

## IT'S PERFECTLY NORMAL

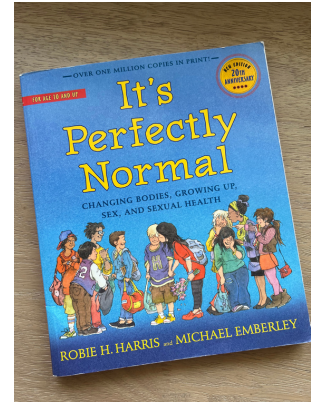
Robie H. Harris

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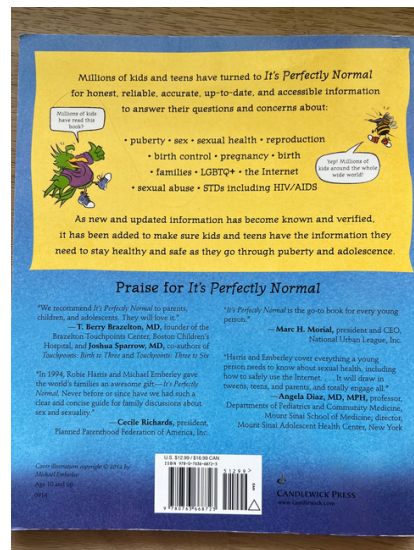
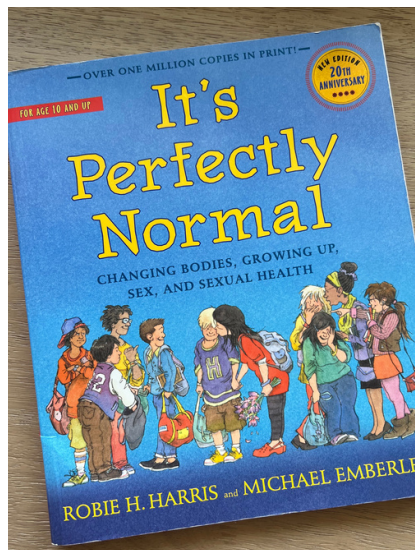
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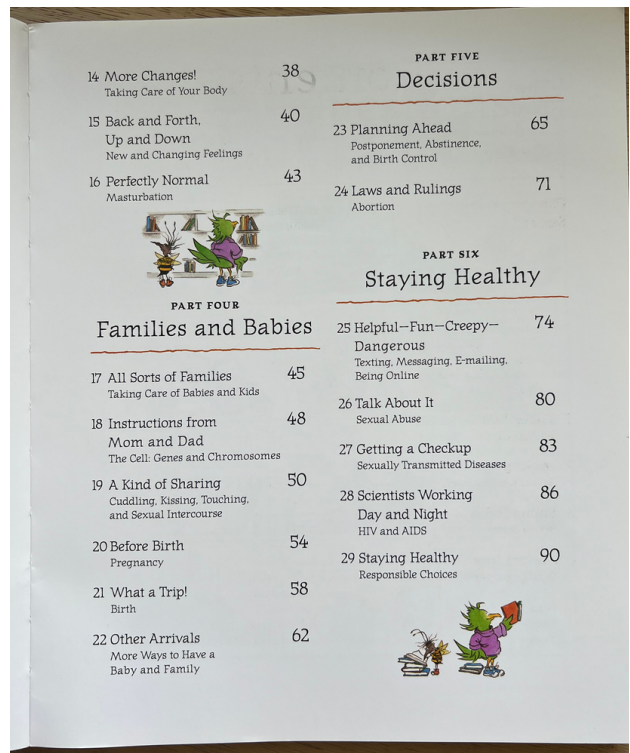
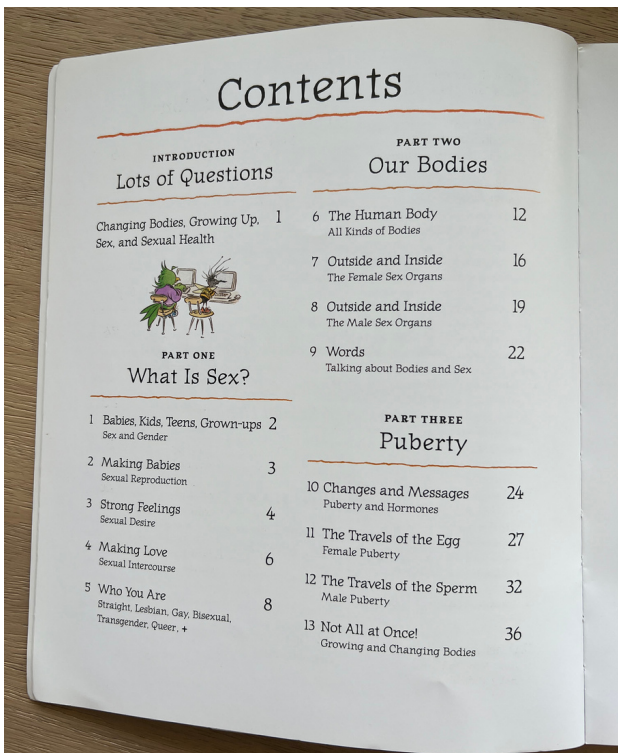
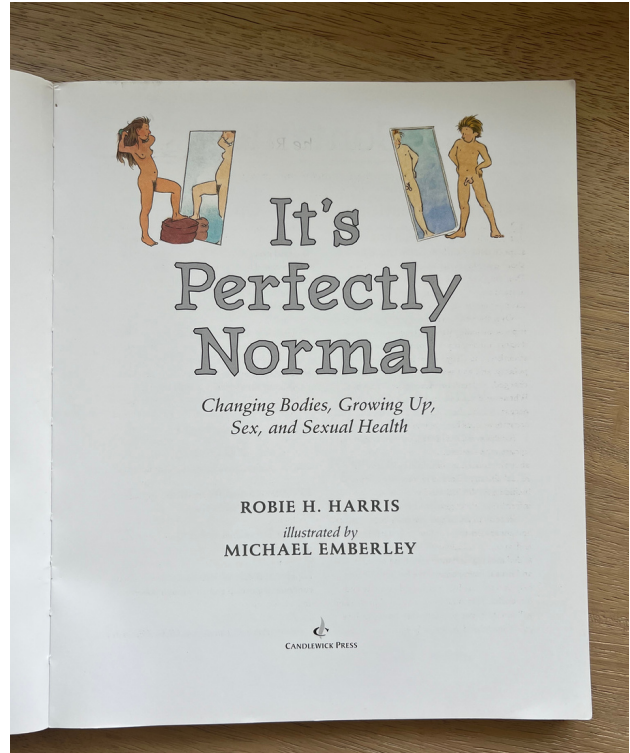
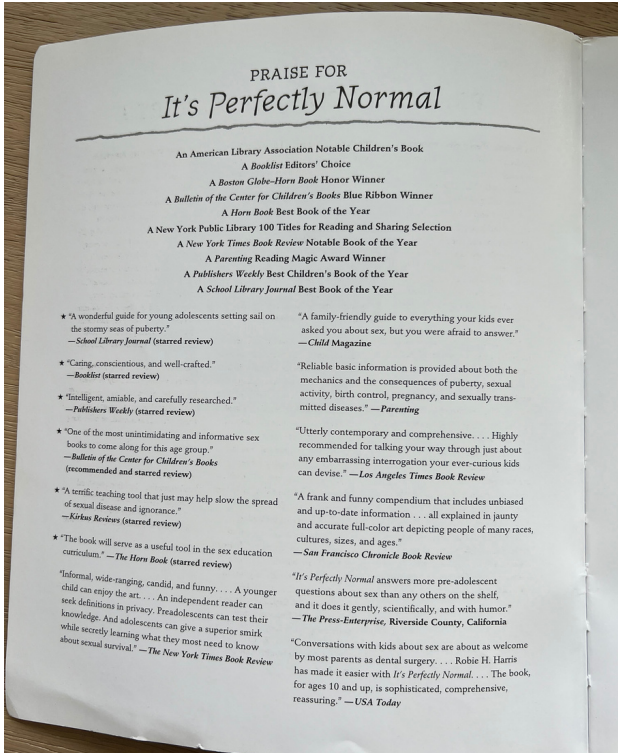


