

It's going to be a wild ride!

It's going to be a wild ride!





Next Stop,  
**PUBERTY!**

## With special thanks



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This book was produced to support  
the ClickView video series  
**Next Stop, Puberty!**  
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# What's Puberty Anyway ...?

Before you were **you**, reading this book right now, you were a much littler you and you couldn't read at all. And going back even further, you looked something like this ...

(except much, much smaller!)

So it's safe to say that you've changed a lot in your lifetime. And, soon, you'll change even more.

Puberty. Everyone goes through it — pop stars, politicians, teachers ... even that old lady who lives next door ...

Hello, dear!

Oh, hi Gwen.

But what **is** puberty?  
Glad you asked.

**PUBERTY IS THE  
PROCESS OF YOUR  
BODY GOING FROM A  
CHILD TO AN ADULT.**

It involves physical, emotional, and social changes. All of these changes are a normal part of puberty.

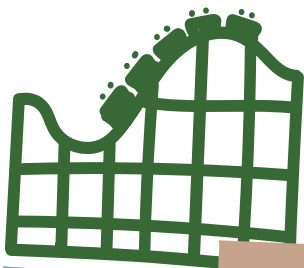
It won't happen overnight. (Can you imagine your surprise in the morning?!) Rather, the changes stop and start. And everyone experiences them differently, at different times, roughly between the ages of 10 and 18 years.





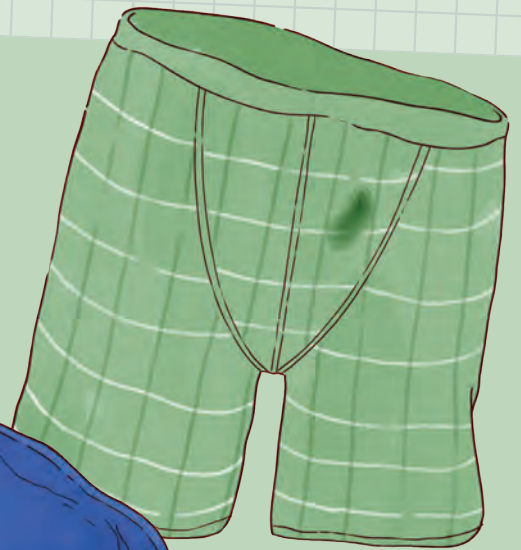
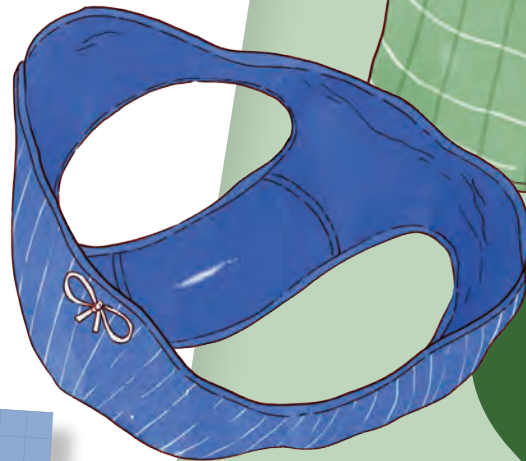
## YOUR BODY IS GOING TO CHANGE...

You may grow breasts and get your period.  
You may have wet dreams and get erections.  
Everybody will get bigger, grow hair where  
there wasn't any before, and get pimples –  
maybe just a few, or maybe a lot.  
And you can bet that you'll leak  
something from somewhere!



## ...AND YOUR EMOTIONS...

You might feel great, then  
moody, then angry, then happy  
again. All within 60 seconds!  
This can take a bit of getting  
used to. It's kind of like the  
roller coaster you never  
wanted to go on.



Discharge is totally  
normal. Worried about  
yours? Check out  
page 9.

## ...AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS, TOO.

As a kid, your family is everything to  
you. But during puberty, you'll start  
to form deeper relationships with  
people outside your family. Friends will  
become even more important to you.

You might develop what are called  
“sexual”, “romantic” or “intimate”  
feelings. These feelings might be for one  
or more people of any gender. That's OK.  
The feelings might also be for yourself.

Buckle up.  
Let's explore all of this some more...

And if you don't feel  
any sexual feelings until  
you're older, or at all,  
that's super normal too!



# ... And What's Responsible for It?



Is Hermione your friend, dear?

Hormones, Gwen.  
Hormones.



## HORMONES. THAT'S WHAT. BLAME THEM.

It's official. You're becoming a human science experiment!

When you're close to or in the middle of puberty, you can start to see things changing on the outside of your body. But what's happening on the inside?

Inside your body, chemicals called hormones are being made in much larger amounts than they were before.

Everyone has hormones – even babies and the old lady next door. But during puberty, the number of hormones in your body goes way up! As the number of hormones inside you increases, changes to your body begin to happen slowly.



Ugh.  
Thanks,  
hormones.

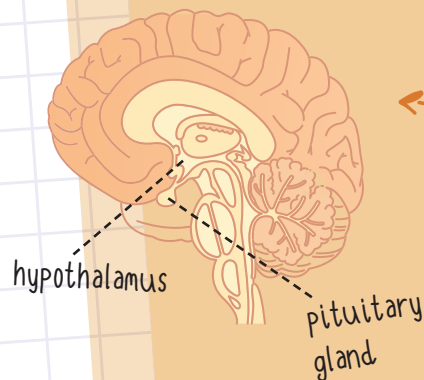


As all those extra hormones surge around your body, remember that everyone's body changes at a different pace during puberty. The growth and changes can also stop and then start again.

The different mixture of hormones in your body compared to anyone else's makes you unique!

