

# Parent Guide



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games



crafts



puzzles



experiments



word searches



## What is this resource and how do I use it?

The information in this guide is designed to help you think about the sorts of questions your child may have about puberty as well as to help you provide some honest, accurate and reassuring answers. Use the information as a starting point for a discussion about how boys' bodies change and grow in puberty.

## What skills does this practise?

Comprehension

Discussion

Self-Awareness

Self-Esteem

## Further Activity Ideas and Suggestions

If you want to discover more about puberty with your child, this [Year 5 Puberty Sorting Activity](#) is a great starting point. These [RSHE Puberty True or False Sorting Statements](#) can help clear up misconceptions around puberty, or discuss emotional changes with this [social story](#).

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# Parent and Carers' Guide to Talking about Puberty in Boys

Puberty is a natural part of growing up yet for many parents and carers, it can be a daunting subject. Knowing when and how to talk to your child about puberty can be tricky, especially as children can mature physically and emotionally at different rates. The information in this guide is designed to help you think about the sorts of questions your child might have about puberty as well as to help you provide some honest, accurate and reassuring answers. Encourage your child to celebrate their body and to see puberty as a time full of opportunities to learn about all the amazing things their body will do on its journey into adulthood.



## What is puberty?

Puberty is the time when a child's body undergoes physical and hormonal changes as they start to grow from a child into a teenager and eventually into an adult. For boys, puberty is a sign that their bodies are getting ready to be able to reproduce. It can be a gradual process that can sometimes last up to four years so your child will have plenty of time to adjust to the changes taking place.

## When is the right time to talk to my child about puberty?

Ideally, children should learn about puberty before it starts to happen so that they won't be worried or concerned when their bodies begin to change. Most boys start puberty between the ages of 9 and 14 (slightly later than girls). It is also important to have conversations with your child about puberty changes in girls and boys, so they understand any similarities and differences.

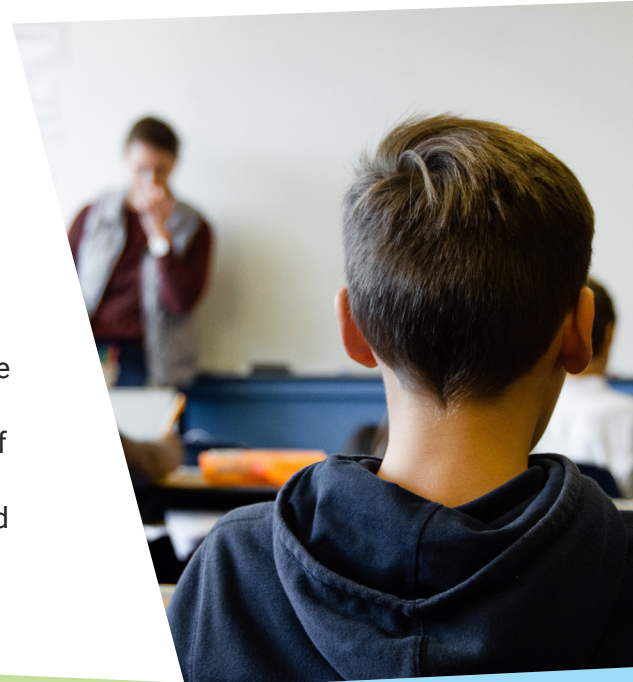
Every child is different and only you know your child best. Bear in mind that they may be exposed to topics around puberty through talking with their peers in the playground or by watching films and TV programmes. It may be a good idea to talk to them as soon as you think they are ready so you can be assured they are gaining an accurate view of the changes ahead.

