

Changing expectations



There are lots of changes that will happen to your child when they go through puberty. These are:

- body changes
- emotional changes
- social changes

It is important for parents to understand these changes. It will help you to prepare yourself and your child for puberty.

It is important to prepare as early as possible.



What is on this page?

This page is about supporting your child with the social changes that happen during puberty.

It has information about:

- your child's growing independence. Independence means doing things by yourself
- social changes and learning new skills
- talking about changing relationships with your child
- ways to help your child prepare for social changes at puberty



Your child's growing independence

As your child grows up, they may want:

- more privacy. For example, when speaking to their friends or getting changed
- more time with friends and less time with family
- a boyfriend or girlfriend
- more independence

These are all normal things that many children want as they grow older.

Some of the things your child wants may not happen straight away.

This might be because:

- they are too young
- it is out of your control
- their support needs make it hard it is out of your control, like finding a boyfriend or girlfriend



This is OK.

Talk to your child about how you can help them learn new skills to meet these goals as they get older.

For example, you cannot promise your child that they will find a friend, but you can make a plan to help your child make new friends.



Social goals and learning new skills

Some of the skills that can make it easier for your child to make new relationships and be more independent are:

- good hygiene
- independent living skills
- conversation skills

Some children do not like learning these skills.

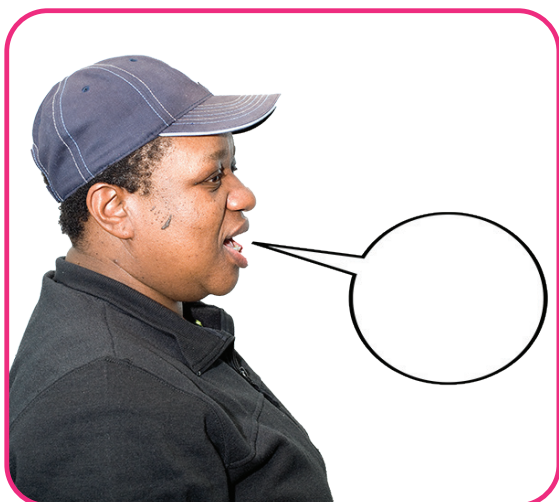
You can use their goals to encourage them.

For example, if your child wants a boyfriend you can use this goal to encourage them to improve their hygiene and conversation skills.



Learning these skills will also help your child to:

- keep their body healthy
- make healthy relationships in the future
- be more independent



Talking to your child about social changes at puberty

Sometimes it can be hard to talk to your child about the social changes at puberty.

You might not know what to say.

You might feel embarrassed.

This is OK.

Here are some ways you can start talking to your child about social changes:



- “Your sister has a new boyfriend. Have you ever thought about if you want a boyfriend or girlfriend too?”
- “You’ve been doing so well lately speaking to the worker at the takeaway shop. Did you want to try ordering the food by yourself next time?”
- “The teenager on that show just told their mum that they want to spend more time by themselves. Is that something you ever think about?”



Teaching your child about social changes

Think about your own values and experiences

When supporting your child to learn about the social changes that happen during puberty it is important to think about:

- your personal, cultural and religious values
- what you want life to look like for your child in the future
- what you want them to be able to do
- what you want their relationships to look like



This will help you to answer your child's questions about social changes at puberty.

It will help you to support them to learn new skills to meet their new social goals.

Support your child to be more independent

Independence is different for every child.

Think about the skills that your child has now, and how you can support them to build those skills.

For example:

If your child needs help putting clothes on, they could choose the outfit they want to wear.

You could start by asking them to pick between two different outfits.

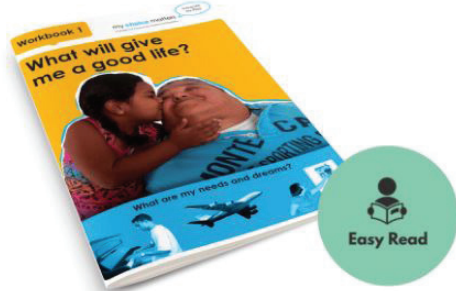


Or if your child wants to make new friends but they find it hard talking to strangers, they could practice ordering food at the takeaway shop.

Resources for you to use

Trusted people worksheet

<https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/My-safe-people-F.pdf>



CID What Will Give Me a Good Life workbook series

<https://cid.org.au/resource-tag/workbook/>



What to read next

- [Healthy relationships](#)
- [Feelings in relationships](#)
- [Things people do in relationships](#)

For more information go to the
Planet Puberty website

www.planetpuberty.org.au