

Puberty workshop for parents (SEND)

**Kent School Health
Whole School Approach
2025**





Puberty

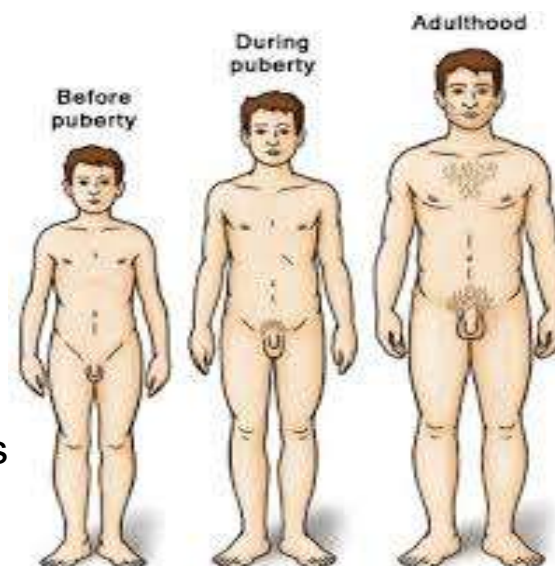
Puberty can sometimes be a puzzling time for young people, as there are a lot of changes in the chemicals in the body (hormones) and in the way they think and feel. Some children completely welcome the changes that puberty brings, whilst others may be confused or uncomfortable. Young people who have a learning disability may find it difficult to understand the changes that are happening, manage their emotions, and communicate with others how they are feeling. They may also find it difficult to understand what is appropriate and inappropriate.

Activity: changes during puberty

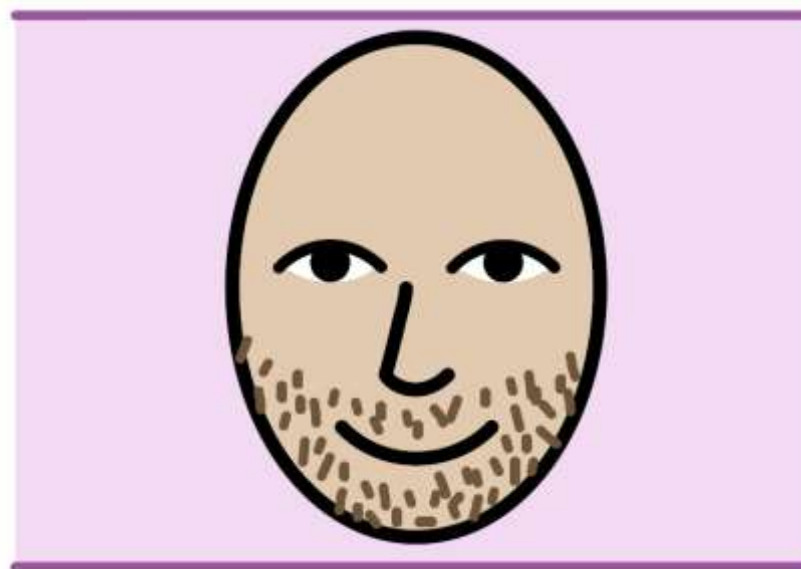


Changes for boys

- Around 10-18 years of age.
- Growth spurt (can be up to eight cm in one year)
- Greasy hair.
- Oily skin – may lead to spots.
- Deeper voice.
- Hands and feet get bigger.
- Muscle growth.
- Broader shoulders and chest.
- Pubic hair (hair at the base of the penis)
- Body hair (some boys will become much hairier than others)
- Facial hair.
- The penis will get longer and thicker.
- Wet dreams.
- Scrotum will begin to thin and redden and testicles will increase in size.
- Sweat more (especially under the arms and between the legs)
- Erections.



For young people



I

might



grow



hair



on



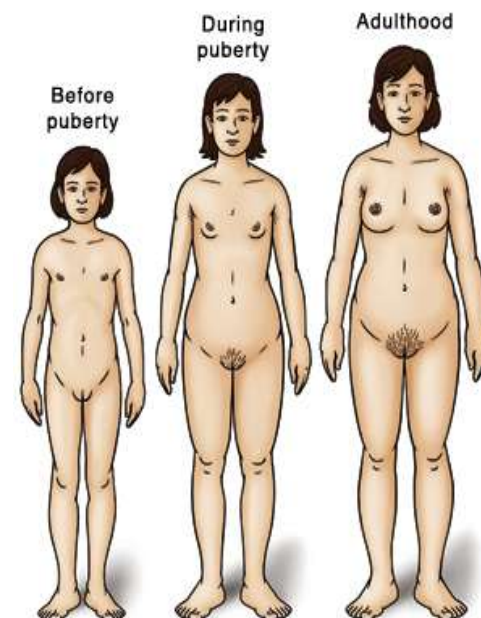
my



face.

