

HAVING THE TALKS: GIRLS + PUBERTY

Sample Language for Key Messages

There are 3 key messages to communicate with girls when you're talking about puberty. Below is sample language you can use to convey those messages!

Key Message	Sample language
<p>1</p> <p>Puberty starts between ages 8-13; it's different for everyone</p>	<p>"Puberty is when your body changes in order to allow it to physically reproduce and become an adult. Everyone goes through it."</p> <p>"There are many physical, emotional and social changes that happen during puberty and it generally takes 5-7 years for all of the changes to be complete."</p> <p>"Puberty is not a race! Everyone will be different when it comes to when things start."</p>
<p>2</p> <p>It's normal to feel a lot of different things during puberty</p>	<p>"It's totally normal to feel embarrassed, uncomfortable, self-conscious and/or excited by all of the changes your body is going through."</p> <p>"Puberty can be a little confusing; there's so much going on! It's OK not to know things so just ask. I'll do the best I can to answer your questions and if there's something I'm not sure about we can look it up together."</p> <p>"Having an adult you trust to talk to about these changes is a good thing, whether that's me or [insert name of a trusted adult, e.g., teacher, coach, relative]."</p> <p>"Mood swings and sexual feelings are totally normal things that happen during puberty."</p> <p>"You may feel like you want more privacy from parents and/or siblings and that is totally normal."</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Several changes happen during puberty: breast development, ovulation/ periods, pubic and underarm hair, stinky sweat, hips get wider, sexual feelings</p>	<p>"A lot of changes happen during puberty. You will develop breasts, you'll get your period, you'll grow pubic and underarm hair, your body will fill out, and you will start to have sexual feelings."</p> <p>"Most girls get their first period a couple of years after breast buds and pubic hair have begun to grow, although there's no way to know exactly when someone will get their first period."</p> <p>"A period is when a small amount of blood and tissue leave the body through the vagina. It happens about once a month and can last between a couple of days and a week."</p> <p>"Your period happens because your hormones tell your body to start preparing for a pregnancy. Your body tells your uterus to start creating a thick, lush "bed" of blood and nutrients in case you have sex and a baby starts to grow in there. If there's no pregnancy, the uterus pushes out the blood and nutrients, which is your period."</p> <p>"It's normal to feel nervous or anxious about getting your period. It's good to carry some period supplies like a pad, tampon, or feminine hygiene cup with you, but if you get your period and don't have those supplies with you, go see the school nurse."</p> <p>"The whole period contains less than a couple of tablespoons of blood but it can seem like more because it all comes out really slowly. Don't worry, there's no risk to your health from having a period."</p> <p>"Some girls have cramps during their periods, but other girls don't. Exercise, warm baths and a heating pad can help. If these aren't enough, ask an adult to give you a mild pain reliever like Ibuprofen."</p> <p>"Some girls will shave under their arms and/or shave their legs, but some don't."</p> <p>"It's common to have occasional acne and your sweat may have a strong odor. Showering regularly helps a lot and some people use a deodorant or antiperspirant."</p>