It's Perfectly Normal, a book aimed at 10-year-olds, is nothing more than pornography for children. This book, written by a former member of Planned Parenthood's National Board of Advocates, highlights such topics as oral and anal sex, masturbation, STDs, rape, and abortion. Regardless of the author's stated intention, It's Perfectly Normal sexually grooms young girls and boys by using cartoonish graphic images to intentionally lower their natural inhibitions about private and sensitive subjects. The goal is to normalize every form of sexual expression, because after all, it's "perfectly normal."

Noticeably absent from this book are any discussions of such things as marriage or family, or the consequences of engaging in pre-marital sex, having an abortion, or contracting a STD. Rather, the author emphasizes having sex simply because it feels good.

This book is lauded for its mention of such things as personal hygiene and changes that take place in the body during puberty, but make no mistake, It's Perfectly Normal is yet another tool in the progressive's nationwide effort to desensitize our children and set them on a very dangerous path of sexual experimentation before they leave elementary school.





## PART ONE

# What Is Sex?

### 1

## Babies, Kids, Teens, Grown-ups

### Sex and Gender

What is sex? What is it... exactly? What is it all about?

These are questions lots of kids wonder about. You needn't feel embarrassed or stupid if you don't know the answers, because sex is not a simple matter.

Sex is many things, and people have many different feelings and opinions about it. That's why there is more than one answer to the question, "What is sex?"



One way to find out about sex is to ask someone you know and trust. Remember, there are no stupid questions. Another way to find out about sex is to read about it. For example, you can look up the meaning of the word *sex* in the dictionary.

People always want to know the sex of a new baby. So it's no surprise that—even if the parent or parents knew the sex of the baby before birth—the moment a baby is born, someone usually shouts out, "It's a girl!" or "It's a boy!"

Sex is not just any old tripping and kissing. And it's not just about love. I know that much.

Well, it's not just making babies, either.



Here is what one dictionary says under the word *sex*:

1: Either of the two main groups, female or male, into which living things are placed.

Sex is in the dictionary?

Yep, sex is a word, and words are in dictionaries.



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And often one of the first questions kids ask when they hear that a new kid is joining their class is, "Is it a cat or a boy?"

When people use the word *sex* in this way, they are usually talking about what gender someone is—whether a person

is female or male, a girl or a boy, a woman or a man.

**Gender is another word for whether a person is male or female. Gender is also about the thoughts and feelings a person has about being a female or about being a male.**



### 2

## Making Babies

### Sexual Reproduction

The dictionary tells us more about sex. It says,

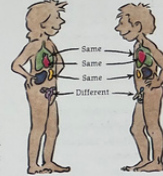
2: *Sexual reproduction.*

Sex is also about reproduction—making babies. To reproduce means to "produce again," or "make again."



Certain parts of our bodies make it possible for a male and a female, when their bodies have grown up, to reproduce—to make babies. The parts of our bodies that make this possible are called the reproductive organs.

Our bodies' organs are the parts of our bodies that have special jobs to perform. For example, the heart is the organ whose special job is to pump blood. Scientists know that most organs inside our bodies, such as our hearts, our lungs, and our stomachs, are the same whether we are male or female. One group of organs that is not the same for a female and a male is the reproductive organs.



People also call the reproductive organs the sexual organs or the sex organs. The female and male sex organs are designed to work in an amazingly interesting way. They are different from each other because they have different jobs to do.

Both males and females have outer sex organs and inner

sex organs. Some are located between our legs and are on the outside of our bodies. Some are tucked inside our bodies. The sex organs on the outside of a person's body are often called the genitals, and the sex organs on the inside of a person's body are called the reproductive organs.

What Is Sex? 3

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## Making Love

### Sexual Intercourse

The dictionary tells us one more thing about sex. It says,

4: *Sexual intercourse.*

Sex also means sexual intercourse. Some people call sexual intercourse "having sex."

Now we're getting to IT!

Getting to WHAT?

Oh, never mind. I wonder if you can find out even more about us in the encyclopedia.



possible for a female and a male—once their reproductive organs have grown up—to make a baby.

This is what I thought IT was about.

I'd rather not think about IT.



Most people don't have sexual intercourse only when they want to have a baby.

Most often, people have sexual intercourse because it feels good. People have sexual intercourse well into old age.

People also call sexual intercourse "making love" or "love-making" because it's a way of expressing love. But sexual intercourse is only one way of expressing love.

Hugging, cuddling, holding hands, kissing, and touching are other ways of expressing love. So is just being with someone you like a lot and telling that person, "I love you."

