



The Growing Up Book

Author: Yamini Vijayan

Illustrator: Aindri C

Level 4

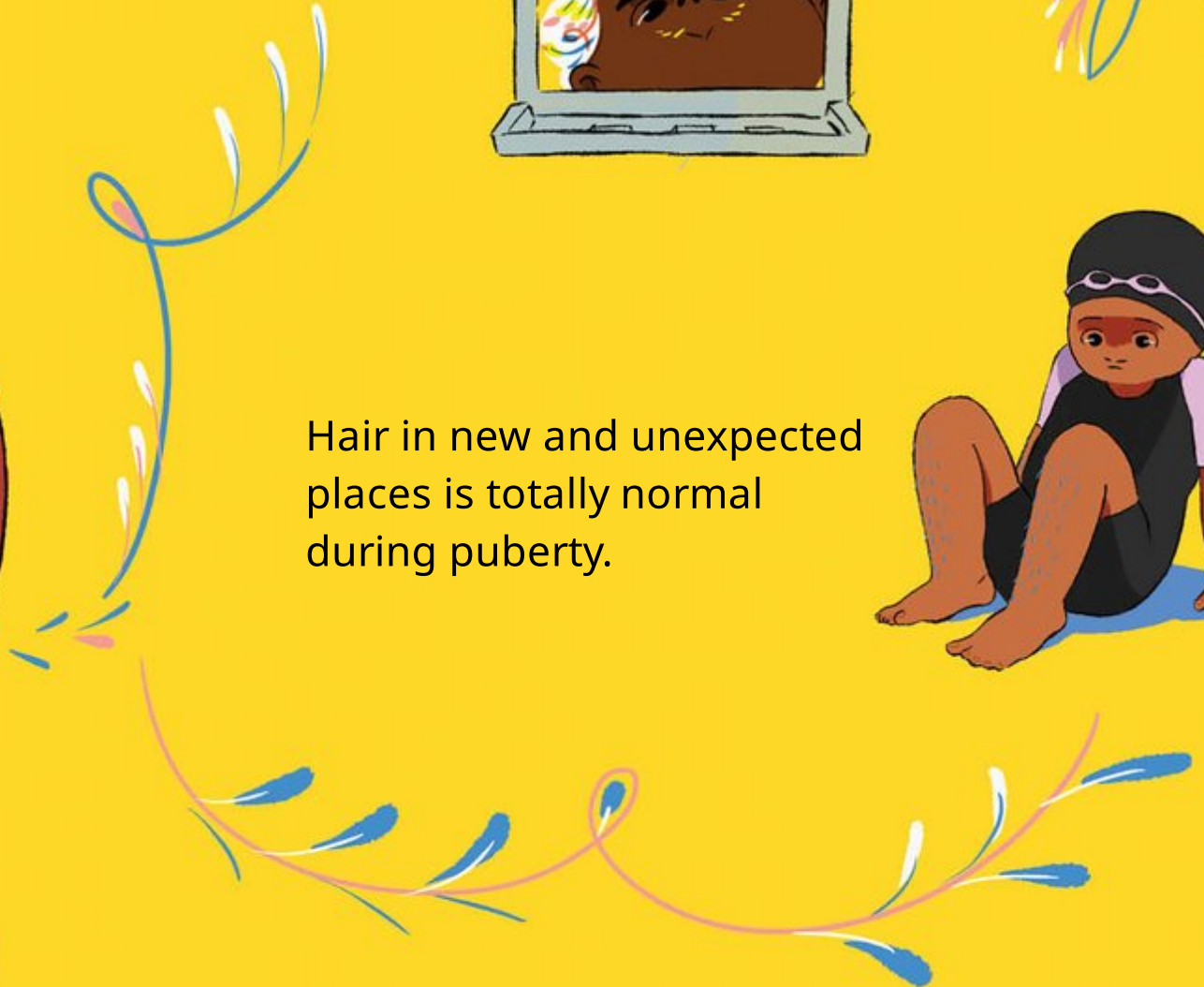


Here's a little secret about growing up.
The path to becoming an adult has a fair bit of hair.

