. This may be true for **transgender, gender-fluid, or non-binary** youth whose **gender** is different than the gender they were given at birth. Some transgender youth may choose to take medication to delay or change the way puberty happens for them. If you are having a hard time dealing with these changes talk to a trusted adult, or give us a call and we can help.

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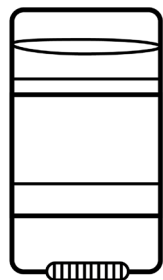
Growth

Everyone's bodies will be a different size and shape before, during, and after puberty. Growth can be very fast over a short period of time; this is called a growth spurt. Growing this fast might give you achy "growing pains". You might also feel clumsy while you get used to your new size. Remember that everyone will grow at their own rate. You might suddenly find that you are a lot taller or shorter than a friend who's the same age as you! All of this growth means you will also get heavier. You'll need more muscles and fat to support your new body. This is totally normal. Some people might find their shoulders, chests, and/or hips get wider.



Voice

Everyone's voice changes during puberty. Voices get deeper because the voice box, or larynx, is growing. During this time voices can crack or sound high and low while speaking. This is normal and will stop happening after puberty.



Sweating

During puberty, your body will start to produce more sweat. The changes to your hormones will give your sweat a stronger smell. This is most noticeable under your armpits! Showering and washing sweaty areas with soap can help with the smell. Some people choose to use deodorant or antiperspirant to change or cover up this smell and it is ok to try different ones to find the right one for you.

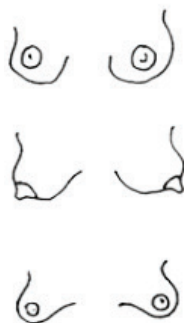
Showering

Showering or taking a bath regularly is important during puberty. When bathing remember to wash in between all of the folds of skin on your body including: armpits, behind ears, between toes, and the **vulva**, **penis**, and butt cheeks. Wash with gentle, unscented soap and water. If you have a penis with a **foreskin** gently pull the foreskin back and wash underneath it. The **vagina** is located on the inside of the body and cleans itself naturally, so you do not need to wash inside. We will learn more about these different types of bodies later in this book!



Chests and breasts

The chest will change during puberty for all bodies because all bodies have breast tissue. During puberty, breasts begin to grow and develop. There is no set time that this will start, but you may be able to tell it is happening because they might tingle, itch, or feel a bit sore as they grow. If a nipple points inward this is called an **inverted nipple**. Sometimes a nipple that points inward will change to an outward nipple as the chest grows, but often it won't. This is totally normal and different for everyone.



Things to keep in mind:

- All breasts are normal and can be different shapes and sizes.
- It is normal for one breast to be larger than the other. For some people it is noticeable while for others it is not.
- Wearing a bra is your choice. Some people find it comfortable to wear a bra, while other people do not. Do what is most comfortable for you!

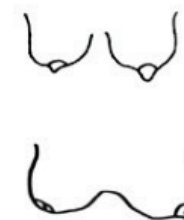


If you're worried or concerned about your chest it's okay to talk to an adult you trust or to your doctor.



Skin

During puberty, your skin makes more oil. Sometimes your **pores** can become blocked with oil. If this happens, you might get pimples or **acne**. Washing your skin twice a day with a gentle soap and then using a lotion that does not have perfume could help with acne. If the acne becomes uncomfortable, you could check with a doctor about other ways to take care of acne.



Hair

Just like your skin, the hair on your head can make more oil than before. Washing with shampoo and conditioner more often can help.



New hair also will start to grow EVERYWHERE! Legs, arms, under arms, **pubic area**, face (for some people this grows in thicker than others but EVERYONE has facial hair), stomach, chest, butt, and back.

The amount of new hair is different for everyone. It's your choice what you do with this body hair. Some people leave it alone while others prefer to remove it. If you are interested in removing hair, talk to a trusted adult about shaving, waxing, threading, trimming, plucking, or other options.