**Sexual intercourse happens when two people—a female and a male or two females or two males—feel very sexy and very attracted to each other and want to be very close to each other in a sexual way. When a female and a male are so close that the male's penis goes inside the female's vagina, the vagina stretches in a way that fits around the penis.**

When this happens, it is



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There are some things about sex and sexual intercourse that are important to know and remember:

- It makes sense to wait to have sexual intercourse until you are old enough and responsible enough to make healthy decisions about sex.
- Every female and every male has the right to say no to any kind of touching—even when one person is older, or a lot older, or stronger, or a lot stronger than the other person.
- A relationship that includes sexual contact often comes with complicated feelings.
- **Sexual intercourse—having sex—can involve the penis and the vagina, or the mouth and the genitals, or the penis and the anus.**
- **After sexual intercourse that involves the vagina and the penis, the female can become pregnant. But there are ways that people can help protect**

**themselves from having a baby.**

• During sexual intercourse, serious infections—such as HIV, the virus that causes AIDS—as well as other infections that are less serious, can be passed from one person to the other. However, there are ways in which people can help protect themselves from getting or passing on these infections.

That's a lot to remember.

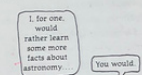


So sex is a lot of things... even feelings... and thoughts.

Sex is the desire to be very close to someone. Sex is touching the sexual parts of the body.

Sex is intercourse. Sex is making babies. And sex is whether you are male or female.

Sometimes people use the word *sexuality* to talk about sex. When people use the word *sexuality*, they are usually talking about everything in our daily lives that makes us sexual human beings—our gender, our sexual feelings, thoughts, and desires, as well as any sexual contact, from sexual touching to sexual intercourse.



I, for one, would rather learn some more facts about astronomy... You would.

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Who You Are  
Straight, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, +



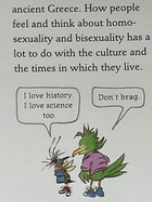
**S**traight, lesbian, gay, and bisexual are words that have to do with sexual desire and sex. A person who is straight is someone who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex, or, as some say, the other sex. Heterosexual is another name for a straight person. *Heteros* is the ancient Greek word for other.

a male and a female—are attracted to, may fall in love with, or may have a sexual relationship with each other. A person who is gay is someone who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex. Homosexual is another name for a gay person. *Homos* is the ancient Greek word for same. In a gay relationship, two people of the same sex—a male

and a male, or a female and a female—are attracted to, may fall in love with, and may have a sexual relationship with each other. A gay relationship between two females is also called a lesbian relationship. The word *lesbian* began to be used in the late nineteenth century. It refers to the time, about 600 BC, when the great female poet Sappho

lived on the Greek island of Lesbos. Sappho wrote about friendship and love between women. The ancient Greeks thought that love between two men was the highest form of love. In the ancient Greek city-state of Sparta, in about 1000 BC, it was hoped that male lovers would be in the same army regiment. People thought that if a warrior was in the same regiment as his lover, he would fight harder in order to impress him. The Spartan army was one of

the most powerful and feared armies in ancient Greece. A person who is bisexual is someone who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex and sexually attracted to people of the same sex. Someone who is bisexual is attracted to, may fall in love with, and may have a sexual relationship with both males and females. *Bi* means two and is also the ancient Greek word for two. There have been gay and bisexual relationships all through history, even before



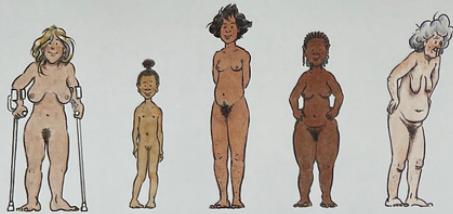
Scientists do not completely understand or agree on why one person is straight, why another person is gay, or why another person is bisexual. In fact, there may be more than one reason.

But most scientists believe that being gay, or straight, or bisexual is not something you choose—just as you cannot choose what skin color you were born with or whether you were born male or female. They believe that a person is born with traits—that make him or her develop into a straight person, or gay person, or bisexual person.

Sometimes as kids are growing up, boys become curious about other boys and girls become curious about



In a straight relationship, two people of opposite sexes—

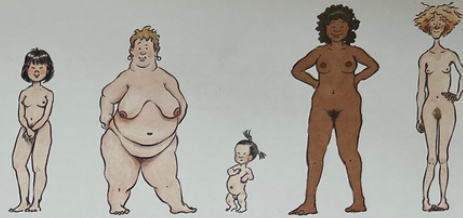


Have you noticed that human bodies come in all different sizes, shapes... and shades? People's bodies look so different.

Most human bodies look pretty much the same to me.

They do?

They do.



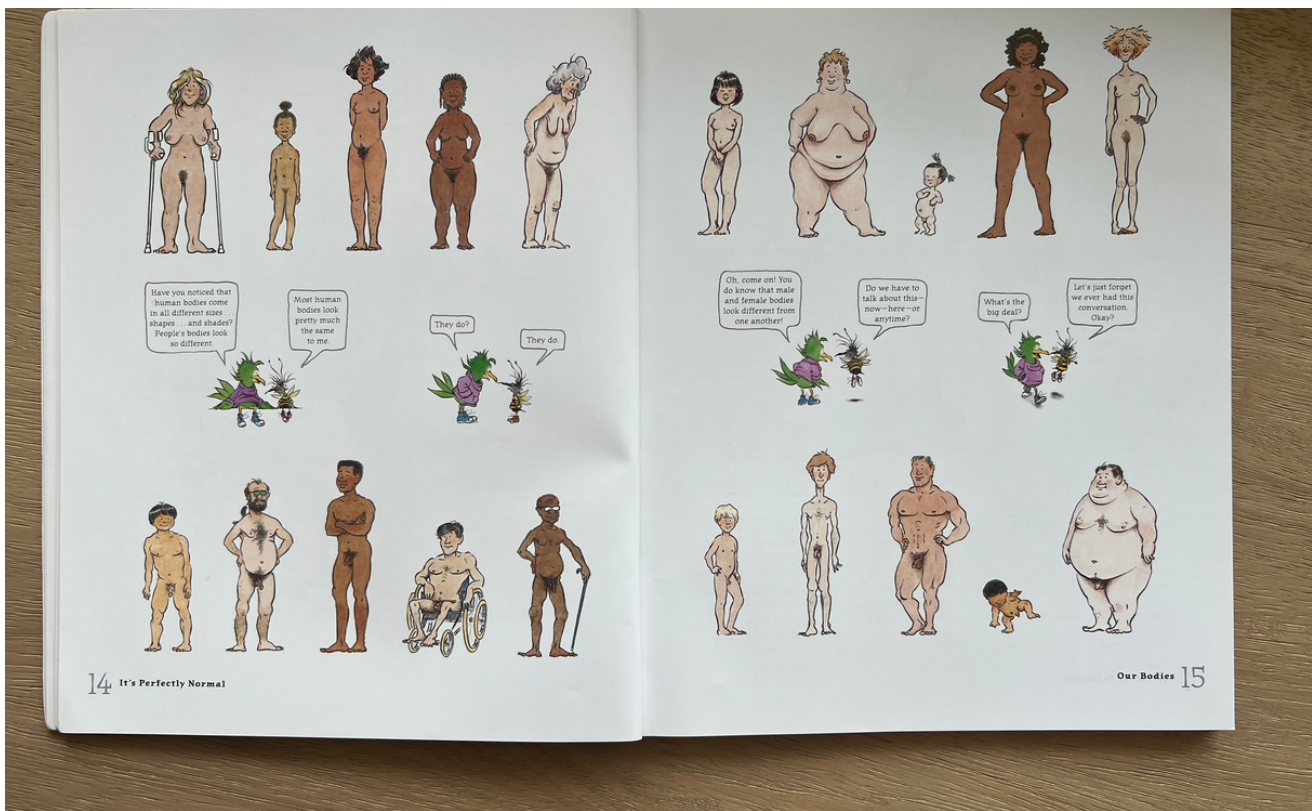
Oh, come on! You do know that male and female bodies look different from one another!

