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## TEACHING GUIDE



### MEET THE NEW YOU! For Boys

No. 9571

Recommended for Grades 3-5

You asked and we delivered! This introduction to puberty includes new music, new information and a fresh, new take on the changes coming soon for boys! Prepare your youngest student with the basics of puberty.

Topics include:

- When to expect the onset of puberty
- Physical and emotional changes
- The importance of good hygiene, nutrition, exercise and sleep
- Self-esteem
- Body Image

## SCRIPT

BOY 1: New!

BOY 2: New!

BOY 3: New!

ALL BOYS: NEW!

Everyone loves something new. New clothes, new gear, new songs, new movies, or . . . making new friends, or . . . starting a new school year. New things . . . are exciting!

And the world and nature is always changing, always starting anew. Springtime brings new flowers; winter brings new snow; summer brings new adventures; and fall brings new color to the leaves.

And how about . . . YOU? Do you feel new? Well, you're reaching an age where physical changes and all sorts of new feelings will start happening to you. This is a very special time in your life. And that time has a name! It's called PUBERTY!

Your body is going to start going through some very interesting developments. Some of the changes you will experience will be awkward and difficult! But most will be very exciting and new! It's time . . . to Meet the New You!

**Puberty – Wow, that word kind of scares me.  
What does it mean?**

Puberty is the word that describes the time when the human body changes from a child into an adult. Puberty for boys can begin at any time between the ages of 9 and 16. And it usually starts a little later for boys than for girls.

Puberty happens at different times for different people. It can start early for some boys and much later for others. There is a wide range of normal, and YOU will start puberty when YOUR body is ready. And don't worry, not all of the changes happen suddenly, or at the same time.

During this time you'll start to develop the physical traits of a male adult. Your height and weight will increase and you'll start to look like a young man. Your shoulders will broaden; your muscles will become more developed. Hair will grow under your arms, in the pubic area, and on your face. The hair on your arms and legs will grow thicker. Many boys, but not all, will develop chest hair.

### **How does my body know when to start puberty?**

Your body is an amazing machine, with many different systems to make it function. One of the most important systems is the glandular system.

There are oil glands, sweat glands, and glands that help you digest your food. Some glands produce chemicals called hormones that act like messengers in the body. They travel from the glands to other parts of the body where they help control how cells and organs do their work.

One of the most influential glands is the pituitary gland, which is located at the base of your brain. The pituitary gland controls many important functions, including growth and development. The hormones from the pituitary gland are what trigger the many changes that start during puberty.

### **I can see the changes that happen OUTSIDE my body, but what are the changes that are happening INSIDE my body?**

Let's take a look! The pituitary gland produces hormones that cause changes to occur in organs that are located in your pelvic area. The two main organs are the penis and the testicles. The penis is a tube-shaped organ located at the front of your body. Behind the penis are the testicles; two egg-shaped organs carried inside a pouch of loose skin called the scrotum. The testicles produce the hormone testosterone, which plays a key role in puberty, such as the increased growth of body hair, muscle development, a changing voice and even changes in the way you think and act!

Normally the penis hangs down. However, sometimes the penis will become stiff and stand out from the body. This is called an erection. An erection happens when the sponge-like tissue inside the penis fills with blood. Sometimes during puberty, boys may experience involuntary erections. They happen without warning and for no apparent reason. This is perfectly normal. The erection will go away as the muscles relax.

Occasionally, some boys may have erections while they sleep and a small amount of fluid may be released. This is called a nocturnal emission or a wet dream, and it does not mean that you wet the bed. In fact, it is a sign that you are growing up!

**My voice keeps cracking when I talk,  
and it's really embarrassing.**

**Why do boys' voices change during puberty?**

Both boys' and girls' voices change during adolescence, but in boys it's usually more noticeable. Your vocal cords work a little like guitar strings: the longer they get, the deeper your voice gets. You'll know your voice is changing when it "cracks" on you.

**Boy: I hate it when that happens!**

It's just one of a number of occasionally awkward growing pains you'll experience. Try to keep your sense of humor and remember; puberty happens to everyone.

**It's a lot more important to me now to feel clean  
and to take care of my appearance. Why is that?**

When you were a little kid and you played hard, you might have gotten sweaty and dirty. But you're older now. How you act, how you look, and, yes, how you SMELL, are very important in developing social skills and relationships.

During puberty, sweat glands in your body become very active. Hormones cause your body to produce more oils. These oils can combine with sweat and bacteria present on your skin to cause . . . body odor.

