

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our children begin growing and changing the very moment they are born. Now adolescence brings a time of bigger changes, when your daughter's growth and development start preparing her for womanhood. During this phase, called puberty, she will mature physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially. It can take anywhere from one to six years and marks the time when her body will begin to look more like a woman's and less like a girl's.

The changes of puberty and adolescence don't happen on a strict timeline; instead they occur over time based on your daughter's unique internal calendar. Adolescence can be a challenging time. Girls may feel caught between being a child and being a grownup; they may be excited about their new social roles, or they may be afraid and confused about their changing bodies. All these emotions are common, and normal. In fact, their feelings about puberty will likely change from day to day.

Parents play a critical role during this time of transition. Talking to your daughter about changes she will encounter during puberty is an incredibly important job. Girls need access to reliable information and support from sources such as yourself and web-sites like www.toynachin.com. During this complex phase of life, your involvement can foster positive experiences while your daughter matures not only in body, but in mind and spirit as well.

Often, girls are embarrassed or nervous to approach their parents about puberty, leaving them uninformed about the physical changes they are experiencing. Or, some girls may rely on inaccurate or incomplete information. Therefore, beginning a conversation with your daughter about puberty is vital. But make sure the first conversation is the beginning of many more to come.

When talking with their daughters, we encourage parents to emphasize that all the changes of puberty are normal changes. Girls will benefit from hearing that you went through similar experiences at their age. Talk to her about how you felt when you realized you were becoming a woman, what it felt like when you first got your period, or when you bought your first bra. Convey that although the stages of puberty are similar for all girls, they don't always happen at the same pace. Each young girl should understand that her body has its own developmental schedule and rhythms which are different from anyone else's. Many girls begin to feel insecure about appearance during puberty. Reassure



your daughter that her body will eventually regulate itself and the hormonal changes which spur height, weight, mood and acne will return to a state of balance.

Tell your daughter that you are available to her anytime she wants to talk. Maybe you could even come up with a signal word so that if she's nervous about asking for some private time with you, you'll know because she'll use your special password. Also make sure YOU ask for time to talk with her. Put it on the calendar. She'll know what it means. It's an honor to talk to your daughter about her journey into womanhood. Treat it as such. Even if you are nervous, just remember how much easier it will be for your daughter if she has an open, honest, informed adult to turn to.

So get ready. Your journey with her is about to begin.

Best of luck,
Toyna Chin

Developed by: Valerie Sabbag, Health Educator
and curriculum developer.

This lesson was developed in consultation
with Dr. Michelle Bourke.

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