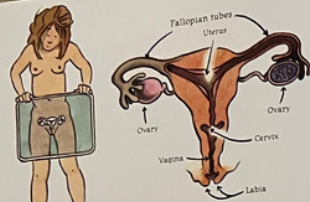
Do we have to talk about this now—here—or anytime?

What's the big deal?

Let's just forget we ever had this conversation, okay?







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If you could actually look inside the female body and see the female's inner sex organs, you would see two ovaries, two Fallopian tubes, the uterus, and the vagina.

**The Ovaries**  
The two ovaries—one on each side of the uterus—are about the size of large strawberries. The ovaries contain a female's sex cells—also called eggs or ova. A single egg is called an ovum.

**Body Fact:** At birth, a baby girl's ovaries already contain an astonishing number of egg cells—about one to two million. These egg cells are not grown up enough to produce babies until a girl begins to go through puberty. Female puberty—the time when a girl's body starts to grow into a young woman's body—can begin anytime from about the age of eight or nine until fifteen. At puberty, a girl has about three hundred to four hundred thousand egg cells.

**The Fallopian Tubes**  
The two Fallopian tubes are passageways through which an egg travels on its way to the uterus. One end of each tube almost touches an ovary. The other end of each tube is connected to the uterus. Each tube is about three inches long and the width of a drinking straw.

**The Uterus**  
The uterus is made of strong muscles and is hollow inside. It is about the size and shape of a small upside-down pear and is connected to both Fallopian tubes and the inside end of the vagina.

**Body Fact:** The uterus is the place in which a developing baby, called a fetus, grows, is fed, and is protected. A fetus grows in the uterus, which stretches as the fetus grows bigger, for about nine months until it is ready to be born. The uterus is sometimes called the womb.


**The Cervix**  
The cervix is a small opening located in the lower part of the uterus. It connects the uterus to the top of the vagina. This opening stretches wide when it's time for a baby to be born.

**The Vagina**  
The vagina is the passageway from the uterus to the outside of the female body.

**Body Fact:** A baby travels through the vagina when it is ready to be born. The vagina is also the passageway through which a small amount of blood, other fluids, and tissue leave the uterus, about once a month. This small amount of normal bleeding is called menstruation or "having a period" and begins when a girl has reached puberty. The vagina is also the place where the penis fits during sexual intercourse.

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## Outside and Inside The Male Sex Organs

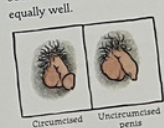


**A** male's outer sex organs, the penis and the scrotum—which contains the two testicles—are easy to see when a boy or man is naked because they hang between his legs.

**The Penis**  
The penis is made of soft, spongy tissue and blood vessels. Urine—liquid waste—leaves a male's body through a small opening at the tip of his penis. The end of the penis is called the glans. When the penis is touched and rubbed, a male's body feels good both outside and inside—kind of tingly, kind of warm and nice. It feels sexy.

**Body Fact:** Generally, the penis is soft and hangs down over the scrotum. Sometimes, it becomes stiff and hard, and larger and longer, and stands out from the body. This is called an erection.

All males are born with some loose skin covering the end of the penis, called the foreskin. Some male babies have their foreskins removed a few days after they are born, by a doctor or a specially trained religious person. This is called circumcision. Although a circumcised penis looks different from an uncircumcised penis, both work in the same way and equally well.




**Our Bodies 19**

## PART THREE Puberty

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### Changes and Messages Puberty and Hormones



**O**ur bodies change from the moment we are born and keep on changing all through our lives. They change because everything that's alive grows and changes.

There is a time when girls and boys do more than just grow taller and bigger as they have done since birth. Girls start to grow into young women sometime between the ages of eight or nine and fifteen. Boys start to grow into young men sometime between the ages of nine or ten and fifteen.

**Puberty** is one of the names given to this span of time. The word *puberty* comes from the Latin word *pubertas*, which means *grown-up* or *adult*. When people use the word *puberty*, they are usually talking about all the physical changes that

take place in kids' bodies during this time. Most of these changes make it physically possible for a female and a male to make a baby.

The other word that is used to describe the span of time between childhood and adulthood is *adulthood*. The word *adulthood* comes from the Latin word *adulescere*, which means to *grow up*. When people use the word *adulthood*, they are usually talking not only about the physical changes that take place during puberty, but also about all the new thoughts, feelings, relationships, and responsibilities kids have as they become young adults.

Even though the words *adulthood* and *puberty* have somewhat different meanings, people often use them interchangeably.

Puberty, or adulthood, is an in-between time—when a boy or girl is not a child anymore but is not yet an adult.

Girls often start puberty when they are nine or ten or eleven years old. Boys often start puberty a year or so later—when they are ten or eleven or twelve. For most kids, puberty takes place over a stretch of time—over a few years. This usually gives kids time to get used to their adult bodies.

The many changes that take place in our bodies during puberty are caused by hormones. Hormones are chemicals that are produced in many different places in our bodies. Hormones travel through the body's bloodstream from the place where they are made to other places in the body where they do their work.

The word *hormone* comes from the Greek word *hormon*, meaning to *set in motion*—to start something working. There are many kinds of hormones in our bodies.