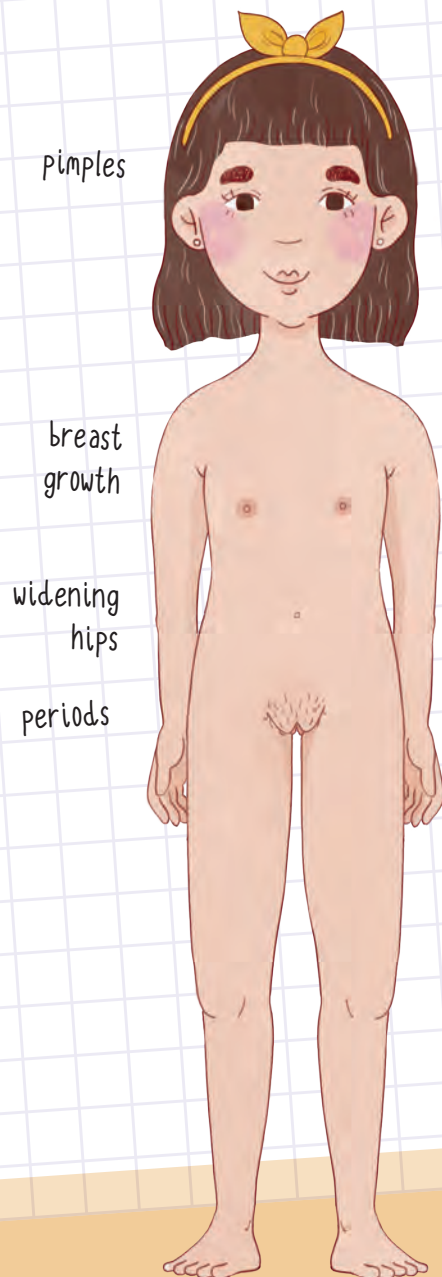
## THE PROCESS OF PUBERTY BEGINS IN THE BRAIN.

- 1 Puberty is triggered when a part of your brain called the hypothalamus releases a special hormone known as GnRH, which travels to the pituitary gland. It tells the pituitary gland to start releasing more hormones known as LH and FSH.



2

The hormones LH and FSH travel through the bloodstream to the ovaries in females and the testicles in males and “switch on” the sexual development process.



3

The ovaries start releasing a hormone called estrogen, and the testicles start releasing a hormone called testosterone. These hormones, sometimes called “sex hormones”, trigger changes all over the body, from head to toe!

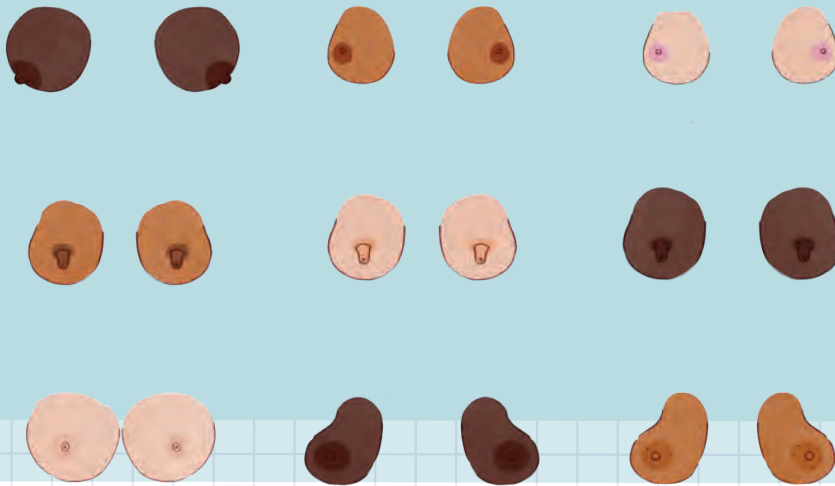


# So What's "Normal"?



## **NOTHING! NO SUCH THING! NEXT QUESTION!**

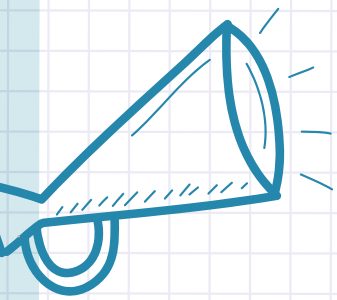
Seriously though, how you go through puberty is as unique as you are! Comparing the size and shape of your "private parts" to the ones you see in the changing room or on TV is as useful as taking your goldfish for a walk. You also won't develop at the same time or rate as your bestie, but that's OK.



## **NO TWO BREASTS ARE IDENTICAL ...**

Literally. Even two breasts on the same body will be a slightly different size and shape. So between different people, the variations are huge.

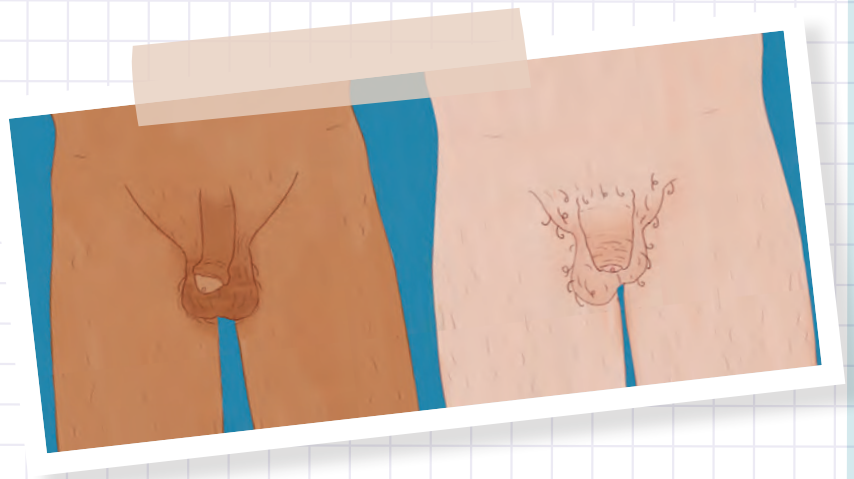
Big breasts, small breasts, flat nipples, pointy nipples, hairy nipples... You get the point.



**SAME GOES FOR VAGINAS AND VULVAS.**

## **LIKEWISE, THERE IS NO RIGHT' SIZE OR SHAPE OF A PENIS OR TESTICLES.**

They'll continue to grow and change right through puberty, and everyone's are individual.





**THAT BEING SAID, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT MIGHT NOT BE QUITE RIGHT.**

So it's worth seeking help (and not from Dr. Google) if you experience any of these things:

You don't notice any changes to your body at all by the time you reach about 14.

(If you're expecting to get your period and it hasn't arrived by then - don't worry, it should turn up by 16.)

The discharge coming out of your penis or vagina is really smelly or hurts.

Yes, you should talk to a doctor. Yes, it'll be a bit embarrassing. Yes, you'll be totally fine.

Your body odor is so strong and smelly that it interferes with your daily life.

Increased body odor is a normal part of puberty, but if it's so bad that it's becoming embarrassing, talk to your doc.