One day soon, you'll find hair sprouting from all kinds of places: under your arms, above your lips, all along your legs, and even in between. Maybe you're already there.

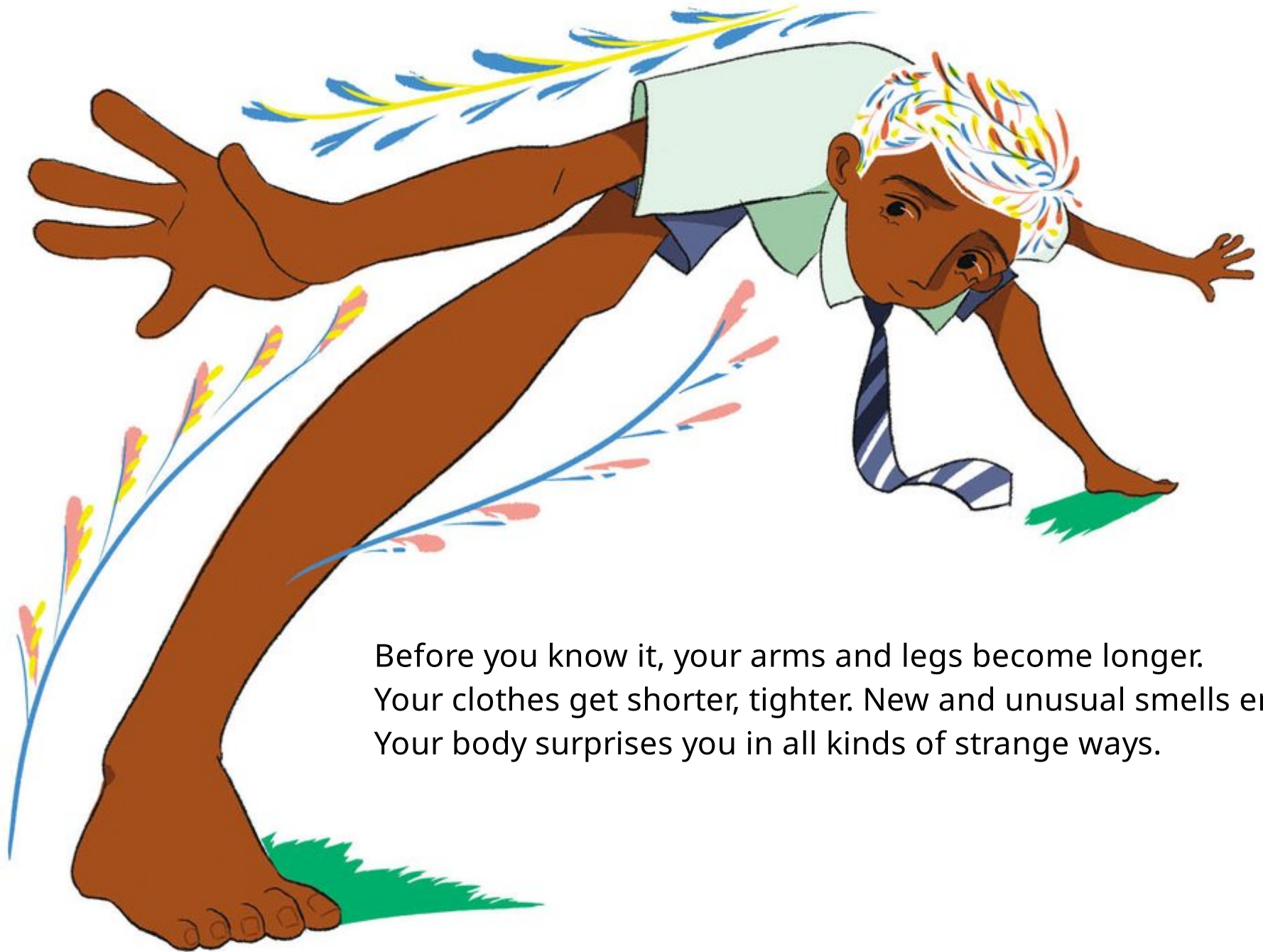


Hair in new and unexpected places is totally normal during puberty.