It's important to take a shower or a bath every day. Wash your body with soap and water. Be sure to wash your face, under your arms, your back, your feet, and your private parts.

Wash your hair with shampoo whenever it needs it, but at least every two or three days. Clean hair looks nice and smells nice too.

Many boys also start to use an underarm deodorant or antiperspirant during puberty. But remember, using deodorant or body spray is no substitute for a bath or shower.

You should brush your teeth once in the morning, after breakfast; and once in the evening, just before bed. It is also important to brush your tongue! Use dental floss every day to clean between your teeth. Brushing your teeth keeps them strong and healthy, and makes your breath smell fresh.

Wearing clean clothes, socks, and underwear each day is really important. Even if you shower every day and use deodorant, dirty clothes can start to smell! If you sweat a lot you might find that shirts, T-shirts, socks and underwear made from cotton or other natural materials will help keep you cool, and absorb sweat more effectively.

Puberty is also a time when some boys will start growing enough facial hair that they may want to start shaving. But before trying this yourself, you should check with your parent or another trusted adult. They can help you choose the right method of shaving and can show you how to avoid injuries. And remember don't ever share razors as it can spread disease.

**I wish I was taller!**  
**I wish I looked older!**  
**I wish I had more muscles!**

Another important issue is body image. Some people think that only girls worry about their looks. Not true – boys are just as concerned about

their appearance, and almost every boy wishes there was something different about his body. Sports are very popular and there can be pressure on boys to look strong and athletic and muscular. While it's true that exercise makes you feel and look your best, very few young men are meant to look like bodybuilders or weight lifters. And over-exercising; lifting too much weight; taking chemicals or supplements that promise to build muscles; this can all be very dangerous to your health! Keep in mind, the media – TV, movies, websites and magazines, often create unrealistic images that boys try to live up to. They use special lighting, makeup, and digital effects to make athletes, models and actors look...well, perfect. And nobody's perfect!

Part of growing up is being healthy and happy with who you really are, and what you really look like.

### **Why do I get pimples?**

#### **Is there anything I can do about it?**

You'll discover that your oil glands will begin to produce more oil, particularly on your face. With the increase in oil, it's likely you'll have to deal with some blemishes, such as pimples and blackheads. The best way to fight blemishes is to keep your skin clean. Wash your face gently with a mild soap and water or cleanser once or twice a day. Cleaning your skin more often than that can dry it out too much.

Keeping your hands clean and avoiding touching pimples will also help. Talk to your parent or school nurse about over-the-counter medications to treat pimples and blackheads.

### **It seems like I'm hungry all of the time!**

#### **Should I worry about gaining weight?**

Gaining some weight at this time in your life is normal! You're getting taller, and your shape is

changing, so it's natural to weigh a little more. But as you have probably heard, obesity and being overweight is becoming a big problem for some young people. The main cause of this is too many sugary and fatty foods, and not enough exercise.

It's important to know what foods are good for your body, and to eat a variety of those foods. A healthy diet, combined with regular exercise (sports, swimming, running, even taking a walk) will help you feel your best, and keep a proper weight for your height and body type.

When you're thirsty, there are lots of different choices. But the best choice for your body – the best way to relieve your thirst – is to drink plenty of water! Sports drinks can be used if you've been exercising especially hard. Fruit juice has lots of calories, and, of course, soda pop is bad for your bones and teeth and has too much sugar and caffeine. Try to drink three big glass of water, about eight cups, every day.

### **How much sleep should I be getting?**

The right amount of sleep is essential for success in school, sports, and life! Most kids need about 8 ½ to more than 10 hours of sleep each night. Unfortunately, though, many don't get enough sleep. Here are some tips to help you get the rest you need:

- Set a regular bedtime. Going to bed at the same time each night signals to your body that it's time to sleep. Waking up at the same time every day can also help establish healthy sleep patterns.
- Exercise regularly, but not too close to bedtime. Exercising in late afternoon can help you get a good night's sleep.
- Don't nap too much. Naps of more than 30 minutes during the day may keep you from falling asleep later.
- Avoid stimulants. Don't drink beverages with caffeine, such as soda and coffee.

- Relax your mind. Avoid scary or violent movies, TV shows, or books right before bedtime.