Your pimples are super deep, inflamed, and painful and cover lots of your face and/or body.

A doctor or dermatologist (skin specialist) will be able to help.

You have **BIG** emotions that you can't control.

Find out about how to control your emotions before they get too **BIG** on pages 21-22.

Or anything else that makes you worried!

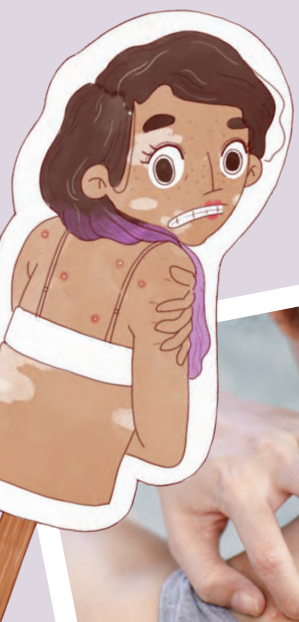
There are no silly questions when it comes to your health.

Finding good help can sometimes be tricky. Check out page 26 for what to look for.



# What's the Deal With Pimples ...?

Unfortunately for lots of people, getting pimples or acne is just a part of growing up. Oil glands in the skin become overactive when sex hormones start surging around the body, which leads to a buildup of oil, dead skin cells, and bacteria. And pimples!



It's common to get pimples on your face ... back ...



## WHAT TO DO TO PREVENT AND CONTROL BREAKOUTS...

- ✓ Wash your face with warm water and a mild soap or cleanser
- ✓ Keep your hair clean and off your face
- ✓ Avoid greasy hair products and oily makeup
- ✓ Avoid unhealthy foods
- ✓ Seek help if you get loads of pimples or they hurt

## AND WHAT NOT TO DO (EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT BE REALLY TEMPTING...)

- ✗ Squeeze or scratch your pimples - breaking the skin will only make them take longer to heal. (And ain't nobody got time for that!)
- ✗ Scrub your face and body really hard. Be gentle. Your skin is an organ, after all!



chest ... and bottom.





# ... And Hair Down There (and Everywhere)?

Everyone gets more hair during puberty, and it often gets a bit darker, too. Some of you will get more hair than others, and some won't get much at all.

You'll get pubic hair and underarm hair.

You might get facial hair and maybe chest hair, too.



## KEEPING THESE AREAS CLEAN IS IMPORTANT.

Your body is now making more chemicals, and these create new smells in your armpits and groin. Hair can trap odors. So it's a good idea to clean your whole body every day with mild soap and water and wash your hair at least once a week. Don't forget to wash under your arms and your private areas too, including your anus and vulva or penis. You may also want to use deodorant or antiperspirant under your arms.

# What Happens to Females?

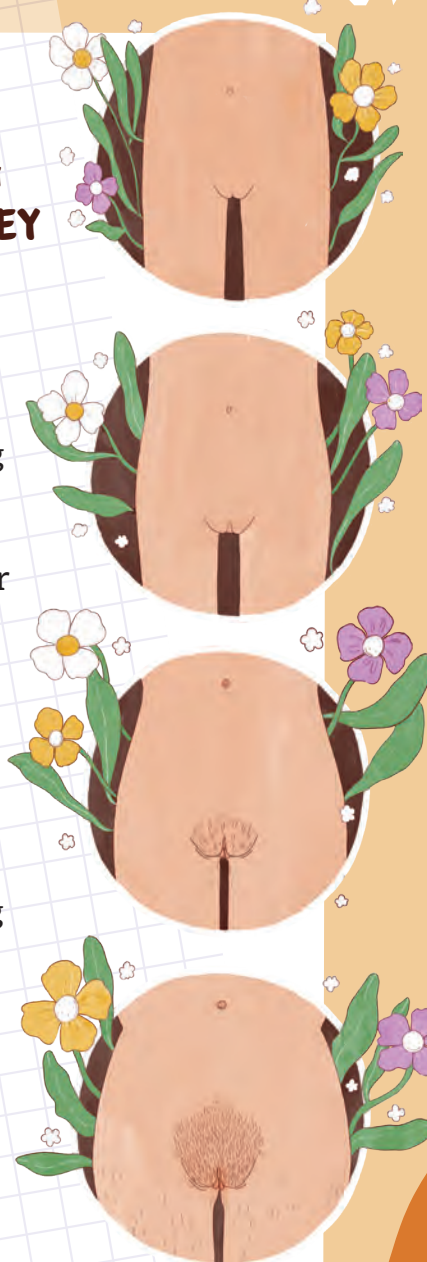
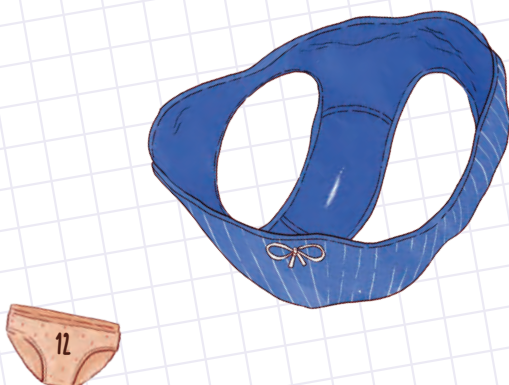


Hey! No skipping ahead! Even if you don't own a vagina, you know plenty of people who do, and there's a good chance you came out of one... AWKWARD (no, it's not really). Knowing what happens to the other half of the population is important.

## FEMALE BODIES GO THROUGH SIGNIFICANT CHANGES AS THEY MOVE THROUGH PUBERTY.

The private parts of your body – your vagina, vulva, and breasts – all change shape and size during puberty. They'll also start to do different things. This is because your hormones are changing your kid body into an adult body.

Vaginas will probably start producing a bit of fluid, or what scientists call “discharge”. This is normal unless it hurts or the discharge is very smelly. If you're not sure if the stuff coming out is OK, ask for help.



## GETTING YOUR PERIOD IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHANGES YOU WILL GO THROUGH AT THIS TIME.

The scientific word for period is “menstruation”. The average age to get your first period is 12, but it can happen as early as 8 all the way up to 16.

Remember: periods are not a competition, and your body will start to menstruate when it is ready to.





Getting your first period can be a bit scary. You might wake up and find blood on your sheets or your underwear and clothing, but it's nothing to worry about.