**I hope bodies don't instantly pop into puberty!**  
**I'd like that. You could get it all over with at once.**

**I'm in-bee-tween.**  
**Now you're bee-ing silly.**

**Puberty 25**

## 12 The Travels of the Sperm Male Puberty

“Start making the male sex hormone testosterone!” is one of the messages a boy’s brain sends out to his testicles during puberty. And the testicles do just that. They begin to produce testosterone, which causes the male body to grow and change in many new ways. One of the most important things testosterone does is instruct the testicles to begin to make sperm—something the testicles have never done before.



Sperm are male sex cells. Unlike girls, boys do not start making sex cells until they reach puberty. Starting at puberty, however, the testicles make a phenomenal number of sperm—about one hundred million to three hundred million sperm per day. That’s anywhere from

about one thousand to three thousand sperm every second. The scrotum protects the testicles by keeping them at the right temperature to make sperm, not too cold and not too hot, just a few degrees below the body’s temperature. If it is too cold, the scrotum pulls up the testicles closer to the body to keep them warm enough to make sperm. When a man or boy is swimming in cold water, he can often feel his scrotum tighten as it pulls up his testicles. If it is too hot, the scrotum hangs down loosely, away from the body, again keeping the testicles at just the right temperature to make sperm.

After sperm are produced, the sperm from the right testicle travel through the right epididymis, and the sperm from the left testicle travel through the left epididymis. As they travel, the sperm grow up enough to be able to fertilize—to unite with—a female’s egg.

Sperm travel through the vas deferens and pass by the seminal vesicles. As sperm pass by, they mix with fluid from

the seminal vesicles and the prostate gland. The mixture of sperm and fluid is now called semen. Semen is sticky, cloudy, and whitish. Chemicals in it keep the sperm healthy as they travel into the urethra, through it, and out the tip of the penis. Sperm leave the male body when a male ejaculates semen. To *ejaculate* means to suddenly release or to let go. When a male ejaculates, his penis is usually erect.



Here’s what happens inside a male’s body when he has an erection: When his penis is not

## THE TRAVELS OF THE SPERM: Ejaculation



At puberty the brain tells the testicles to produce testosterone and sperm.



Sperm travel to the epididymis, where they mature and travel



through the vas deferens, past the seminal vesicles and prostate gland,



through the urethra, and are spurted out the tip of the penis.

erect, blood trickles in and out of the penis continuously. But when he has an erection, the muscles that allow blood to flow in and out of his penis open wide and allow more blood to be pumped in, while other muscles tighten and keep the extra amount of blood from leaving the penis. This causes the spongy tissue inside the penis to fill up, which in turn makes the penis become stiff, erect, and stand out from the body. This filling up is called an erection.

When the erection is over, the muscles relax and allow the blood to flow back out of the penis and into the body again. And the penis becomes soft again.

A male can have an erection when his penis is touched and rubbed, when he has pleasurable thoughts or sees someone who makes him feel happy, excited, sexy, or nervous; when he is watching a movie or TV show or video or reads or sees something online that excites him; when someone attractive to him walks by, or when he is having a pleasurable dream.

Males often have erections when they wake up. If a male’s bladder—the place where urine is stored in his body—is full, the full bladder excites some nerves at the base of his penis,



which causes more blood to flow into the penis. This kind of erection has little to do with sexy thoughts and feelings.

Males usually have erections before and during sexual intercourse. An erection makes it possible for the penis to enter the vagina. Sometimes males have erections for no apparent reason, even when they don’t want to have them.

Some people call an erection a “hard-on” or “boner” even though there are no bones in the penis. Erections usually last a few seconds, to a few minutes, to a half-hour, or more. Males can have erections from the time they are little babies until they are old men—even while they sleep.

Here’s what happens inside a male’s body when he has an ejaculation: Muscles in each epididymis, in each vas deferens, and in the seminal vesicles, along with muscles around the prostate gland, tighten and push the semen into the urethra. The semen, which contains sperm, travels through the urethra and spurts out through the tip of the penis. This spurting out of semen—ejaculation—causes a feeling of excitement called an orgasm.



During ejaculation, muscles tighten so that urine does not leave the penis at the same time as semen. After ejaculation, the penis becomes soft again and is no longer erect.

There are usually about two to five hundred million sperm spurted out in a single ejaculation—about a teaspoonful of semen. Males can and do have erections without ejaculating any semen. When this happens, the blood leaves the penis slowly and returns to the body’s bloodstream, the erection slowly goes away, and the penis becomes soft again and hangs down as usual. It is possible, although this does not happen often, for a male to ejaculate without having an erection.

Boys start to be able to ejaculate during puberty and continue into old age. Ejaculation usually occurs during sexual intercourse. It can also occur during other kinds of sexual touching and excitement and even during sleep.