Changes for girls

- Changes can occur anytime between ages eight and 16
- Puberty can last for between two and five years.
- Periods start.
- Breast and nipple development.
- Pubic hair.
- Body shape with change to be more curvy with a slim waist and broader hips.
- Greasy hair.
- Oilier skin – more prone to spots.
- Hair on arms and legs may become longer and darker.
- Growth spurt.
- Vaginal discharge.
- Sweat more.



For young people



I

will



grow



hair



under



my

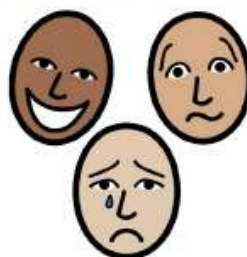


arms.

Emotional, social and behavioural changes

Feelings and emotions

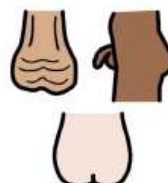
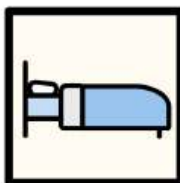
You might notice changes in your child's mood during puberty. They may appear happy or excited one minute and irritable, grumpy or tearful the next. Mood swings during puberty are very common. Young people may also become more aware of the differences between themselves and other people.



Public and Private

Private

‘Private’ can be described as being alone in a place where no one else can see or interrupt your child, such as their bedroom, a toilet at home, or the shower or bath. You may need to help your child understand that they can touch their private body parts if they choose to do so, but this must happen when they are alone in a private place.



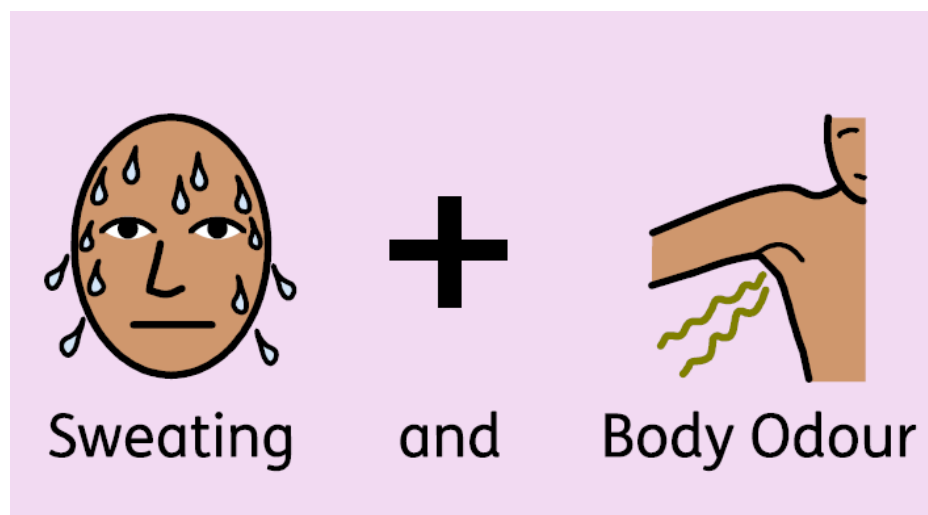
Public

Public is a place where anyone can go and where other people will be around such as a shop or a classroom. You may need to help your child understand that they cannot touch their private parts when they are in a public place, even if they want to.



Hygiene

- Why do we wash?
- What happens if we don't wash

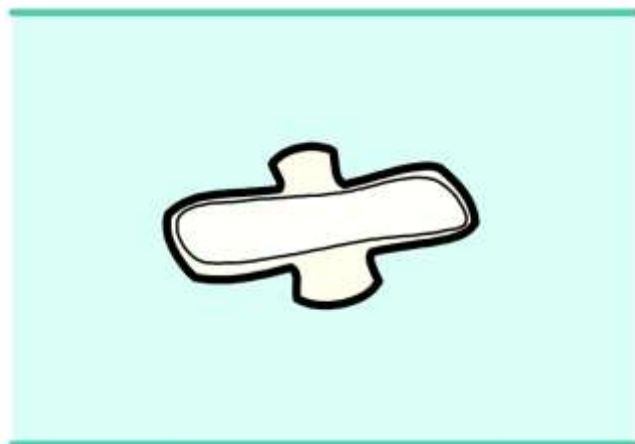


For Girls – Periods

- At some point during puberty, most girls will start having periods.
- Your child may be worried or scared when they start their period, so it is important to reassure them that periods are normal and losing blood is nothing to worry about.
- You will need to talk to your child about using sanitary products, which absorb the blood.



Sanitary products



I might use a sanitary pad when it is time for my period.

My sanitary pad will need to be changed often.

