

HAVING THE TALKS: BOYS + PUBERTY

Different Ways To Start the Conversation

"Have you ever noticed at [insert name of your child's sport] how the boys really vary in how tall and developed they are? It was totally the same way when I played [insert sport] at your age. Puberty can start anywhere from 9-15 so boys will be all over the map."

"Hey, I noticed that you're starting to grow some facial hair, which happens for lots of boys around now. I picked up some shaving supplies for you at the drugstore but let me know if you want help figuring out how to use them. When I tried to shave for the first time when I was around your age I made a huge mess!"

"You're so lucky I still do your laundry (ha ha ha) and I just wanted you to know that it's really normal for boys as they're going through puberty to have something called a wet dream. It's when the penis releases semen while you're asleep, which means you can wake up with a wetness in your pajamas and/or on the sheets. If that happens, I just don't want you to worry about it. Just change your clothes and put the sheets in the hamper. I won't ask what happened, I promise. Let me know if you have questions or want to talk more about any of that at any time. All of these changes of puberty can be a little overwhelming."

"I know it can be embarrassing to have your voice crack when you're talking at this age. It's a frustrating part of puberty as your voice is getting deeper but it doesn't happen all at once. Try not to get too upset about it since it's really normal and everyone who went through puberty had to deal with it at some point too. I'm always here to talk about it if you ever want to."

"Hey, sorry I was so grumpy the other day! Even now as an adult, I get pretty moody sometimes. Have you been feeling that way too, now that things are changing?"

"When I was your age, we never learned that masturbating—or touching yourself to feel pleasure—could not hurt us. Boy, did that come as a big relief. Is that something you've heard anything about?"