Blood can be tricky to wash out. Ask a parent or other adult to show you how to treat the stain. Accidents happen, sometimes more than once!

## **PERIODS ARE JUST BLOOD. BLOOD IS PART OF EVERYONE'S BODY.**

A period happens about once a month when the lining of the uterus dissolves and blood comes out of the vagina. It will usually last for about five days but may be shorter or longer than this.

Don't worry if your periods aren't "regular" as soon as they start. It can take up to a couple of years for your body to get into a pattern.



## **PERIODS CAN BRING OTHER SIDE EFFECTS, TOO.**

You might experience period pain. It's common to have cramps in your belly and some lower-back pain and even sore breasts. You can also get what people call PMS or PMT, which stands for premenstrual stress or tension. This means you might get headaches and feel a bit off or irritable.

Gentle exercise or a heating pad can help with the cramps and aches. But if the pain is so bad that you can't go to school or do everyday things, talk to a trusted adult or doctor.

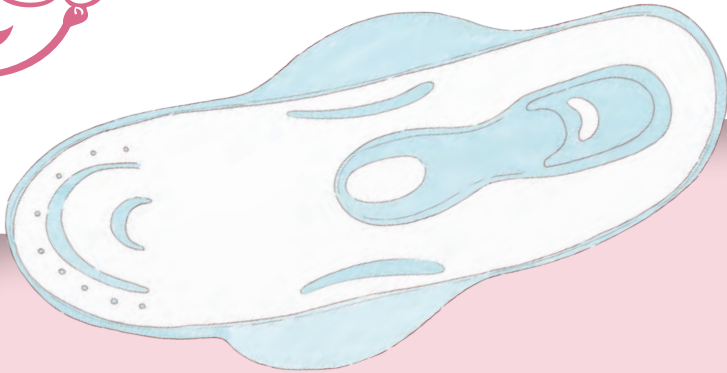


## THESE DAYS, THERE ARE LOTS OF OPTIONS TO HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR PERIOD.

When I was your age -

I'll stop you right there, Gwen.

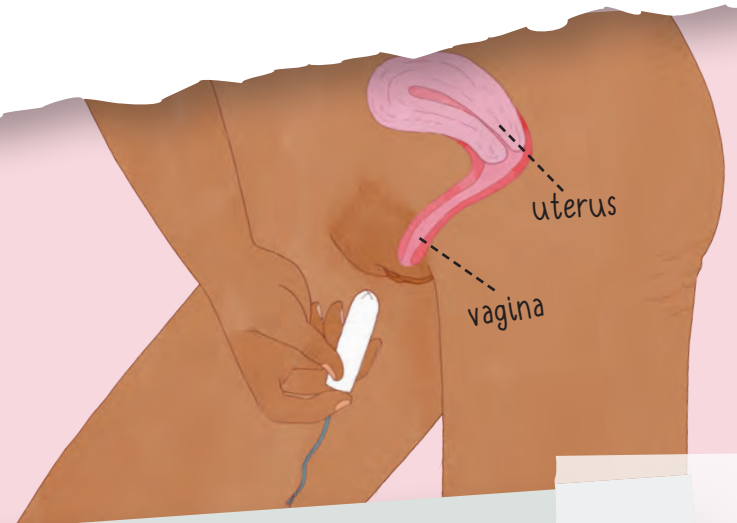
Luckily, menstrual hygiene products have come a long way and are now better for you and the environment than they have ever been.



Some people use pads that sit inside their underwear to catch the blood.

A pad needs to be changed and disposed of every 6 to 8 hours — or more often if there's a lot of blood. Sometimes, blood may accidentally spill over onto underwear, clothes, or sheets. This is fine; it happens to everyone at some point.

Two environmentally friendly options that have become popular are period underwear and menstrual cups. Period underwear absorb the blood and are washable and reusable. Menstrual cups sit in the vagina like a tampon and can be emptied, washed, and reused.



Some people prefer to use tampons. They are made from cotton and rayon and they're small, about the size of the top half of your finger.

A tampon is inserted inside the vagina and absorbs the blood before it leaves the body. They can be tricky to use at first, but it gets easier with practice. The main thing to remember with tampons is to never leave them in for more than eight hours as they can cause infections.

Never flush pads or tampons down the toilet. They can clog the pipes! Trash cans for sanitary products are found in every female toilet stall.



## PERIODS ARE NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF.

Teasing someone because they have their period, or are feeling unwell because of it, is just not cool.

And if someone at school has leaked through without noticing, take them aside to let them know privately. It's a common courtesy that you'd be grateful to receive in return.



## IF YOU GO THROUGH FEMALE PUBERTY, YOU'LL HAVE HEAPS OF QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU. QUESTIONS LIKE THESE ONES...

Why are my breasts sore?

It's normal for your breasts to be tender as they begin to develop. The tenderness will go away as they grow. It's also normal if one breast grows faster than the other. The smaller one will catch up, and both breasts will be roughly the same size by the time you finish puberty.

I mustache you a question... WHY do I have dark hair above my lip?!

Boys aren't the only ones to get facial hair in puberty - everybody can grow it! This could be due to your genetics and ethnicity or, less commonly, may be a sign of hormonal imbalance.

How can I hurry up my development?

You can't. Everybody develops at their own pace. Worrying about it won't help. Take pride in your uniqueness, and don't compare.

How much "white stuff" should be coming out?

The amount of vaginal discharge you notice will vary from day to day and month to month. Some people will have more than others. You can wear a panty liner between periods if you get enough to make you feel uncomfortable.

Will puberty make me gain weight?

Yes, and this is totally OK. Not only will you get taller and bigger in general, but adults - particularly women - have more body fat than children, which begins to appear during puberty. Exercise and a healthy diet will help you maintain a weight that is right for you.



Got more questions?  
Jump over to page 26 to  
find out where you can go  
for answers.

# What Happens to Males?



Whoa, hold up! Even if you don't have a penis, think of all the people you know who do. In fact, a penis probably played a crucial role in making you. EWWW! (no, it's not really). Knowing what happens to the other half of the population is important.

## MALE' BODIES UNDERGO MANY CHANGES DURING THE PROCESS OF PUBERTY.

The private parts of your body – your penis, testicles, and scrotum – all change shape and size during puberty. They'll also start to do different things. This is because your hormones are changing your kid body into an adult body.