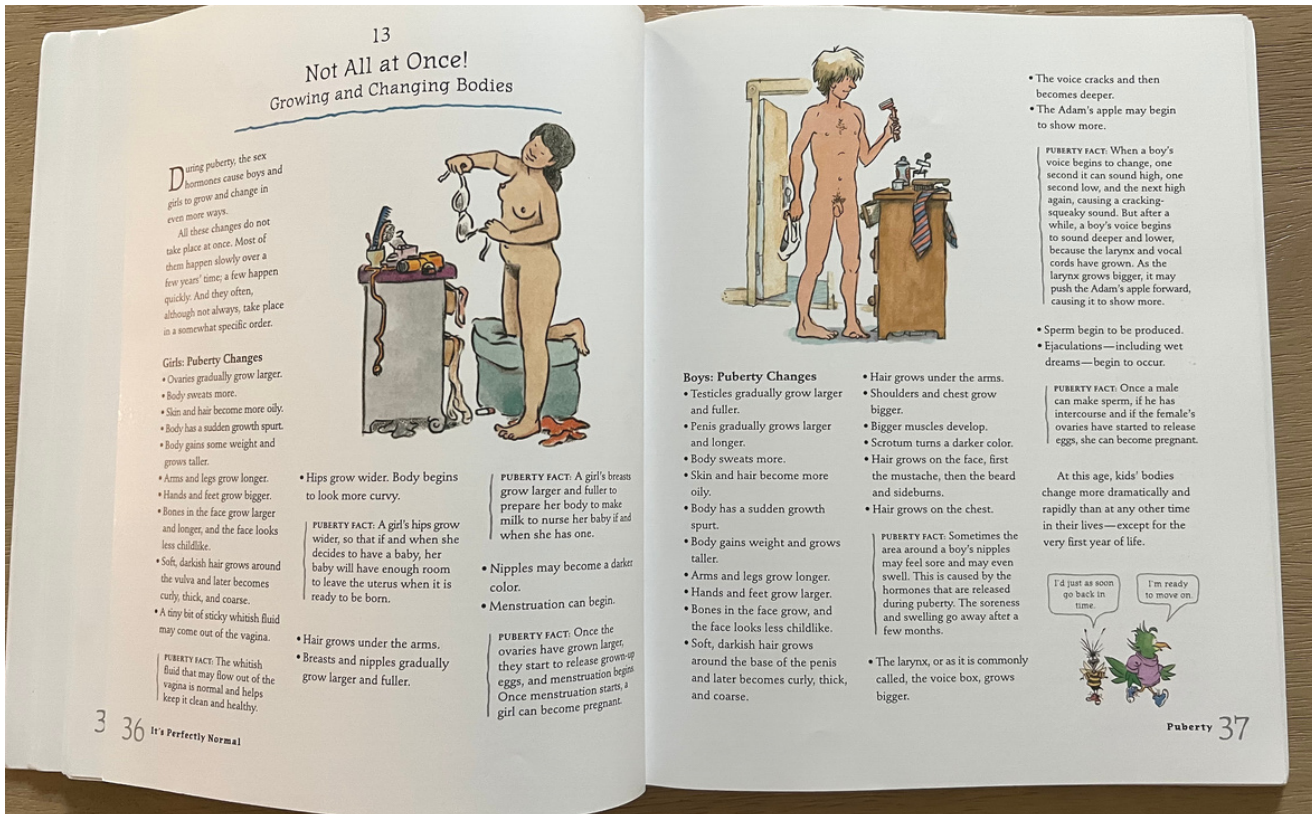
Boys usually start having “wet dreams” at puberty. Wet dreams occur during sleep when a boy is having a pleasurable, exciting, or sexy dream and ejaculates some semen. When the boy wakes up, his pajamas or sheets may be wet and sticky from the ejaculated semen.

The scientific term for a wet dream is *nocturnal emission*. *Nocturnal* means occurring at night. *Emission* means a release, a letting go. Wet dreams are usual and normal events for boys. A boy’s first ejaculation often happens during a dream.

Once a male has begun to produce sperm, if just one of his sperm unites with an egg during sexual intercourse, the female can become pregnant and the united cell can grow and develop into a baby.

Many boys feel that starting to ejaculate is one of the biggest changes of puberty.





## 13 Not All at Once! Growing and Changing Bodies

During puberty, the sex hormones cause boys and girls to grow and change in even more ways. All these changes do not take place at once. Most of them happen slowly over a few years' time; a few happen quickly. And they often, although not always, take place in a somewhat specific order.

### Girls: Puberty Changes

- Ovaries gradually grow larger.
- Body sweats more.
- Skin and hair become more oily.
- Body has a sudden growth spurt.
- Body gains some weight and grows taller.
- Arms and legs grow longer.
- Hands and feet grow bigger.
- Bones in the face grow larger and longer, and the face looks less childlike.
- Soft, darkish hair grows around the vulva and later becomes curly, thick, and coarse.
- A tiny bit of sticky whitish fluid may come out of the vagina.

**PUBERTY FACT:** The whitish fluid that may flow out of the vagina is normal and helps keep it clean and healthy.



- Hips grow wider. Body begins to look more curvy.

**PUBERTY FACT:** A girl's hips grow wider, so that if and when she decides to have a baby, her baby will have enough room to leave the uterus when it is ready to be born.

- Hair grows under the arms.
- Breasts and nipples gradually grow larger and fuller.

**PUBERTY FACT:** A girl's breasts grow larger and fuller to prepare her body to make milk to nurse her baby if and when she has one.

- Nipples may become a darker color.
- Menstruation can begin.

**PUBERTY FACT:** Once the ovaries have grown larger, they start to release growth-up eggs, and menstruation begins. Once menstruation starts, a girl can become pregnant.

### Boys: Puberty Changes

- Testicles gradually grow larger and fuller.
- Penis gradually grows larger and longer.
- Body sweats more.
- Skin and hair become more oily.
- Body has a sudden growth spurt.
- Body gains weight and grows taller.
- Arms and legs grow longer.
- Hands and feet grow larger.
- Bones in the face grow, and the face looks less childlike.
- Soft, darkish hair grows around the base of the penis and later becomes curly, thick, and coarse.

- Hair grows under the arms.
- Shoulders and chest grow bigger.
- Bigger muscles develop.
- Scrotum turns a darker color.
- Hair grows on the face, first the mustache, then the beard and sideburns.
- Hair grows on the chest.

**PUBERTY FACT:** Sometimes the area around a boy's nipples may feel sore and may even swell. This is caused by the hormones that are released during puberty. The soreness and swelling go away after a few months.

- The larynx, or as it is commonly called, the voice box, grows bigger.