The Penis

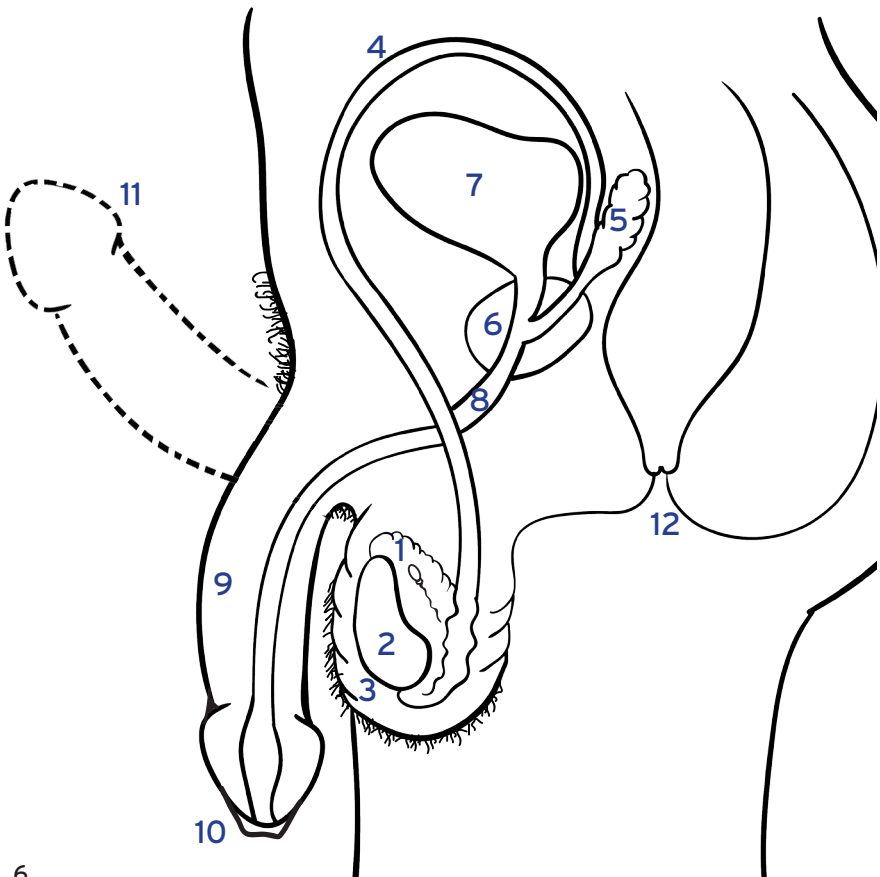
Bodies all look different and not every penis will look like this.

Instructions:

- Read the name and definition for each of the body parts
- Match the name to each body part

1 Sperm

- The cells made in the testicles starting at puberty
- New **sperm** cells are being made all the time and someone will never run out of sperm
- If sperm cells get inside the vagina they could join with an egg cell. This is how pregnancy happens



- 2 **Testicles**
 - Two oval-shaped glands that hang inside the **scrotum**
 - During puberty, the testicles will grow first followed by the penis
 - It is normal for one testicle to hang lower than the other
 - This is where sperm is made
 - This is where the hormone testosterone is made
- 3 **Scrotum**
 - The sack of skin and muscle just behind the penis
 - It holds and protects the testicles and keeps them at the right temperature to make sperm
- 4 **Vas Deferens**
 - Two tubes that carry sperm from the testicles to the **prostate gland**
- 5 **Seminal Vesicles**
 - Two small glands that add more fluid to sperm to create semen
- 6 **Prostate Gland**
 - One of the glands that adds fluid to sperm to create semen
- 7 **Bladder**
 - The organ where urine (pee) is stored
- 8 **Urethra**
 - The tube that carries both urine (pee) and semen through the penis and out of the body.
- 9 **Penis**
 - Both urine and semen leave the body through the penis, but never at the same time
 - During puberty the penis will grow. The size of the penis will be different for each person
- 10 **Foreskin**
 - Loose skin that protects the head of the penis.
 - Some people have it removed through **circumcision** (see page 9)
- 11 **Erection**
 - When blood flows into the penis making it harder and stand away from the body
- 12 **Anus**
 - This is the opening where feces (poo) leaves the body

Erections

An **erection** is when blood fills the spongy tissues in the penis and the penis becomes harder and stands away from the body. Erections can happen from wearing clothes that rub against the penis or during sleep. Sometimes erections happen for no reason at all. These are called random erections. Some people might find random erections happen every few months, for others it might happen many times a day. If you get an erection at a time you don't want one, this could feel embarrassing or uncomfortable. Here are some things you can do:

- Tuck your penis into the waistband of your underwear or clothes
- Cover your erection by placing a jacket or backpack over your lap
- Take some deep breaths and stay seated until the erection goes away
- Go for a walk to get the blood flowing away from your penis

Erections can also happen from sexy feelings! During an erection the penis is very sensitive to touch and it may feel good to rub the penis with your hand. This is called **masturbation**. Not everyone masturbates, but if you choose to then make sure you are in a private place. This will not hurt the penis, testicles or any other part of the body, nor will it change the body's ability to make **sperm**. Not all erections end in ejaculation.

Ejaculation

Ejaculation is when a white or cloudy fluid called semen leaves the tip of the penis. Minutes before this happens a clear fluid called **pre-ejaculate** will leave the penis first. Read the following points, then go back to page 6 to draw the journey of the sperm!

