

Additional Resources: Suggestions for Parents

The information on further resources is meant to serve as a guideline only. Each child or adolescent develops and asks questions at their own pace. I respect that families differ in spiritual beliefs, culture and values. Choose the information that best fits you and the values of your family

***It's Not the Stork!* by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley**

Appropriate age: Around 5+, use your judgement.

Approach: Quality reading time, and answering questions.

This is a great resource for answering young children's questions. The text in this book is moderately explicit, using terms such as penis and vagina, but has no explicit images. The adults do things "under the covers" in the illustrations, but the text does not evade answering questions. Advertised for kids as young as 4, remember to use your judgement. If nothing else, it's a great book for the first "talk."

***Let's talk about where Babies come from* by Robie Harris and Michael Emberley**

Appropriate audience: 6-10

Approach: Quality reading time for one-on-one discussion.

This book has a lovely sense of humour. Good for adults reading with younger children who are asking lots of questions. Pre-teens often enjoy and get a laugh from the comic statements made by the children in the book. It is a great book for elementary age kids and remains a steadfast resource for years. This is mostly a basics book, but it addresses different kinds of love, relationships, and the difference between "love" and "making love."

Busy Bodies A book about puberty for you and your parents by the HSE and Crisis Pregnancy Agency (and video can viewed online.)

Appropriate age: 10- 14

Approach: ***Busy Bodies Adolescent Development Programme*** provides information on the physical and emotional changes that children may experience during puberty, to reassure them that puberty is a normal part of growing up. https://www.healthpromotion.ie/health/inner/busy_bodies

Talking to Your Young Child about Relationships, Sexuality and Growing Up by the HSE and Crisis Pregnancy Agency

Appropriate age: 4-9

Approach: A resource which comprises of two booklets; a parent's guide, 'Talking to Your Young Child about Relationships, Sexuality and Growing Up' and a story booklet, 'Tom's Power Flower; A gentle explanation of how babies are made.

<https://www.healthpromotion.ie/publication/fullListing?category=Sexual+Health&searchHSE=>

It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex, and Sexual Health by Robie Harris and Michael Emberley

Appropriate audience: 10+

Approach: Read some together, then let the book do the talking. Answer questions appropriately.

This thorough guide to changing bodies, growing up, sex, and sexual health does a great job covering all the bases, including embarrassing erections! The newest edition now includes a chapter on the safe use of the Internet. The illustrations are for older kids but are creative and eye-catching. If you are looking for upfront and non-biased information, this would fit the bill. Beautifully illustrated and presents the facts in a reassuring, responsible, warm and charming manner. But definitely use your judgement, though. You know what's best for your child.

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Usborne What's happening to me (a book for boys and a book for girls) by Alex Frith (Author) and Nancy Leschnikoff (Illustrator)

Appropriate audience: 10+

Approach: Go through a little of the book together and then allow independent reading. Be prepared to answer questions. Factual information in simple language with lots of illustrations.

Usborne Understanding the Facts of Life by Susan Meredith and Robyn Gee

Appropriate audience: 10+

Approach: Highly acclaimed guide with a straightforward approach and reassuring information. Describes exactly what happens at puberty, with informative sections on sex, contraception and sexually transmitted diseases, and advice on hygiene, exercise and healthy eating. Traces the development of a baby from conception to birth and first years of life, with practical information on how to help take care of a baby. It probably touches on subjects i.e. STIs and contraception, that younger children are not going to be interested in. Parents need to be considered what with, and if they comfortable to answers questions that can come up. Hence, my advice it to use your judgement. You know what's best for your child.

The Secret Business of relationships, love and sex By Heather Anderson , Fay Angelo and Rose Stewart

Appropriate age: 14 +

Approach: This book is attempts to balance talking about the important stuff while not providing them with too much information about everything to do with sex!

This book covers alot of information, such as, romantic relationships (sexual attraction, sexual decision making), gender identity and sexual preference, healthy relationships, emotional and physical safety (contraception, unplanned pregnancy, STIs) and legal issues. This Australian publication talks about sex, but also talks about all the other parts that make up healthy and safe relationships. I recommend you read the book first and make your own judgement. You can always use it for a reference book for yourself to help you with those awkward conversations.

My Princess Boy: A mom's story about a young boy who loves to dress up by Cheryl Kilodavis (Author) and Suzanne Desimone (Illustrator)

Appropriate age: 6-10

Approach: Quality reading time for one-on-one discussion.

This book is a resource for tackling non-traditional gender identification. There are a million reasons to accept people just as they are. Reading about a boy who doesn't go with the stereotypical boy flow will open up discussions about understanding and accepting differences. The illustrations in this book show faces with no features, presumably to remind readers that the characters can be anyone. However, some children may be perplexed by these faceless people, so adult readers need to be prepared to address this fact or to redirect children's attention back to the story.

Heather has Two Mummies by Leslea Newman (Author) and Laura Cornell (Illustrator)

Appropriate age: 6-10

Approach: Quality reading time for one-on-one discussion.

This is a warm and gentle view of a little girl starting school, meeting new friends, and discovering a wider world. The kids learn that differences are just another part of life. The illustrations are superb, filling the book with a rainbow of colour and texture. The text is simple and powerful. It reflects the innocence of children who see potential friends and not differences.

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