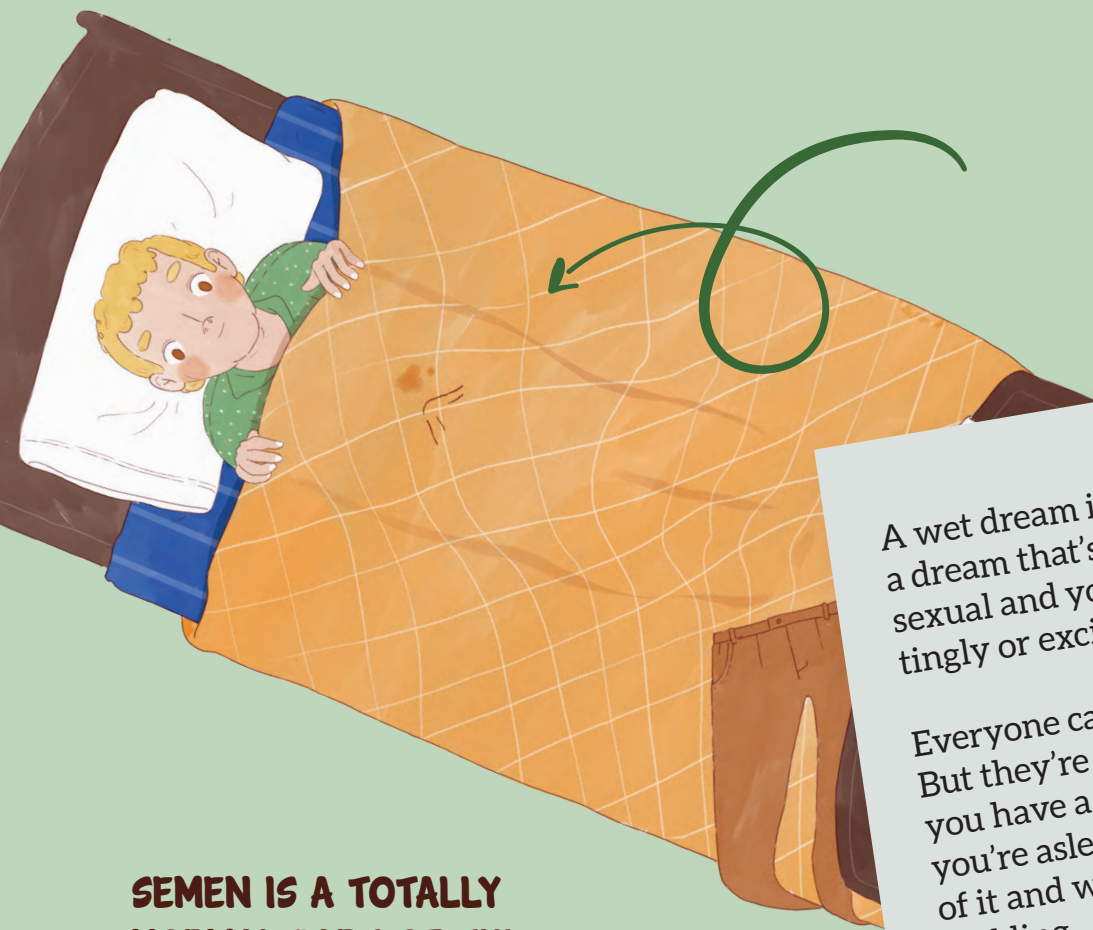


As the level of the hormone testosterone increases in your body, your scrotum also becomes lower and darkens in color. Pubic hair will get darker, curlier, and thicker, too.

It's a mistake to think that only female bodies experience breast growth during puberty. Many boys get tender in this area too. This is due to all those extra hormones in your body. This time, it's one called estrogen.

Breast swelling doesn't mean you're turning into a girl! Any swelling lasts only a year at most.



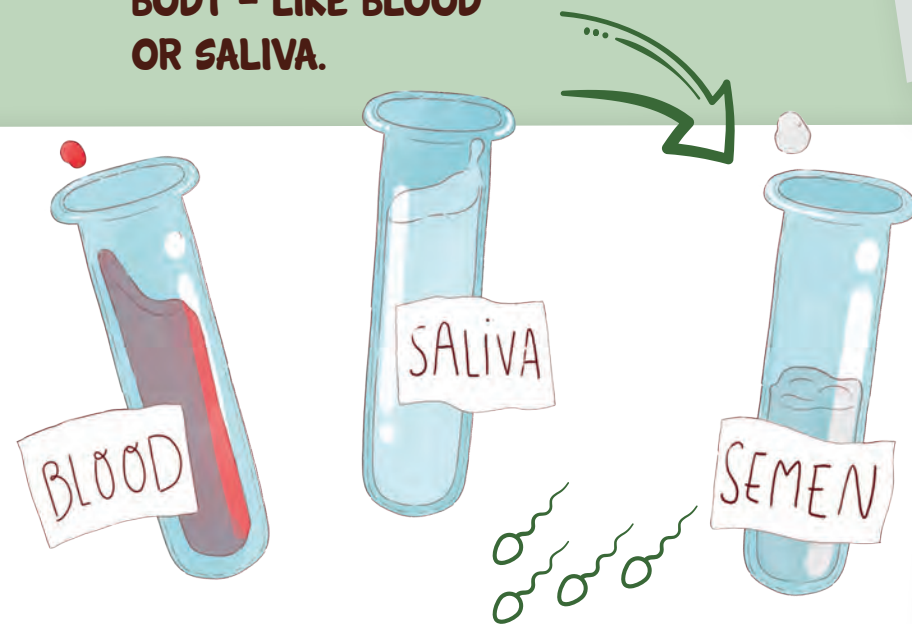


**WET DREAMS ARE  
REALLY COMMON  
DURING PUBERTY.**

A wet dream is when you have a dream that's a bit romantic or sexual and your genitals feel tingly or excited.

Everyone can have wet dreams. But they're more obvious when you have a penis, because when you're asleep, semen can come out of it and wet your clothing and bedding.

**SEMEN IS A TOTALLY  
NORMAL PART OF THE  
BODY – LIKE BLOOD  
OR SALIVA.**



Wet dreams are just an effect of the body getting used to producing sperm, which is part of semen.

As your body gets more familiar with this process, wet dreams will happen less and less.

Wet dreams are nothing to be ashamed about, but learning how to use the washing machine can save some embarrassment in the morning.