Puberty is when your body goes through all kinds of incredible changes.





Before you know it, your arms and legs become longer.
Your clothes get shorter, tighter. New and unusual smells emerge.
Your body surprises you in all kinds of strange ways.

For some of you, this means that your breasts grow, and you begin to get your period (yes, there will be blood). You might even start wearing a bra.



And for some of you, your voice deepens, and the beginnings of a moustache start to show. You might even start to experience erections.

While these changes are exciting, they can also be quite embarrassing. There will be days when it might feel like your body isn't on your side.

A gigantic pimple in the middle of your face.
Something in your body seems bigger, or smaller,
or stickier, entirely against your wishes. A horrible
hair day. A bizarre smell!



When this happens, remember that it will pass,
and that part of what makes you so uniquely you
is this amazing body. Even if it sometimes makes
you want to scream.

Which is why being curious about your own body is wonderful. As your body changes, it becomes even more important for you to get to know it.

Don't be afraid to explore every inch of your body.





The truth about puberty, though, is that while everyone goes through it, our experiences of it vary. So, whether it happens to you sooner than others or later, don't let it worry you.

But puberty isn't only about your body.
It also changes how you feel, and think.



You might notice that you suddenly feel angry, or sad.
While this can be difficult, these feelings aren't here
to stay. You may also feel the need for a little more
space, to be on your own for a while.

After all, you are moving into adulthood, which
is an adventure.

And as with any adventure, there are some ups, and there are some downs.



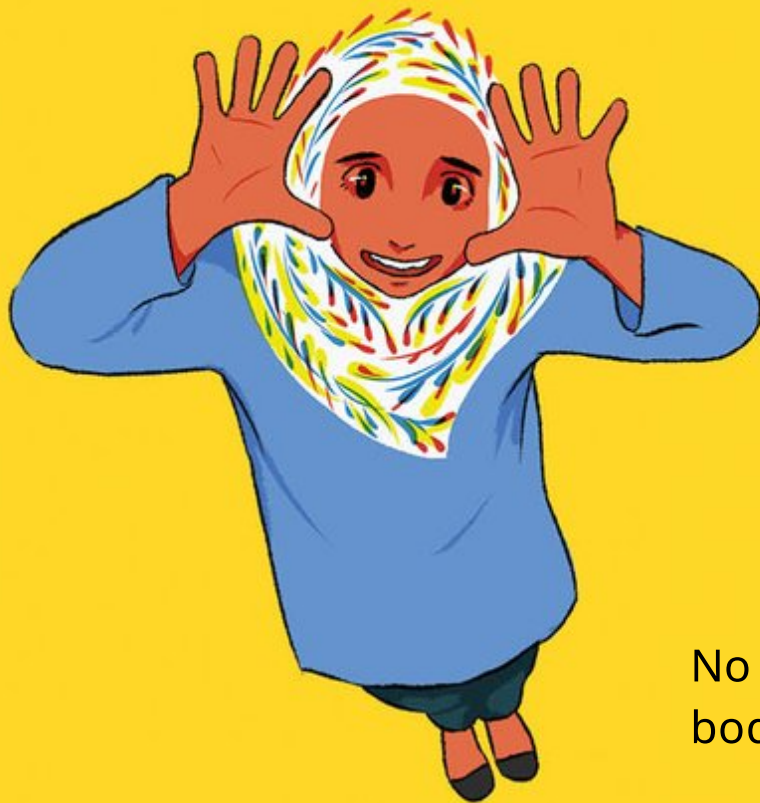
Mood swings are common during puberty. Your friends are likely to be going through them too. So be kind to them, and to yourself.

It's also around this time that you may start developing feelings for others—love, attraction, and that kind of thing.

As you make your way through puberty, there will be times when you feel misunderstood. Remember then to turn to something that makes you happy. Listen to that song you love, go for a long cycle ride with a friend, watch a snail glide—do what it takes.



Growing can be both joyful and scary.



No matter how you feel, remember to listen to your body, and treat it lovingly—after all, your body is yours.