## How should I talk to my child about puberty?

- Emphasise the fact that everyone goes through puberty; adults and older teenagers have already been through it and every young person will experience it at some point too. Puberty is a normal and natural part of growing up.
- Try not to feel embarrassed when talking about puberty. The more you normalise puberty, the more comfortable you and your child might feel about discussing it together. There's nothing shameful or wrong about the changes your child's body is going through.
- Finding a calm, quiet space at home may be a good way to initiate a discussion about puberty. It may be that you start with an open question, encouraging your child to tell you about any physical changes they may have noticed about their bodies or about how they are feeling emotionally. You may find that using this guide or having a book about puberty helps to start a conversation. Alternatively, you may find it easier to initiate a conversation when your child comes to you with a question about growing up.
- Try to use specific terminology when talking about puberty and different parts of the body, such as penis and testicles. This makes things clearer and easier to understand as well as normalising vocabulary surrounding puberty.
- Encourage your child to ask any questions and attempt to answer them as honestly as you can. Reassure them that they can come to you with any concerns or queries.
- You may wish to engage in a general discussion about puberty for both genders - it's educational for both sexes to know what the other is going through during this time of change. Equally, you may wish to concentrate on the changes ahead for boys. Whatever is more comfortable for you and your family is the best fit.

## When will my child learn about puberty at school?

Although it can vary from school to school, most primary schools teach children about puberty in year 5 (ages 9 - 10) as part of the national curriculum for science, which states that pupils should be taught to '**describe the changes as humans develop to old age**'. This is often consolidated with age-appropriate learning as part of RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education). These sessions may involve discussions about relationships, body confidence and emotional and physical changes.



## What are the main changes boys experience during puberty?

During puberty, a hormone called testosterone is responsible for many of the changes that occur in a boy's body during this time.

### Growth

During puberty, boys start getting taller and more muscular. It's not uncommon for boys to grow up to 8cm in a year during puberty. You may also notice their shoulders getting broader and they may even experience a little breast growth. This is temporary and perfectly normal.

### Erections

Boys get erections during puberty. This is where the penis fills with blood and becomes hard and stiff. Erections can occur when a boy is thinking about someone they find attractive or sometimes they can happen for no particular reason when they don't expect it. Again, this is normal and happens to most boys.

### Wet Dreams

Boys may experience 'wet dreams'. During puberty, boys start to produce sperm. This is produced in the testicles and is part of the fluid called 'semen'. Sometimes, sperm can be ejaculated (ejected from the penis) during sleep. Boys may wake up after having had a 'wet dream' or they may sleep straight through it.

### Genitals

A boy's penis, testicles and scrotum (the soft pouch beneath the penis that holds the testicles) will start to grow. At the start of puberty, testicles increase in size, drop lower and the scrotum becomes looser and dotted with small bumps. Sometimes one testicle may hang lower than the other - this is common and nothing to worry about. As these changes happen, the penis also starts to grow.

### Hair

Pubic hair will start to grow around a boy's penis and testicles. At first this hair is fine and soft but eventually becomes darker and coarser, sometimes spreading to the thighs and up towards the stomach as puberty progresses. Hair may start to grow on a boy's face, chest, legs and under their armpits. This may become more prominent towards the end of puberty.

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. This resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only. It is intended to offer general information and should never be taken as medical advice. As medical information is situation specific and can change, we do not warrant that the information provided is correct. You and your child should not rely on the material included within this resource and we do not accept any responsibility if you or your child does.

Please note: this resource uses the term 'boy/boys' to refer to children who will go through male puberty and the term 'girl/girls' to refer to children who will go through female puberty.

## Moods

Mood changes are common among boys during puberty. This is a reaction to the hormones in their body. Boys may feel a range of emotions during puberty, such as irritability and anger. This should start to level out by the end of this period of change.