Only about 1 or 2 teaspoons of semen are released during a wet dream, but even that small amount contains millions of teeny tiny sperm!



If you ask  
me ...

We didn't,  
Gwen.

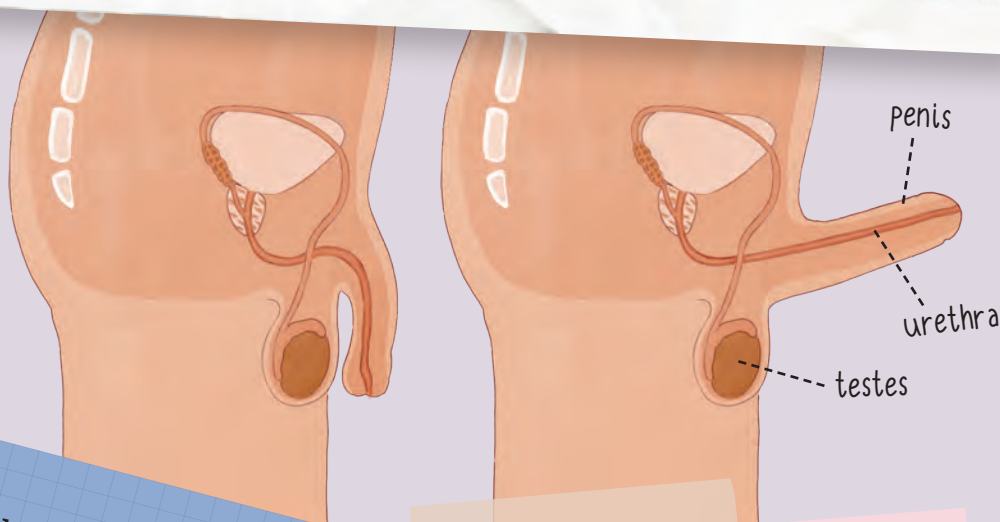
## **SOMETIMES IT WILL FEEL LIKE YOU'RE NOT TOTALLY IN CONTROL OF YOUR PENIS BECAUSE, WELL, YOU AREN'T.**

All the chemicals flying around your body during puberty can sometimes produce unexpected outcomes. For example, you may get an unexpected or unwanted erection.

An erection happens when increased blood flow to the penis makes it longer, thicker, and stiffer. This stiffness makes it stand up away from your body.

Erections might happen when you're cold, when you need to pee, when you're having romantic or sexy feelings, or just when blood is pumping faster around your body, like after playing sports.

Many people will also wake up to an erect penis - often several times a week. This is fine and just an indication of healthy blood and nerve supply to the area.



Even though you can't always control when your penis will become erect, you can help an erection go away by relaxing and thinking about something else.

At other times, you can control when you get an erection. Flip to page 20 to learn about it.

Erections are a totally normal part of growing up, and at one point or another, most people will experience one in public.

An erection isn't actually that noticeable when you're clothed - it's your panicked attempts to cover it up that attract attention! Play it cool. And remember that making fun of someone else's erection is just not OK.



## BY THE TIME YOU FINISH PUBERTY, YOU'LL SOUND DIFFERENT TOO.

From around 14 your “Adam’s apple,” your larynx, will get bigger and your voice will deepen. As your body adjusts to this change, it’s common for your voice to “crack” or “break” occasionally. But this should stop after a couple of months.



## IF YOU GO THROUGH MALE PUBERTY, YOU'LL HAVE HEAPS OF QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU. QUESTIONS LIKE THESE ONES...

Does penis size matter?

Not one bit! Penis size has no relation to masculinity or fertility (your ability to have children). Penis size comes down to genetics, your hormone balance, and ...randomness! Small people can have large penises and vice versa. You'll know how big yours will end up when you reach about 18 or 19 years old.

One of my testicles hangs lower than the other. Is this normal?

Not only is it normal, it's a biological certainty! Because of the structure of this area, one testicle will always hang a little lower than the other. By how much is unique to you.

How can I hurry up my development?

You can't. Everybody develops at their own pace. Worrying about it won't help. Take pride in your uniqueness, and don't compare.

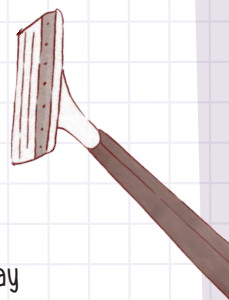
How do I shave my face?

Like most things, shaving takes practice. There are tutorials online, but the best way to learn is with help from an older family member or other trusted adult.

My voice squeaks so much, I sound like a rusty wheel! It's so embarrassing. When will it stop?

Think of your voice changing as a growth spurt for your larynx, because that's what it is! Growth spurts typically last for a short time, so the squeakiness won't last long. Plus, your voice beginning to change often signals other growth spurts too - so get ready to buy some longer jeans!

Got more questions?  
Jump over to page 27 to  
find out where you can go  
for answers.



# Is It OK to Explore My Body?

**WHEN YOUR BODY IS CHANGING, WANTING TO EXPLORE IT IS NATURAL.**

Exploring your changing body looks different for everyone, because we all look different, change differently, and like different things.

Some people freak out about touching and exploring their own body. But as long as you do it in private, it's totally fine. As long as it feels good and it doesn't affect your life negatively, there's not much to worry about.

**HOW SOMEONE EXPLORES THEIR OWN BODY DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON THE INDIVIDUAL.**

What feels good to one person may not feel right to another. If it doesn't feel good, stop doing it.

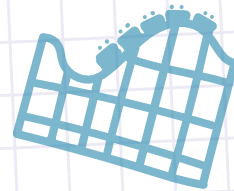


**REMEMBER: IF IT ISN'T SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TRY, THAT'S TOTALLY FINE!**

You might decide to try when you're older, or you might not. It is a private decision, so it's not something to tease or pressure others about.







# Why Am I So Sad? Or Am I Anxious? No, Wait, I Think I'm Happy ...



Sad!



Confused!



Happy!



Angry!  
Or maybe  
hangry!

**BEING HUMAN MEANS HAVING FEELINGS. BEING HUMAN, AND A KID, MEANS HAVING BIG FEELINGS...**

And being a kid who's going through the science experiment of puberty means having **VERY BIG FEELINGS**.

During puberty, the number of chemicals inside your body is increasing like never ever before and like it never will again in your life!