- Inside the body, the testicles begin to make sperm cells
- The sperm cells leave from each testicle and travel in a tube called the **vas deferens**
- The vas deferens take the sperm through glands called the **seminal vesicles** and the prostate
- These glands add liquid to the sperm and this is called semen
- Muscles push semen out of the penis. This is called ejaculation and this release can feel good
- During ejaculation, about one teaspoon of semen leaves the penis
- Often after ejaculation, the penis will become soft again

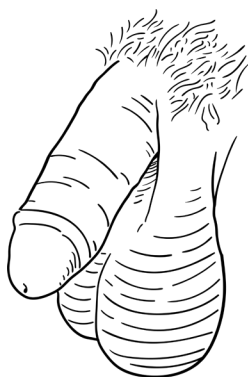


Wet dreams

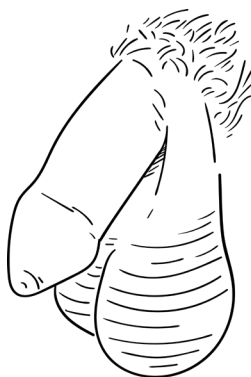
Sometimes the penis can get an erection and ejaculate semen while someone is asleep. This is called a **wet dream** or a nocturnal emission. Not everyone has wet dreams and that's normal too. If you wake up and notice semen on your pajamas or sheets you may want to shower, change your clothes or wash your sheets.

Circumcision

One of the many reasons penises may look different from each other is because of **circumcision**. An uncircumcised penis has a **foreskin**. The foreskin is loose skin that covers the tip of the penis. A circumcised penis has had the foreskin removed. A doctor usually does this soon after birth. Families may think about their religious beliefs or family traditions to decide if they circumcise a baby or not. Circumcised and uncircumcised penises work the same. If you have a penis with a foreskin gently pull the foreskin back and wash underneath while in the bath or shower.



circumcised



uncircumcised

Penis size

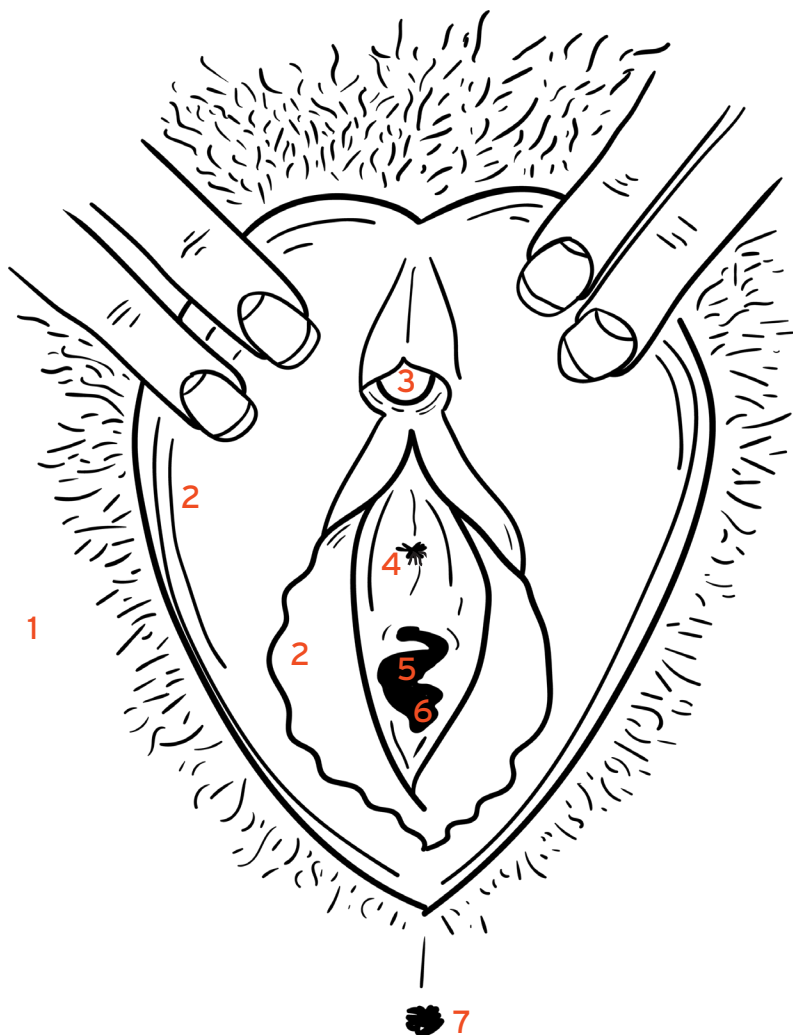
Every penis looks different and is a different size, shape and skin colour. Everyone's penis will grow at a different rate. Testicles will get bigger, and the penis will get longer and wider. The size of the penis while it is soft will be different from the size of the penis when it is erect. A person's genetics will decide their penis size, just like genetics can decide the shape of someone's face or size of their nose, but your body may not look exactly like someone else's in your family. There is no way to change the size your penis will grow. A person cannot change how their penis will grow. Products that are sold to make the penis larger do not work and may be harmful to the penis or body. The size or shape of the penis doesn't matter.

The Vulva

Bodies all look different and not every vulva will look like this.