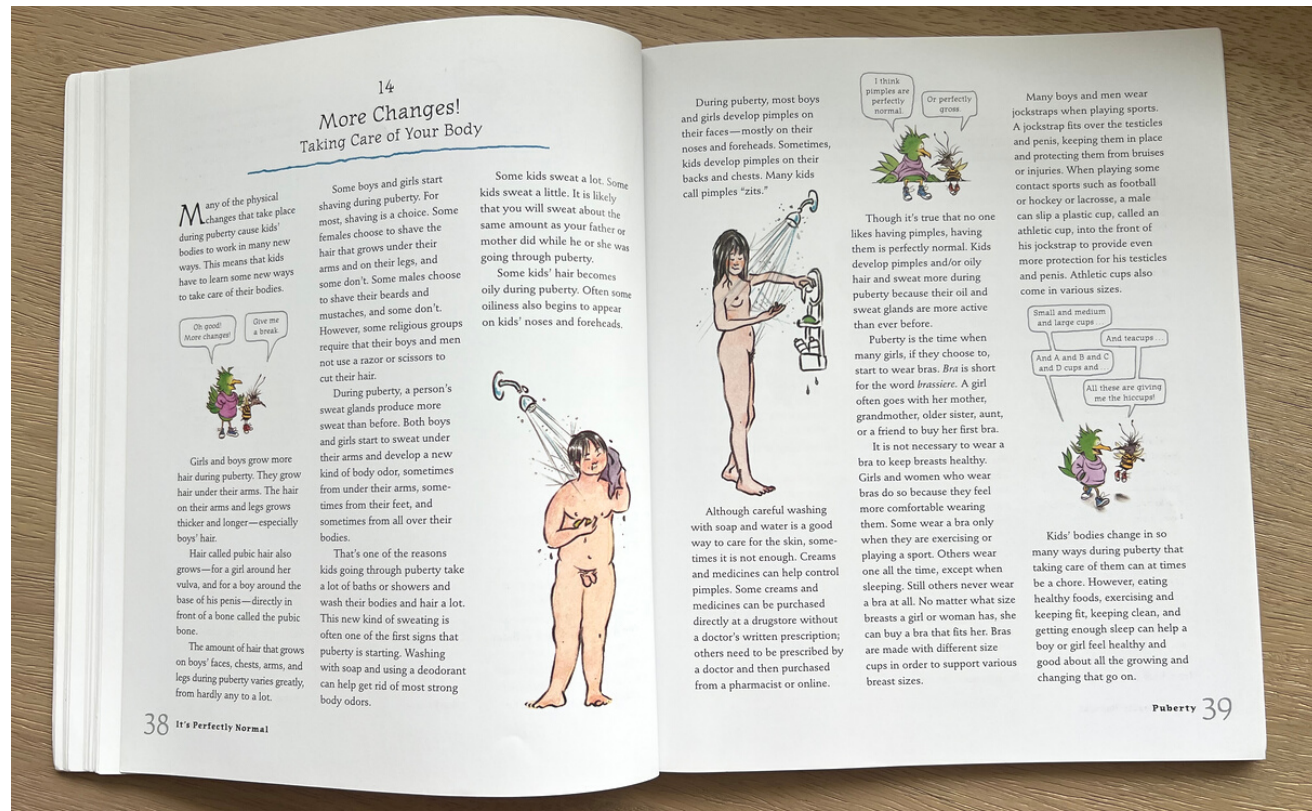
- The voice cracks and then becomes deeper.
- The Adam's apple may begin to show more.

**PUBERTY FACT:** When a boy's voice begins to change, one second it can sound high, one second low, and the next high again, causing a cracking, squeaky sound. But after a while, a boy's voice begins to sound deeper and lower, because the larynx and vocal cords have grown. As the larynx grows bigger, it may push the Adam's apple forward, causing it to show more.

- Sperm begin to be produced.
- Ejaculations—including wet dreams—begin to occur.

**PUBERTY FACT:** Once a male can make sperm, if he has intercourse and if the female's ovaries have started to release eggs, she can become pregnant.

At this age, kids' bodies change more dramatically and rapidly than at any other time in their lives—except for the very first year of life.



## 14 More Changes! Taking Care of Your Body

Many of the physical changes that take place during puberty cause kids' bodies to work in many new ways. This means that kids have to learn some new ways to take care of their bodies.

Oh good! More changes!

Give me a break!



Girls and boys grow more hair during puberty. They grow hair under their arms. The hair on their arms and legs grows thicker and longer—especially boys' hair.

Hair called pubic hair also grows—for a girl around her vulva, and for a boy around the base of his penis—directly in front of a bone called the pubic bone.

The amount of hair that grows on boys' faces, chests, arms, and legs during puberty varies greatly, from hardly any to a lot.

Some boys and girls start shaving during puberty. For most, shaving is a choice. Some females choose to shave the hair that grows under their arms and on their legs, and some don't. Some males choose to shave their beards and mustaches, and some don't. However, some religious groups require that their boys and men not use a razor or scissors to cut their hair.

During puberty, a person's sweat glands produce more sweat than before. Both boys and girls start to sweat under their arms and develop a new kind of body odor, sometimes from under their arms, sometimes from their feet, and sometimes from all over their bodies.

That's one of the reasons kids going through puberty take a lot of baths or showers and wash their bodies and hair a lot. This new kind of sweating is often one of the first signs that puberty is starting. Washing with soap and using a deodorant can help get rid of most strong body odors.

Some kids sweat a lot. Some kids sweat a little. It is likely that you will sweat about the same amount as your father or mother did while he or she was going through puberty.

Some kids' hair becomes oily during puberty. Often some oiliness also begins to appear on kids' noses and foreheads.



During puberty, most boys and girls develop pimples on their faces—mostly on their noses and foreheads. Sometimes, kids develop pimples on their backs and chests. Many kids call pimples "zits."

I think pimples are perfectly normal.

Or perfectly gross!



Though it's true that no one likes having pimples, having them is perfectly normal. Kids develop pimples and/or oily hair and sweat more during puberty because their oil and sweat glands are more active than ever before.

Puberty is the time when many girls, if they choose to, start to wear bras. *Bra* is short for the word *brassiere*. A girl often goes with her mother, grandmother, older sister, aunt, or a friend to buy her first bra.

It is not necessary to wear a bra to keep breasts healthy. Girls and women who wear bras do so because they feel more comfortable wearing them. Some wear a bra only when they are exercising or playing a sport. Others wear one all the time, except when sleeping. Still others never wear a bra at all. No matter what size breasts a girl or woman has, she can buy a bra that fits her. Bras are made with different size cups in order to support various breast sizes.

Many boys and men wear jockstraps when playing sports. A jockstrap fits over the testicles and penis, keeping them in place and protecting them from bruises or injuries. When playing some contact sports such as football or hockey or lacrosse, a male can slip a plastic cup, called an athletic cup, into the front of his jockstrap to provide even more protection for his testicles and penis. Athletic cups also come in various sizes.

Small and medium and large cups  
And teacups  
And A and B and C and D cups and  
All these are giving me the hiccup!



Kids' bodies change in so many ways during puberty that taking care of them can at times be a chore. However, eating healthy foods, exercising and keeping fit, keeping clean, and getting enough sleep can help a boy or girl feel healthy and good about all the growing and changing that go on.





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intercourse say that they can still have a close, loving, and sexy relationship with another person.

Sometimes, when people choose to have vaginal intercourse, they have planned to have a baby. But other people may want to wait to have a baby or may not want to have a baby at all. That's why knowing how to prevent pregnancy is important.

**Birth control and contraception** are the two names given to the many ways of preventing a pregnancy.

*Contra* is the Latin word for against. *Conception* is part of the word *conception*, which means beginning. *Contraception* means against beginning a pregnancy.

There are many kinds of birth control, and some work better than others. For most kinds, a person must learn how to use them correctly and every time he or she has sexual intercourse in order for them to work. However, no method of birth control can be guaranteed to work 100 percent of the time.