This will affect how you feel. You might feel grumpy in the morning. Then happy in the afternoon. Then sad at night.

You might get frustrated by everybody one minute and then burst with love for them the next. You might feel like your emotions are all confused!

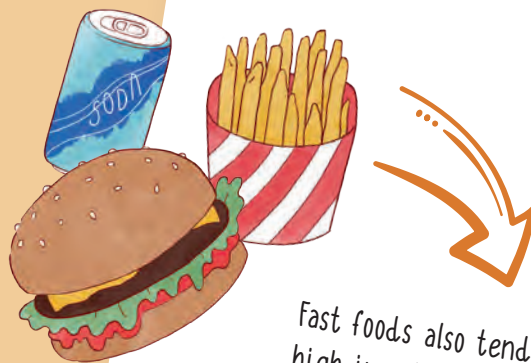
You might wonder if what you are feeling is OK. Don't worry — these feelings are all totally natural for someone going through puberty.

Mood swings will happen for all of you, but there are things you can do to make them less overwhelming.

## YOUR FOOD CHOICES CAN AFFECT YOUR MOOD, SO CHOOSE WISELY.

Food is fuel. It makes energy and keeps you alive. But not all food is equal...

Fast food, or prepackaged food, is not good fuel. It doesn't contain enough of the vitamins and minerals you need to grow and have long-lasting energy. If you eat too much of this kind of food, you will be constantly tired and irritable and be more prone to pimples too. And you can bet that doesn't help with moodiness!



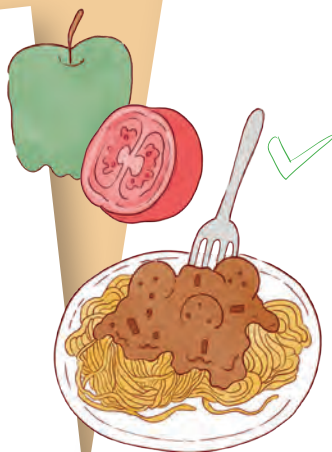
Fast foods also tend to be high in salt, fat, and sugar, leaving us prone to diseases like type 2 diabetes. Save this kind of food for occasional fun times.



Drinking lots of water helps, too. Try to avoid coffee and energy drinks with lots of caffeine in them. Caffeine stops your body from absorbing calcium, which is essential for growing bodies.

- On the other hand, healthy, unprocessed food can help boost your mood.

- Foods like fruits, veggies, nuts, and meat give you good, long-lasting energy, the calcium and other nutrients you need to grow, and can even settle your hormones down a bit.



## MOVEMENT IS ALSO REALLY GOOD FOR YOUR MOOD.

Whether it is from sports, walking the dog, going for a swim, or even dancing like no one is watching, exercise sends feel-good and calming chemicals to your brain.

It's also something you can do with friends or family, so you can enjoy hanging out together. Try to get an hour's worth every day!





## **FOR SOME PEOPLE, GOING THROUGH PUBERTY CAN MEAN YOU FEEL SAD OR ANXIOUS A LOT.**

This is usually because of all those chemical changes your body is going through. This is normal.

There may also be some things happening in your life that are hard: parents breaking up, friends changing or leaving. Or you might get rejected by someone you like.

This can be really hard. Sometimes, a day can feel like a week. Again, this is pretty normal – we all go through hard times.

**BUT** if you feel sad or anxious a lot – for more than a week or two at a time – get some help.

## **SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED TO TAKE A DEEP BREATH WHEN YOUR FEELINGS GET BIG.**

Walking away from a situation or talking to a friend or adult about how you feel can also really help.

But if your feelings are big **ALL** the time and it's as if they're really getting out of control, speak to a trusted adult and get some extra help from your school counselor or a mental health service.

There is no shame in talking about and working on your mental health. It is just as important as your physical health.



# Why Do My Relationships Seem ... Different?

## **HORMONES. AGAIN. UGH.**

Hormones can change the way you feel toward other people.

## **DURING PUBERTY YOU MIGHT START TO HAVE SEXUAL OR ROMANTIC FEELINGS.**

You might have a crush on someone or have thoughts and feelings about someone that are different from how you think and feel about friends.

Your romantic feelings might be for any gender, regardless of your own, and you may feel really confused about this. This is all part of figuring out who you are, which is a process that takes time and thought.

Just remember that acting on romantic feelings isn't always appropriate. Sometimes your crush won't want your attention at that specific time or place, or maybe not at all. This can be hard and even embarrassing, but it is an important lesson in respecting the boundaries of other people.



## **YOUR FRIENDSHIPS WILL CHANGE, AND THEY'LL BECOME STRONGER.**

Often puberty is happening at the same time as other big life changes, like moving schools. You might go to a high school without some of your old friends. They might find it hard to see you making new friends – remember, they're probably going through puberty and dealing with BIG FEELINGS too!

If they are good friends and you want it to stay that way, try to be patient and don't be hurtful. Be kind to yourself, too, as it's normal to develop new, even stronger friendships and interests as you grow and change.





## YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR FAMILY, PARTICULARLY YOUR PARENTS, WILL CHANGE, TOO.

When you were a little kid, you probably did more or less what the people around you decided you should do. That makes sense when you don't know everything about life yet.

But now you might be thinking about or questioning your identity, which is a very normal thing to do at this time. You'll want to make your own decisions about how you want to act, how you want to make others feel, how you want to dress, and who you want to be.

These decisions may not be ones that your parents totally agree with. Having arguments or differences of opinion with your family is a normal part of growing up.



Your parents may not love your "new style." It's OK. They probably followed some pretty odd trends when they were your age, too!

## RESPECT IS KEY, AND IT WORKS BOTH WAYS.

It's normal to go through times when you feel like you don't understand the people you love. Respect their opinions, and they should respect yours.

Bullying, hitting, and shaming are not respectful and are never OK. Even if the person doing these things is someone in authority or someone close to you and you love them, no one has the right to make you feel scared or make you feel small. Get help if you need it.



Friendships are super important to your mental health. Surround yourself with people who make you smile, laugh, and feel good.