Instructions:

- Read the name and definition for each of the body parts
- Match the name to each body part



1 Vulva

- The vulva is outside, underneath the body, and between the legs.
- It can be hard for someone to see their own vulva without a mirror
- There are different parts to the vulva, they are: the **clitoris**, **labia**, urethral opening, and vaginal opening

2 Labia

- The two folds of skin that cover the clitoris, **urethra**, and vaginal opening
- Hair will grow on the outer labia
- The inner labia may stick out or stay tucked inside the outer labia

3 Clitoris

- A sensitive organ made up of nerves above the vaginal opening
- Most of the clitoris is under the skin, inside the body where it can't be seen
- It fills with blood and becomes larger when someone has sexy feelings
- Touching the clitoris can feel good for some people

4 Urethra

- This is the opening where urine (pee) leaves the body

5 Vaginal Opening

- The opening on the outside of the body that leads to the vagina
- This is where **period** fluid and **vaginal discharge** leaves the body
- If a **tampon** is used during a period, this is where it goes into the vagina
- This is where a baby might come out during birth

6 Hymen

- The hymen can be a thin or thick, stretchy layer of skin inside the vagina, near the vaginal opening
- All hymens are different and some people have them while others do not
- Often hymens stretch and move to the side of the vaginal wall while a person is growing up
- No one, including doctors, can look at the hymen and be able to tell if someone has had any type of sex

7 Anus

- This is the opening where feces (poo) leaves the body

The Vagina

Bodies all look different and not every vagina will look like this.

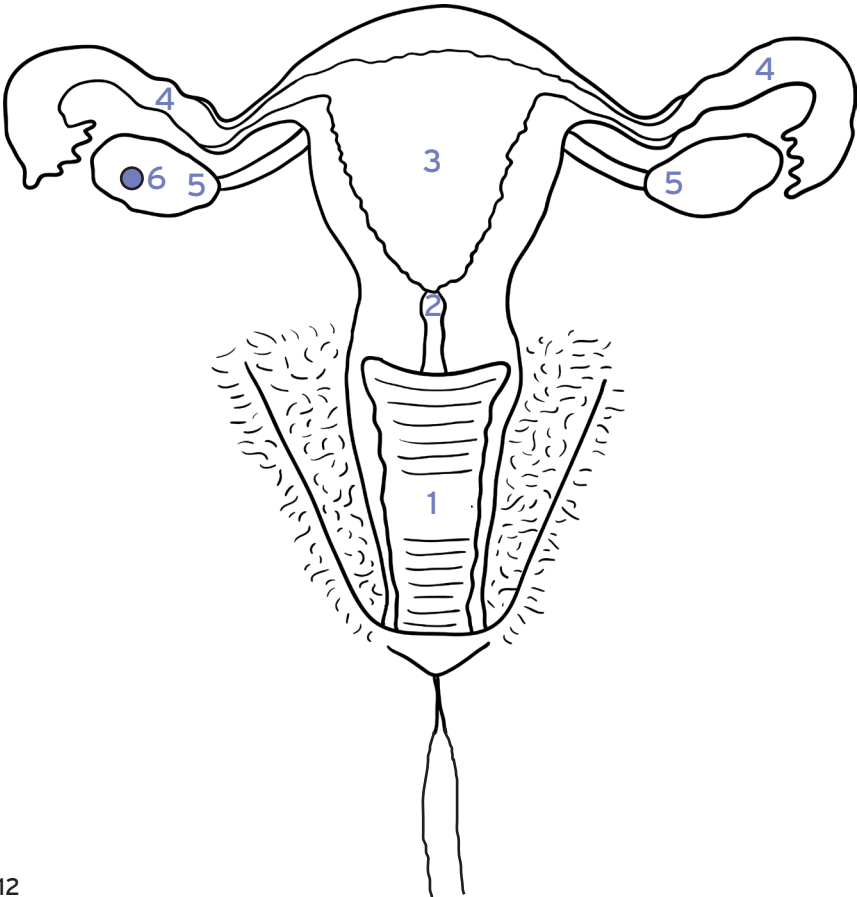
Instructions:

- Read the name and definition for each of the body parts
- Match the name to each body part

1

Vagina

- The part of the body that goes from the **uterus** to the outside of the body
- The vagina stays clean on its own and does not need to be washed
- The muscles (or walls) sit flat against each other and can stretch if something like a tampon is placed inside



2

Cervix

- The part of the body between the uterus and the vagina
- The opening is about the size of a juice box straw

3

Uterus

- This is where periods come from
- An organ made of muscle that can experience cramps during a period
- This is where an egg could attach and grow during pregnancy
- It is the size of a closed hand

4

Fallopian tubes

- Two tubes that move the egg from the ovaries to the uterus

5

Ovaries

- Two glands, each about the size of an almond
- Egg cells are held in the ovaries
- The hormones estrogen and progesterone are made here

6

Egg

- Ova are the egg cells stored in the ovaries
- Someone is born with thousands of egg cells already in their ovaries and will not make more
- If sperm cells are inside the vagina they could join with an egg to start a pregnancy

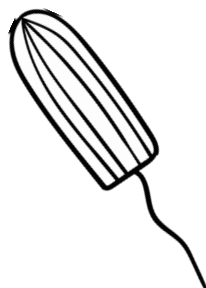


For a pregnancy to happen three things are needed: sperm, an egg and a uterus. Read the following points then draw the sperm and egg coming together!