### **Some days are difficult and confusing. Who should I talk to when I have problems or questions?**

Big changes are happening to your body, inside and out. Along with these physical changes, there are new emotions and feelings that will happen, too. One day you might feel happy, and the next day you might feel sad or really tired for no reason at all. You might find that some things get on your nerves, or make you angry, or make you feel frustrated. This is normal – even though some days it may be difficult to deal with.

It can really help to talk to an adult you can trust and feel comfortable with. A parent or special caregiver can answer your questions, and help you discuss problems or difficult situations in your life. You might also talk to a school counselor or nurse, or a trusted teacher. These adults were kids once too, and can give you advice and be good listeners.

### **Sometimes I feel really awkward, and like everybody is staring at me. Why am I so self-conscious?**

Some days you might look in the mirror and think, “Who is that?” The changes to your body are happening so fast and this can make you feel self-conscious. You might think your feet are too big, or you’re getting too tall, or you’re still too short, or you’re changing too fast, or not changing fast enough! Take a deep breath – everyone your age is going through these changes, too. Give it some time – you will get used to this brand new you!

Do you know what “self-esteem” means? Self-esteem is how you see yourself! It’s about how good, and how valuable you think you are. It’s about liking yourself.

This is a good time to get to know yourself better. Try out new things – you might be surprised at



what you're good at. You'll discover new things that make you feel happy and fulfilled. And you'll learn that making other people happy can make you happy too.

Another thing you can do to feel better about your body, and about yourself, is to get plenty of exercise. If you enjoy sports – that's great. Find a team that works for you. If sports aren't your thing, there are still a lot of fun ways to get exercise. Even taking a walk can give you the exercise you need. 60 minutes a day, all or most days of the week, will make you feel better, look better, maintain a healthy weight, and have more energy.

**Spending time with my friends is becoming more and more important to me.**

Spending time with your friends, caring about what they think about you, and fitting into the social groups will all increase during puberty. Peer pressure, pressure to do what your friends are doing, can happen a lot during this stage of life, and most people don't like to feel excluded. But being different or making different choices from the rest of the group can be a very brave thing to do.

When problems with your friends or your classmates arise, this is another good time to have a trusted adult you can talk to. A parent, guardian, school nurse or counselor can give you good advice about how to handle tough or confusing situations. And if things get really difficult, if you are bullied or intimidated, you have the right to be protected. Tell your parents or school counselor about any dangerous situations. They'll help you figure out the best way to make it stop!

As you become a young adult, you'll find out it's a big world out there. And with all the new changes that are happening to you, you'll find out that your world is full of new experiences

and new adventures. Make good choices, make good friends, and get to know yourself. You will discover new abilities, new talents, and new possibilities that you never could have imagined when you were younger.

MEET THE NEW YOU!

*The End*

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## VOCABULARY

Abdomen	Involuntary Erection
Adolescence	Peer Pressure
Bacteria	Pelvic Area
Blackheads	Penis
Blemishes	Pimples
Erection	Pituitary Gland
Gland	Puberty
Glandular System	Scrotum
Hygiene	Testicles
Hormones	Testosterone

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To describe the physical changes boys will experience during puberty.
2. To promote healthy habits during puberty.
3. To stress the importance of good hygiene.
4. To describe emotional changes boys may experience during puberty.
5. To promote self-esteem and a healthy body image.

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

1. Encourage students to become familiar with the terminology and concepts of puberty by labeling prepared illustrations or discussing the basic biology and function of the parts that make up the male reproductive system.

2. Invite students to write down information they have learned about puberty from various sources, such as a friend or sibling. Use the information to create a “Fact or Fiction” information sheet about puberty.
3. Puberty is a time in life when boys can become overwhelmed with the changes in their lives. Have students identify ways to deal with these changes in a positive way. Volunteering, physical activity, music and art are some examples of positive ways to relieve stress and increase self-esteem.
4. Long-term goals may seem far away and unattainable at this age. Encourage students to list short term goals that can be accomplished now that may lead to long-term goals. Volunteering at your local Zoo or Humane Society could be an excellent short-term goal for students interested in becoming a veterinarian!
5. Puberty can be a great time to try new things and learn new skills. It’s a time for getting to know yourself better. Give students some time to think about themselves and to assess some strong points. Doing so is an important part of growing up and preparing for a productive and satisfying future. Have students make a list of things they are good at to keep as a reminder.
6. Bullying can be a problem at any age, but can be even more prevalent during puberty. Role-play situations of bullying and techniques for alerting a trusted adult. Make sure to include the four sides of bullying (person being bullied, bully, by-stander, person who intervenes) in your role-play.

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