I can do this by myself or ask

a trusted adult to help me.

For Boys

Voice changes

Your child's voice is likely to get deeper, which often takes several months to happen. While this is happening, their voice may go up and down and sometimes sound squeaky. This will settle down eventually. You may have heard this being referred to as the voice 'breaking'.



Wet Dreams

A wet dream is when someone ejaculates in their sleep and releases semen (a fluid which contains sperm cells) from their penis. This is completely normal, especially during puberty, but sometimes young people can feel embarrassed or confused. Sometimes, young people might wake up from a wet dream, but often they will sleep through it.



Erections

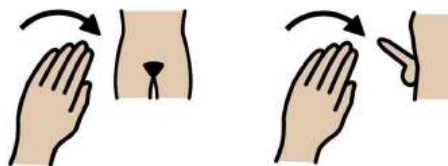
There are various changes that will happen to the genitals as a young person goes through puberty. The penis and testicles will grow larger, and erections become more common. An erection is when the penis goes hard and stiff. Erections can happen at any time. Sometimes this is because of sexual feelings but sometimes an erection can happen for no reason at all. Although this can be embarrassing for boys/people with a penis and those around them, this is a normal part of puberty.



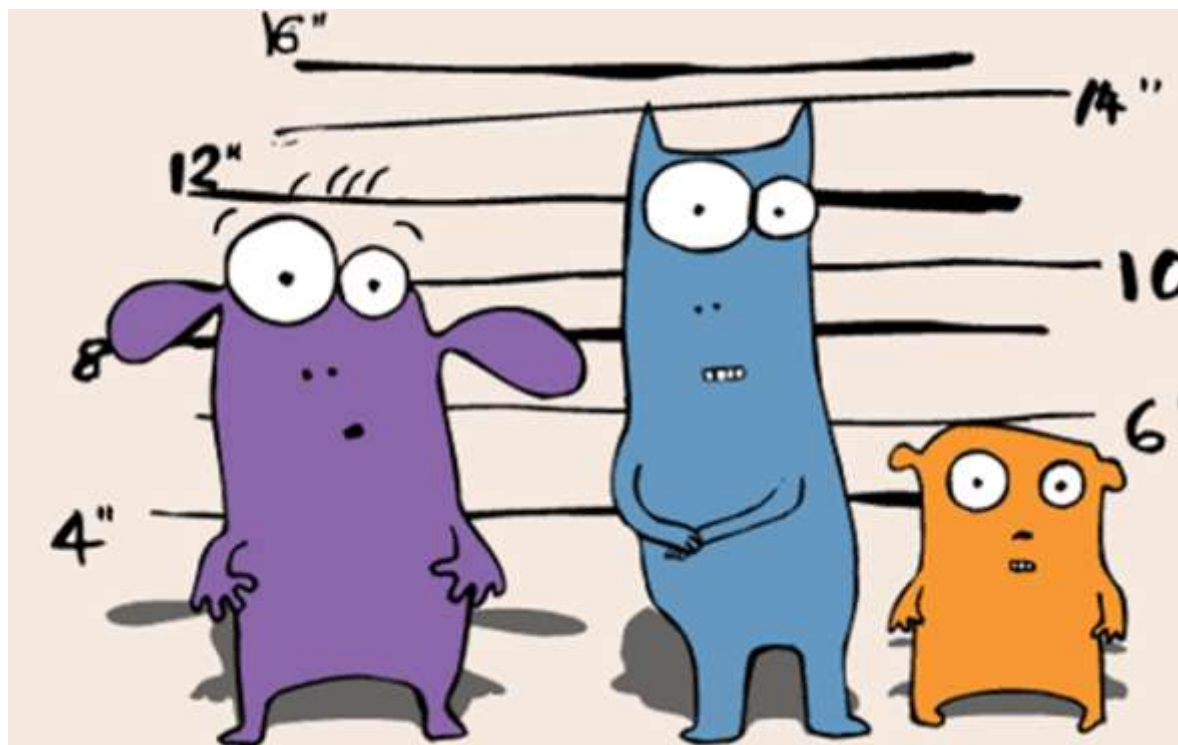
For all - Masturbation

Masturbation

Masturbation is when people of any gender touch their genitals because it feels good or pleasurable. This behaviour tends to increase during puberty. Masturbation is a choice and although some young people may want to do this, others will not. Masturbation does not cause emotional or physical harm. However, it is important that young people are supported to understand that this should happen when they are alone in a private place, and not in public. Masturbation can become a concern if a young person becomes too focused on it, or it stops them from taking part in other activities.



Fears, anxieties, questions!!



Useful resource links

- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/navigating-puberty>
- [Sex education and puberty discussions with learners with SEND — Learn and Thrive](#)



Thank you

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