- The **ovary** releases an **egg** into one of the **fallopian tubes** – this is called **ovulation**
- If sperm are inside the vagina it will travel into the uterus and then into the fallopian tubes, in search of an egg
- Only one sperm can join with the egg. This will happen inside one of the fallopian tubes and is called fertilization
- The fertilized egg will then travel down to the uterus
- A **pregnancy** starts when the fertilized egg attaches to the uterus wall

Vaginal Discharge

You might notice a sticky fluid in your underwear that can be clear, white, or yellow. The body makes this fluid every day to keep the vagina healthy. The amount of fluid and what it looks like will change throughout the month. Sometimes this fluid dries on the underwear, but it will wash out.



Periods / Menstruation

- A **period** is the lining of the **uterus** leaving the body
- Someone will get their first period sometime between the ages 8-16 (it's different for everyone; some people may not get their period until the night before their 17th birthday!)
- Periods usually come every 21-40 days apart, this is someone's cycle
- Periods can last between 2-10 days long
- During your period 4-6 tablespoons of blood and fluid leave the uterus
- Starting to have a period is a sign that your body can get pregnant

To absorb or catch your menstrual fluid you could use:

Pads that attach to the inside of underwear with small sticky strips. Pads absorb menstrual fluid on the outside of the body. There are also reusable pads that you can wash when you're done using them.

Tampons are small rolls of cotton that you put into the vagina. Some have an applicator and some don't. Tampons have a string attached to them to help take them out. It's okay to go swimming or take a bath with a tampon in. They must be changed regularly. Read the instructions in the package.

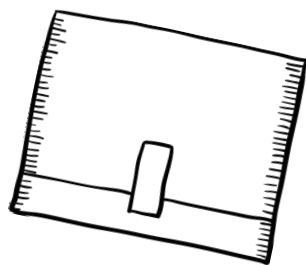


Menstrual cups are cups that sit inside the vagina and collect the fluid leaving the uterus. They are reusable and need to be washed with warm water and unscented soap before using it again. Read the instructions in the package.

There are difference sizes and shapes for each of these products.
Find which one works for you!

During, just before or just after a period you may also notice:

- Cramping below your belly button
- Pain in your lower back
- Headaches
- Swollen or sore breasts
- A change in vaginal discharge



Some things that people do that help:

- Light exercise like going for a walk
- Taking a hot bath
- Using a heating pad
- Drinking warm tea

If your cramps are very painful and these things don't help, you could talk to a trusted adult, your doctor, or a pharmacist about different medicines that could.

You can still do all the activities you enjoy doing. Some cultures and religions have ceremonies to participate in during a period or practices not to do during a period. Talk to your family, elders, or religious leaders for more information about this.

If you are worried about getting your period, you can:

- Keep pads, tampons and a clean pair of underwear in your bag or locker
- Ask a teacher or a friend for a pad or tampon (the school office usually has some)
- Check the bathroom for a machine that sells pads or tampons
- Make a pad out of toilet paper or paper towel to use until you get home
- The first day of your period to the first day of your next period is your cycle
- Keep track of your **menstrual cycle** on a calendar or on a phone app. This will help you to know when to expect your next period. Mark the day on the calendar when your period starts and ends

When your period doesn't come

You might skip your period sometimes. This is very normal for someone under the age of 25. Other reasons a period may not come include being pregnant, stress, being sick, very low body weight, and some medications. If you are worried, talk to a trusted adult or doctor.

EveryBODY

has changing feelings

The hormones that start **puberty** also bring new and different feelings. You might start having new interests, thoughts and emotions. Your feelings might change from moment to moment, these are called **mood swings**. Sometimes you might have a lot of energy, sometimes very little. You might feel very happy or very sad and aren't sure why. All feelings are okay and give you information about yourself and the world around you. It can help to talk to someone you trust, because taking care of your feelings is just as important as taking care of your body.

Self care

These big changes in our lives are exciting and new, but it's also normal to feel sad, angry or upset during puberty. Make a list of five things you do to relax or feel better, or would like to try:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Going through puberty uses a lot of energy, so it is important to get enough food and sleep. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables will give your body the energy it needs to go through puberty. It's normal to have cravings for sugary or salty treats during puberty but they won't provide the same kinds of energy as fruits and vegetables. When it comes to sleep, most people need about nine hours every night. The light from phones, TVs and computers keep our brains awake, so it's a good idea to give our brains some time to relax before bed. Try reading a book, listening to music, or taking a bath or shower instead of looking at a screen.



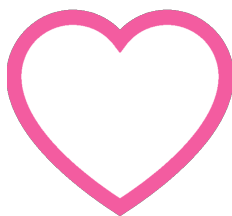
Puberty is a time to figure out what your amazing body can do! Try out different activities to learn more about yourself and your body, meet new people, and find new interests. Exercise can be as simple as going for a walk, playing soccer with your friends, or joining a team. When you do physical activities your brain releases hormones that make you feel happy.