# Where Do I Find Help?

**SOME OF YOU WILL CRUISE THROUGH PUBERTY,  
MOST WILL BE ABLE TO MANAGE IT MOST OF THE TIME,  
AND SOME WILL STRUGGLE.**



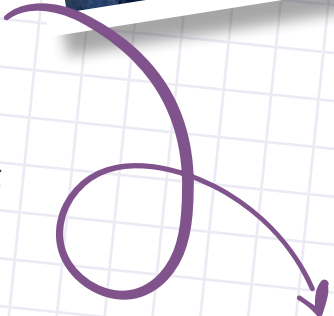
But all of you will have questions or worries about what is happening to your body. If you need help, it's best to ask a trusted adult. It might be a parent, teacher, school nurse or counselor, an aunt, uncle, or friend of the family. Maybe even that old lady living next door?



## **HONESTY TIME NOW – SOME ADULTS WON'T KNOW HOW TO HELP...**

If you are sad, depressed, anxious, or angry, some adults won't know what to do. They might not even know what to do when they feel these things. They might say things that don't help. Sometimes, the things they say will be totally wrong.

If you ask for help and it doesn't help, keep trying. Ask someone else – another trusted adult like an older sister, brother or cousin, a chaplain, or your doctor.



Keep trying until  
someone helps you.  
You don't have to go  
through it alone.



## THE INTERNET HAS ANSWERS BUT NOT ALWAYS THE RIGHT ONES.

Make sure that the information you are getting is accurate. The online world can be full of oddballs or people just as confused as you. Forums, although they might be relatable, aren't the best sources of reliable information.

If you do use a forum, don't include any identifying information and use a different name. The safest option is to stay off these sites altogether unless they're run by health professionals (look for .org, .gov, or .edu in the web address).

## SOMETIMES YOU CAN BE THE HELP THAT SOMEONE ELSE NEEDS.

If you look around, you'll see the signs of puberty in others. Support your friends, ask questions, and listen.

Here are some websites run by real health professionals who know what they're talking about:

➔ [www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/puberty)

➔ [www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Patients-Families/Health-Library/HealthDocNew/Everything-You-Wanted-to-Know-About-Puberty](http://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/Patients-Families/Health-Library/HealthDocNew/Everything-You-Wanted-to-Know-About-Puberty)

➔ [www.kidshealth.org/ChildrensHospitalWisconsin/en/kids/puberty.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/ChildrensHospitalWisconsin/en/kids/puberty.html)

Or if you need to talk to someone confidentially, these helplines are available 24/7\*:

➔ National Suicide Prevention Hotline - 1-800-273-TALK

➔ United Way crisis and emergency counseling - 211

➔ National Alliance on Mental Illness - 1-800-950-6264

Remember: help is always available. Sometimes you just have to look for it.

# Who Will I Be on the Other Side?

## YOU'LL BE JUST LIKE OLD YOU, ONLY DIFFERENT!

Going through puberty is a challenge. But you'll develop new skills and strengths **BECAUSE** of the challenges you'll face.

These skills and strengths will help you become a young person, and then an adult, who makes great choices, keeps healthy and safe, and perhaps best of all, can overcome difficult situations.

If you take away just three things from this book...

1. Puberty will happen when it happens. There's nothing you can do to slow it down or hurry it up. The time and pace are unique to you.
2. There's no such thing as a "normal" body. Yours will look different after puberty than it did before and totally different from your friends'.
3. Puberty can be hard. Seek help when you need it, and don't stop until you find it.







## THINK ABOUT YOURSELF NOW. ARE YOU...'

Loyal and trustworthy?  
Courageous and accepting?  
Determined and adaptable?  
Compassionate and hopeful?  
Kind and strong?

Loyal and trustworthy?

You might not feel like you are right now, but you'll develop these and other amazing skills and strengths during puberty.

Puberty can be really exciting.  
It can also be really confusing.

And surprising.

And amazing.

And frustrating.

And awful.

And amazing again!

One day, it will all be over, and you'll be moving forward into another stage of life.

Good luck,  
deary.



**UNTIL THEN, HANG ON AND  
TRY TO ENJOY THE RIDE!**



# The Puberty Quiz You Never Knew You Wanted

1. Puberty is all over and done with...
  - a) in one crazy roller coaster of a week.
  - b) within 3 years of it starting.
  - c) when your body decides it is.
2. LH and FSH are ...
  - a) acronyms for Long Hair and Freakishly Short Hair.
  - b) hormones responsible for switching on the sexual development process.
  - c) types of menstrual pads.
3. Even on your own body, there's no such thing as identical...
  - a) breasts.
  - b) testicles.
  - c) both.
4. You can deal with pimples by ...
  - a) keeping your face clean and having a bit of patience.
  - b) squeezing those little suckers.
  - c) wearing a pillowcase over your face in public.
5. Body hair can trap ...
  - a) flies.
  - b) odors.
  - c) mice.
6. The scientific word for period is ...
  - a) menstruation.
  - b) womenstruation.
  - c) flowcation.
7. Flushing pads and tampons down the toilet may lead to ...
  - a) a fairly embarrassed plumber.
  - b) a fairly regretful menstruating person.
  - c) both.
8. During puberty, wet dreams ...
  - a) are as rare as pigs flying.
  - b) happen about once a month.
  - c) are really common.



9. An unwanted erection can happen ...

- a) pretty much whenever.
- b) only when you don't want it to.
- c) exclusively at the beach.

10. The rapid change in emotions often experienced during puberty is known as a...

- a) mood disorder.
- b) mood swing.
- c) mood typhoon.

11. You can boost your energy levels by eating ...

- a) a handful of nuts.
- b) a handful of potato chips.
- c) a handful of magic beans.



12. During puberty you might sometimes argue with...

- a) your family.
- b) your friends.
- c) both.

13. When you can't figure it out alone, ask...

- a) Dr. Google.
- b) Gwen.
- c) anybody who'll have your back.

Answers page 32

Puberty is a roller coaster...  
Did you see the 5 roller coasters  
hidden within this book?





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1. c 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. b 6. a 7. c 8. c 9. a  
10. b 11. a (and maybe c, though unproven...) 12. c  
13. c  
roller coasters can be found on pages 5, 10, 18, 21, 29

ANSWERS









Whether you're **excited** about it, or maybe **nervous** about it, puberty will eventually arrive! And it brings with it some **major changes** to your body, emotional, and social life.

During your journey towards adulthood you might have some **questions** (probably lots!), and you'll find the **answers** to many of them within these pages.

So **jump on board**, and hang on ...  
It's going to be a **wild ride**!

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