I'M GROWING, AND SO IS MY CURIOSITY

Understanding the science behind how your body works— especially during puberty— will only help you take better care of it.

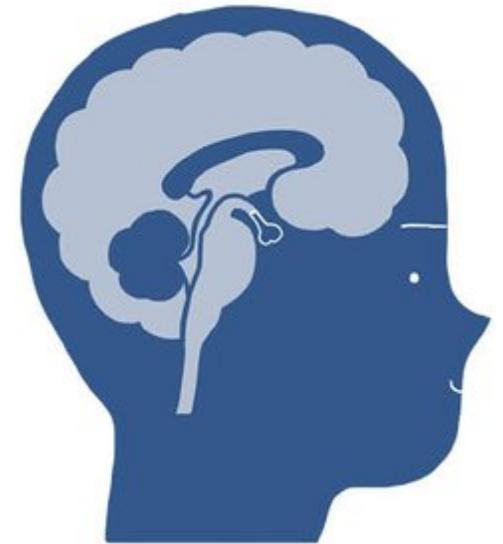


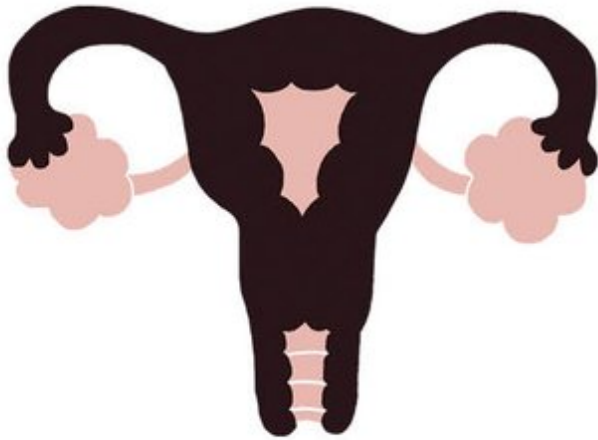
Why does puberty happen, and when does it happen?

Puberty is really just the process of becoming an adult, and it's caused by hormones in our body. Beginning anytime between the ages of 8 and 14, puberty can last till you're around 18. So, it's not something that happens overnight, it takes a few years.

What are hormones, though? What do they do?

Hormones are chemicals in our body that are vital to how we grow. So when your body is ready for puberty, your pituitary gland (a tiny gland in your brain) releases specific hormones that travel through your blood to different parts of your body, telling them to change. Some of the hormones that are at play during puberty are gonadotropin-releasing hormone: testosterone and oestrogen.





What happens when I get my period?

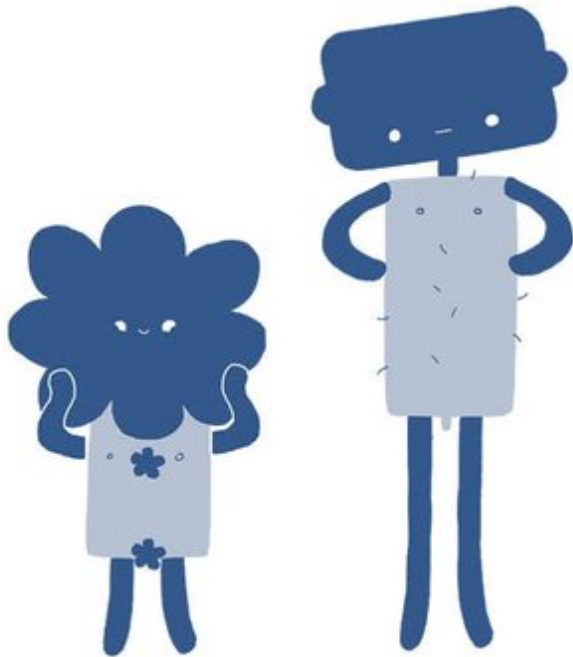
A common sign of getting your period is finding blood in your underwear. This sounds scary, but it's normal. A period (menstruation) occurs when your uterus—for those who have it—sheds its lining. When this happens, you bleed through your vagina. The reason this lining gets thicker is because of hormonal changes in your body. While it can get uncomfortable and sticky, you feel better when you wear a pad or a menstrual cup, or a period product of your preference.