Feeling confident about your body

As your body changes it is common to wonder if your body is normal. It can be hard not to compare your body to friends, family, or even people you see on TV or social media. Your body is completely your own and will never look exactly like someone else's. All bodies are different; all bodies are normal. For many people, growing up is a journey where they learn to love themselves for who they are. It's okay to love your body and its size, shape, weight, skin colour and all the things that make you, you!

Make a list of three things you like about your body:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Crushes

During puberty, it is normal to start having sexy feelings and thoughts. Some people notice they have thoughts like this while watching TV, reading a certain book, or when thinking about a person at school. These thoughts could be about boys, girls, or a person of any gender. People don't get to choose who they like. You might imagine what it would feel like to be in love, or to kiss or touch someone. It can take some time to get used to these new feelings. Questioning who you like during puberty is normal and you don't need to have an answer right away. Having a word to describe these feelings can be helpful. A few of the words people might use are **straight**, **gay**, **bisexual**, **lesbian**, or **asexual**. There are many words to talk about attraction and you get to choose which words fit your feelings best.

Masturbation

Masturbation is when someone touches and rubs their **genitals** in a way that feels good to them. People may try masturbating to get to know their own body, relieve stress, because they are curious, or because it feels good. People of any age and any gender may choose to masturbate or not to masturbate, and both choices are normal. Masturbation is something done in private, like in a bedroom or a bathroom with the door closed.

Orgasms

Blood flows to the genitals with sexy feelings or when the genitals are being touched. If someone keeps rubbing or touching the genitals, the blood can rush back into the body. This is what causes an **orgasm**. Sometimes, bodies will release fluids during an orgasm. People say it is like a strong release that feels really good. Some bodies will experience orgasms, and others may not. All are normal!

Ask a Trusted Adult



Think about an adult in your life that you trust. Below are some questions that you could ask them to start having conversations about puberty and some of the normal changes that happen. Give it a try!

Where did you learn about puberty?

What kinds of things did they teach about bodies and puberty when you were growing up?

What did dating / relationships look like in the media when you were growing up? How were they different from today?

What do you think about dating?

When I have questions about my body who should I ask? How should I bring them up?

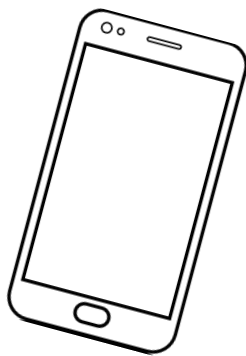
Boundaries and Consent

Boundaries are your rules around your comfort and safety. Boundaries aren't just physical. They are also what you feel comfortable talking about, hearing, seeing, and receiving over the internet, by phone, or in person.

Consent is the conversation that people must have to get and give permission. People have to ask you before touching, kissing, saying, or doing anything sexual. This means that you also have to ask others for consent. No one – including relatives, friends, parents, teachers, coaches, or strangers – has the right to touch your body or decide what happens to your body against your wishes.

If someone says or does something sexual that doesn't feel good, this is a sign that your boundaries have been crossed. If something like this happens it is never your fault, and it is important that you tell an adult that you trust, like a parent or teacher.

If you need help or more information you can call Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA): 403-237-5888 (9am to 9pm) or go to www.calgarycasa.com/contact-us. You can also text or call the Alberta 1line at 1-866-403-8000. You can also chat with someone online at www.aasas.ca. You can also chat with someone your own age at ConnecTeen by calling 403-264-8336 (anytime) or texting 587-333-2724 (evenings/weekends).



Get to know your own boundaries

Who do I feel comfortable with?

What kinds of touches am I okay with? (hugs, high fives, holding hands, etc.)
When?

How do I know what someone else is okay with?

Who do I share secrets with? How do I know I can?

Communication

During puberty, we may need to start having more important (or awkward!) conversations. This could be about your changing body, relationships, or responsibilities. This communication tool helps us work through these difficult conversations.

- The first step in the tool is finding out how you feel about the situation, and finding the right words to help describe your emotions.
- The Feelings Wheel on the next page can help you find the right words to express your feelings when talking about something important.
- Next, you want to be specific about what is making you feel this way. What did the other person do? What are their actions?
- The third step is to offer a solution. What would make you feel better about the situation? Try to be specific.
- Last, ask the other person how they feel about what you've shared so they feel comfortable talking to you about their own feelings. Try it out!

I feel (emotion):

When you (action):