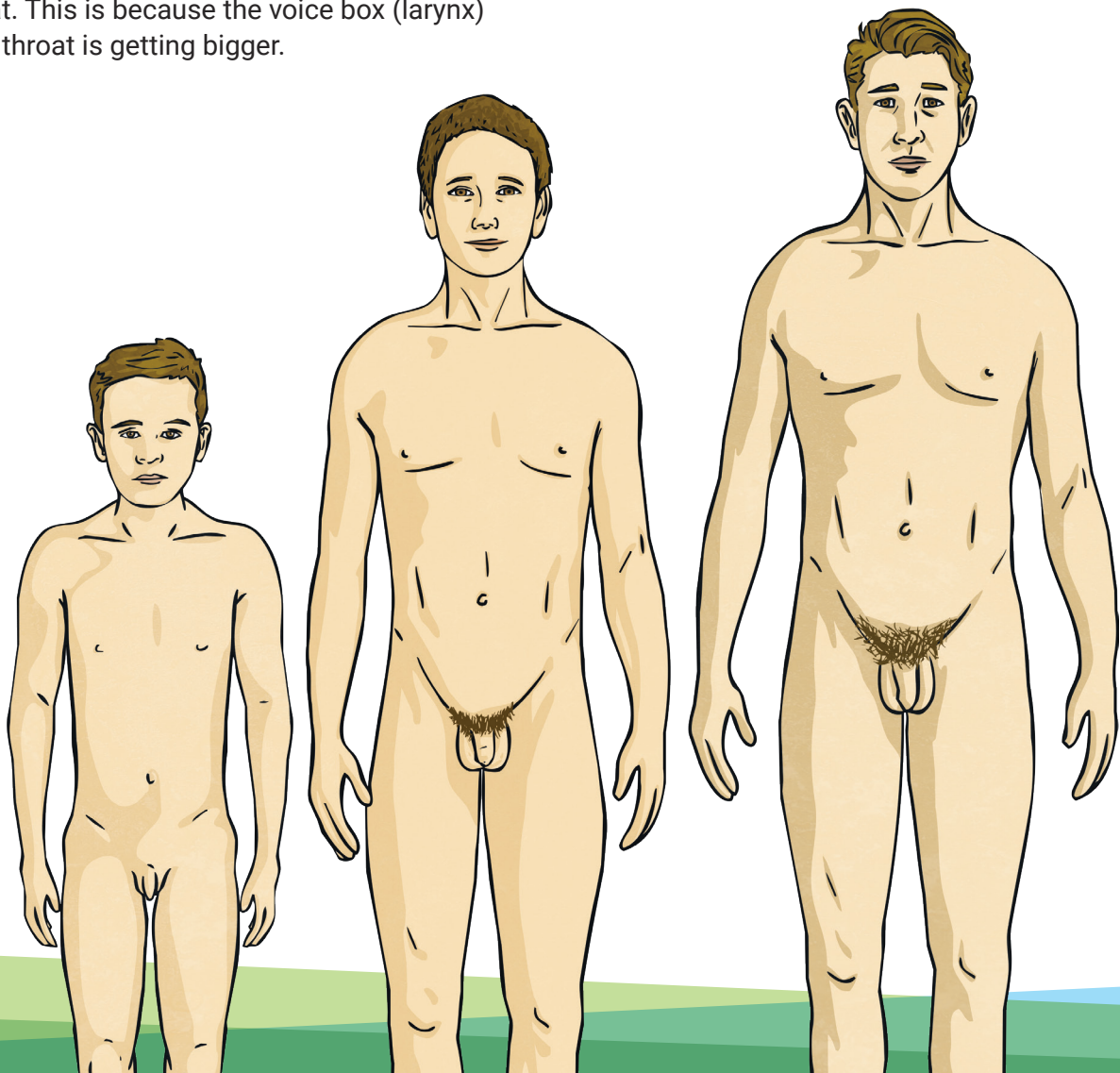
## Voice

A boy's voice starts to 'break' and get deeper. This may be a rapid process or it may take a while to settle down, making their voice sound croaky at times. During puberty, boys may develop a more prominent 'Adam's apple' - a lump in the middle of their throat. This is because the voice box (larynx) inside the throat is getting bigger.

## Sweat and Oil

During puberty, sweat glands change and they produce more sweat in order to help regulate body temperature. They may want to start taking extra care with personal hygiene at this point. Boys should be encouraged to keep sweaty areas (like armpits) clean and dry and wear deodorant and antiperspirant. Showering daily and wearing clean clothes can support hygiene.

Boys may experience oily skin and develop spots and acne during puberty. To combat this, boys can wash their face in the morning and at night with fragrance-free soap.



This resource is designed to support learning about biological attributes. You should consider whether this content is appropriate for all children, especially children who have DSD/are intersex, or who are transgender. This resource is editable to ensure that you can adapt it to meet the needs of your children.