If a person makes the decision to have sexual intercourse, the most useful protection against pregnancy is the correct use of birth control before or at the time of sexual intercourse. It's important to know and

remember that using any type of birth control can help to prevent a pregnancy and most often it does prevent a pregnancy. But using ANY type of birth control method without ALSO using a condom does not protect a couple from getting or passing on a sexually transmitted disease. That's why a couple must also use a condom. It's also important to know and remember that the best protection from becoming infected with a sexually transmitted disease AND from becoming pregnant is for a couple to use a condom WITH another type of birth control.



Condoms can be bought at a drugstore, a convenience store, or a supermarket. They are often displayed in a special section or on the counter next to the cash register—and no prescription is needed. Condoms can also be bought online.

A male condom is a soft, very thin cover that fits over an erect penis. When a male

ejaculates, semen is kept inside the condom and sperm are not able to enter the vagina and unite with an egg.

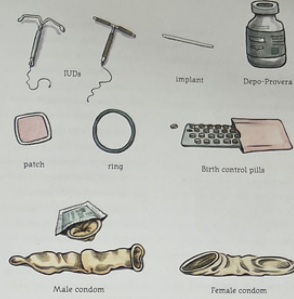


Putting on a male condom

Condoms are called "rubbers" because they are usually made out of a rubbery material called latex. There are other types of male condoms made out of rubbery materials called polyurethane and polyisoprene. It is important to use a latex, polyurethane, or polyisoprene condom—not a lambskin condom. Viruses that are transmitted by sexual contact, such as HIV and hepatitis B can spread through the tiny pores in the lambskin and cause a person to become infected.



So condoms are rubbers? But not like the ones you wear in the rain!



A condom designed to fit inside the vagina, called the female condom, is often made out of a rubbery material called synthetic nitrile. This soft pouch-like condom is inserted into the vagina before sexual intercourse.

Using a new condom during sexual intercourse, correctly and every time, can also help prevent the spread of infections—mild infections as well as life-threatening infections such as HIV and hepatitis B. This is a way of practicing safer sex. The most common infection that can be passed on is chlamydia. Although chlamydia is not life-threatening, it can cause infertility so that a female will not be able to become pregnant in the future and have a baby. It's important to understand that any type of birth control method, when used by itself—without a condom—cannot prevent a person from getting an infection from or passing on an infection to another person.

It is also important to use condoms with silicone- or

water-based lubricants made especially for sex, and not made with oil. Oil can damage and break a latex condom.

The IUD, the implant, and Depo-Provera are the most effective kinds of birth control. The pill, the patch, and the ring are almost as effective. Other kinds of birth control can also be effective, but are not quite as effective. The IUD, Depo-Provera, the implant, birth control pills, the patch, the ring, the cervical cap, and the diaphragm are all contraceptives that a female can obtain only after talking with a trained health-care professional—a doctor,

midwife, nurse practitioner, or a physician's assistant—and obtaining a written prescription. The prescribed birth control method can then be obtained at a doctor's office or health clinic or purchased at a drugstore or from an online pharmacy.

An IUD, or intrauterine device, is a small plastic device that is placed inside the uterus by a trained health-care professional and affects the way sperm move—so that sperm cannot swim to and join with an egg.

The implant and Depo-Provera are birth control methods that contain artificial hormones that keep the ovaries from releasing eggs. The implant,



egg has been released, because the time can vary from month to month—especially for many teenage girls.

When a couple uses the withdrawal method, the male removes his penis from the female's vagina just before he ejaculates. This method does not work very well either because some semen may leak out before ejaculation or because the male may fail to remove his penis before he ejaculates.

Sometimes when people decide not to have more children, they may choose to have a simple operation called sterilization.

When a male has this operation—called a vasectomy—a small piece of the vas deferens is removed or tied off by a doctor. As a result, the semen that is ejaculated no longer carries any sperm.

When a female has this operation—called a tubal ligation or a tubal sterilization—a small piece of each Fallopian

tube is removed or tied off or blocked by a doctor so that an egg cannot get to the uterus and sperm cannot get to an egg.

Some religions and groups and some individuals believe that using any method of birth control is wrong. Others believe that using the rhythm method and withdrawal method is fine. However, they also believe that using over-the-counter and prescription birth control methods is wrong.

Still many others think birth control is a fine and responsible way to prevent an unwanted pregnancy or delay having a baby. These people use birth control to help them plan a family.

I believe in planning. Each fall we birds plan to fly south. But do you ever plan to stay south?



Your parent or parents, doctor or nurse, or other health-care providers are good people to talk with about birth control, postponement, and abstinence. If you talk with a doctor or nurse or health-care provider, your talk will be confidential. **Neighborhood health clinics or family planning clinics are also places to go for information.**



## 24 Laws and Rulings Abortion

An abortion is a medical procedure performed for the purpose of ending a pregnancy. Some pregnant females choose to have abortions. People's feelings about having abortions are not always simple, however, and can range from relief to sadness, from worry to fear.



The word *abort* means to stop or to end something at an early stage. An abortion is usually performed in a clinic or a hospital by a doctor or other trained health-care professional and is a safe procedure, especially when done early in the pregnancy. The pregnancy is ended by removing the embryo or fetus from the uterus. The procedure itself takes about five minutes and is usually performed during the first three months of pregnancy,

before most females even look pregnant.

There are pills that can end a pregnancy and are used as another method of abortion. The pills cause the lining of the uterus and the embryo to leave the female's body. They can be taken by a pregnant female during the first ten weeks of a pregnancy. The first medication is taken at a doctor's office or clinic. The second is usually taken at home one or two days later and followed by a check-up with a doctor or nurse.

These are some, but not all, of the reasons why a female or a couple might want or need to end a pregnancy:

- The female has an illness or inherited disease that makes the pregnancy or her health and might even cause her death.
- A test shows that the fetus is carrying a serious inherited disease or a serious birth defect.
- The mother or father is sick and unable to take care of a baby.
- The parents do not have enough money or time to take good care of a baby or they already

have children and cannot afford another child.

- The parents feel they are too young to take care of a baby in a responsible manner.
- The female feels she was not ready to become pregnant.
- The female was forced to have sexual intercourse against her will—raped—and became pregnant as a result.
- The female is single and feels she is not able to raise a child on her own.
- The female did not intend or want to become pregnant.

People have very strong feelings about whether or not a female has the right to choose to have an abortion. In some countries, abortion is a right for all women and girls; while in others, the right to abortion is only permitted in some circumstances.

In 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States, which is the highest and most powerful court in the nation, ruled that a woman has the right to end an unwanted pregnancy. This ruling also says that no state can limit that right until very

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