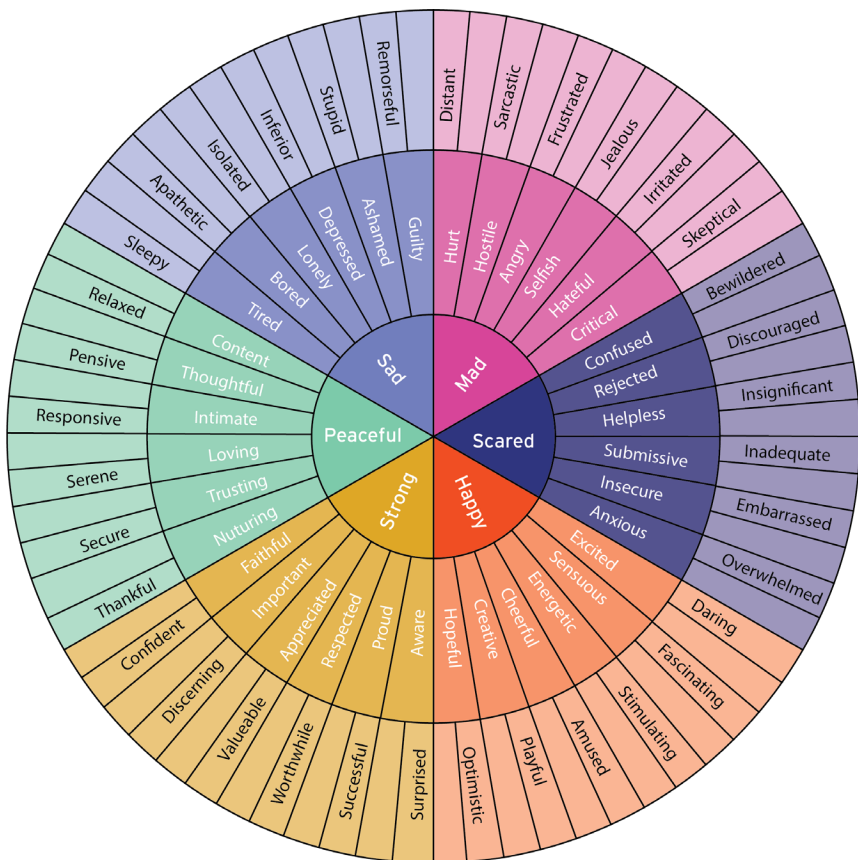
Can we (solution):

How do you feel about that?

For example:

I feel frustrated when you look at my phone without asking permission. Can we talk about giving each other privacy around our devices? How do you feel about that?

Feelings Wheel

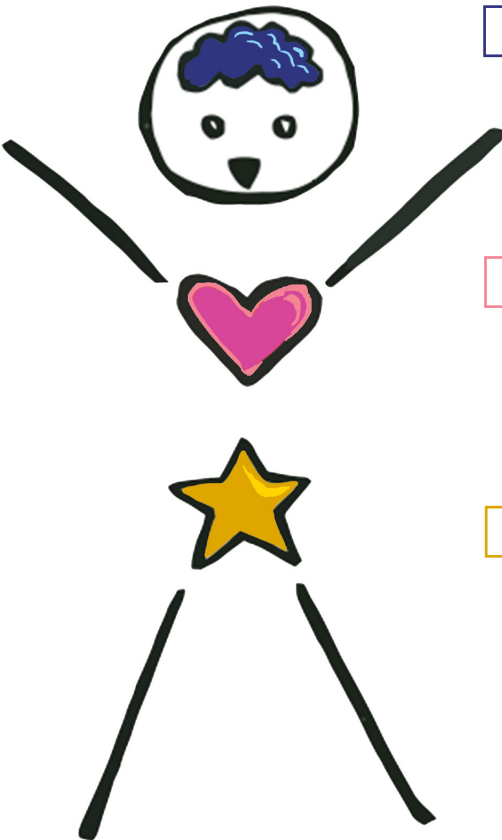


Decision Making

Head, Heart, Body

Have you ever had to make a BIG decision but felt unsure about how to make it? You could use the Head, Heart, Body tool to check in with how you are feeling right now. If you can place a check mark in all three boxes, this might be a good decision for you! If you have any questions or need more information, you may need to place an X inside the box. It is also okay if this isn't the right decision for you right now.

A decision I need to make:



☐ Head

- _____
- _____
- _____

☐ Heart

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- _____

☐ Body

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- _____
- _____

Let's practice working through the decision "Am I ready to date?"

☐ Head ✓ ? ✗

This is where you think and ask the big questions that come up around making the decision.

- What does dating mean to me?
 - What do my family/friends/religion think about dating?
 - What will I tell my family?
 - What do my values and beliefs say about dating?
 - Am I old enough?
 - Why do I want to date?
 - Am I ready or is it because all my friends are dating and I think I'm supposed to?
 - Will it be a group date?
 - Does the person I want to date want to date me?
-

☐ Heart ✓ ? ✗

This is where you write down how you feel.

- Do I feel safe with them?
 - Do I trust them?
 - Happy
 - Excited
 - Respected
 - Confident
 - Sure / certain
 - Like / love the person
 - Comfortable around them
 - Scared
 - Sad
 - Nervous
-

☐ Body ✓ ? ✗

This is where you write what your body is telling you with your senses – touch, smell, sight, sound, taste.

- Heart racing
 - Butterflies in your stomach
 - Gut feeling (the sick or scared feeling in your stomach)
 - Blushing
 - Smiling
 - Warm
 - Sweating
 - Tingling
 - Dry mouth
 - Wanting to be close to someone
 - What are your physical boundaries?
-

Glossary

It's good to know and use the right terms to talk about sexuality. Using these words will make sure people know exactly what you're talking about.

abstinence: when someone chooses not to have sexual contact with another person. This can be different for each person.

acne: when someone get pimples on their face or body because their pores are plugged with bacteria and oil.

anus: opening where feces (poo) leaves the body.

agender: a person who has no gender or whose gender identity is neutral.

aromantic: someone who does not experience romantic attraction to others.

asexual: someone who is romantically attracted to others (wants to kiss, hold hands, date) but is not interested in the sexual parts of a relationship.

bisexual: someone who is attracted to their own gender and other genders.

blackhead: a pimple with a black top.

bladder: the organ that holds urine (pee) before it leaves the body.

boundary: the rules around what you feel comfortable and safe with.

circumcision: when the foreskin on the penis is removed through surgery.

cervix: the part of the body between the uterus and the vagina.

cisgender: someone whose gender is the same as the gender they were given at birth.

clitoris: a sensitive organ that sticks out above the vaginal opening. It is hidden under the skin and stretches back inside the body where it can't be seen.

ejaculation: when a fluid called semen leaves the penis.

erection: when blood flows toward the penis making it harder and stand away from the body.

estrogen: a hormone made by the ovaries. It causes body changes during puberty.

fallopian tubes: the tubes that move the egg from the ovaries to the uterus.

foreskin: the loose skin that covers the tip of the penis.

gay: someone who is attracted to the same gender or a man who is attracted to other men.

genitals: the body parts found between a person's legs.

gender: how you understand yourself (boy, girl, neither, both, etc.); who you know you are, your sense of self.

gender-fluid: someone whose gender identity can change sometimes.

gland: an organ that makes chemicals used in the body. Many glands make hormones.

hormone: a chemical made by glands that can cause changes in the body.

intersex: when someone has a combination of genitals, hormones, or DNA that fits outside the categories of male and female.

inverted nipple: a nipple that points in and not out.

labia: the inner and outer “lips” or folds of the vulva.

lesbian: a woman who is attracted to other women.

masturbation: touching your own genitals for pleasure.

menstrual cycle: the full cycle starting from the release of an egg and ending in menstruation. It often takes between 21-40 days.

non-binary: a person whose gender identity is neither a woman or a man. They may feel somewhere in between, a little bit of both, or like no gender at all.

orgasm: the strongest feeling of pleasure in the body when the genitals are touched.

ovary: the organ that stores egg cells (ova) and makes hormones.

ovulation: when the ovary releases an egg cell (ovum) into a fallopian tube.

ovum/egg: the reproductive cell that is stored in the ovaries (plural: ova).

pad: a product that attaches to the inside of underwear to catch and absorb period fluid. It is also called a sanitary napkin.

pansexual: someone who can be attracted to people of any gender.

penis: the soft part of the body that hangs in front of the scrotum. This is where urine and semen leave the body. It can become hard, and then is called an erection.

period/menstruation: the time when blood and tissue from the uterus leave through the vagina.

pituitary gland: the gland that makes hormones that cause puberty to happen.

pores: tiny openings in the outer layer of the skin. Pores can get plugged by oil and cause acne.

pre-ejaculate: a clear fluid that cleans the urethra of urine before someone ejaculates semen.

pregnancy: when a fertilized egg attaches to the wall of the uterus.

progesterone: a hormone made by the ovaries. It causes body changes during puberty.

prostate gland: an organ that closes off the bladder to prevent sperm cells mixing with urine (pee).

puberty: a time of change. It includes physical, social and emotional changes.

pubic area: the area of the body, between a person's legs, where the genitals are found.

queer: someone who is not straight or not cisgender.

reproduction: the process of making a baby.

scrotum: the sack of loose skin behind the penis which contains the testicle(s).

seminal vesicles: the glands that add fluid to sperm to make semen.

sex: the category someone is assigned at birth based on their genitals.

sex/sexual intercourse: describes many different activities people do with others to feel good in their bodies. This can involve the genitals, mouth, anus or other body parts.

sperm: the reproductive cells made in the testicle(s).

straight/heterosexual: when someone is attracted to the opposite gender.

tampon: a product placed inside the vagina to catch and absorb period fluid.

testicle: the gland that makes sperm cells and hormones.

testosterone: a hormone that is made by the testicle(s). It causes body changes during puberty.

trans/transgender: someone whose gender is different than the gender they were given at birth.

two-spirit: this English term is used by some Indigenous peoples to describe gender and sexual diversity. Many Indigenous communities have their own word for this identity in their own language.

urethra: the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body.

uterus: the part of the body where periods come from and where a pregnancy could develop.

vagina: the part of the body that begins at the uterus and ends at the vaginal opening.

vaginal discharge: fluid that leaves the vagina to keep it clean and healthy.

vas deferens: the tubes that move sperm from the testicle(s) to the prostate gland.

vulva: all the genitals on the outside of the body that include labia, clitoris, urethra and vaginal opening.

wet dream/nocturnal emission: when the penis releases semen during sleep.

Notes and reflections

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