Your period will happen every month, and the bleeding usually lasts for three to seven days. Other things you might experience a couple of weeks before and during your period are pain around your abdomen and lower back, headaches, mood swings and acne.

Is it true that women on their period can't enter the kitchen? Why are there so many weird rules around it?

There are too many myths and beliefs around menstruation, and unfortunately, most of them aren't rooted in any logic or science. Thankfully, these beliefs are slowly changing. Sometimes, all we need to do is to ask rational questions. Relying on science to understand the human body is also crucial. You should be able to do anything you want while you are on your period—play, exercise, eat what you like, and go wherever you like. This is your right, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.





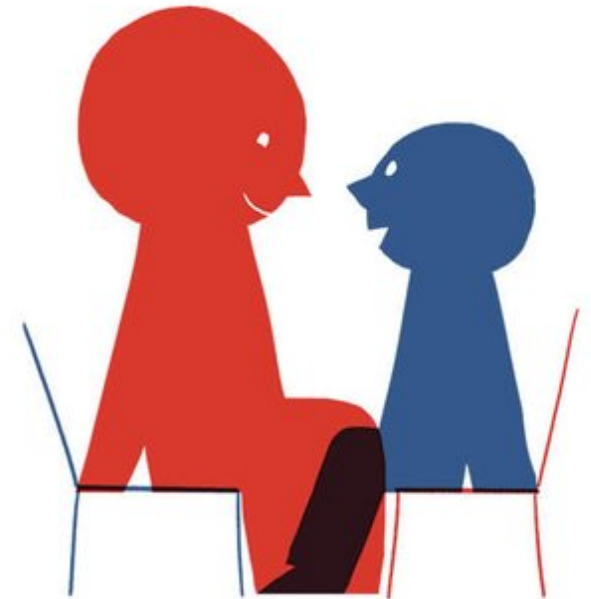
All my friends have facial hair, and many of them have started shaving. Why is it taking me forever?

Waiting is hard, isn't it? While we all go through puberty, remember that our journeys are different. It doesn't matter whether you develop early, or late—you will become an adult, too. Until the stubble appears, hang in there.

There are also other changes that you can expect: you'll get taller, your voice will change, you may even get erections. When an erection occurs, your penis gets harder and bigger than usual. This happens when blood rushes into your penis, and is caused by the hormones in your body, mainly testosterone.

I feel so sweaty, I have acne, and I get bullied!
Will it get better?

It's very natural to feel self-conscious about these changes in your body. While this is because of hormonal changes, it's important to take care of yourself during this time—both physically and mentally. Get enough sleep, eat nutritious food, and make sure to bathe every day. Being bullied is never okay, and you should know that it's not your fault. It always helps to find someone you trust to talk to about what you are going through. But if the bullying gets too hard for you, talk to an adult whom you trust.





Story Attribution:

This story: The Growing Up Book is written by [Yamini Vijayan](#) . © Pratham Books , 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license.

Other Credits:

'The Growing Up Book' has been published on StoryWeaver by Pratham Books. www.prathambooks.org.

Images Attributions:

Cover page: [Adolescent children in school uniform striking different poses](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 2: [Tiny hair growing on a girl's arm](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 3: [Children observing the hair growing on different parts of their body](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 4: [A boy in a wheelchair looking at his body](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 5: [A boy stretching out his arms and legs](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 6: [Children observing the changes puberty brings to their bodies](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 7: [A boy looking at the changes puberty has brought to his body](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 8: [Children being curious about their bodies](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 9: [Children accepting their emotions and the changes in their bodies](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 10: [A girl going through mood swings](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 11: [A girl soothing her period cramps](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license.

Disclaimer: https://www.storyweaver.org.in/terms_and_conditions



Some rights reserved. This book is CC-BY-4.0 licensed. You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, all without asking permission. For full terms of use and attribution, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Images Attributions:

Page 12: [Girls being there for each other](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 13: [Children being joyous and free in their bodies](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 14: [Two children waving](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 15: [An illustration of the human brain](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 16: [An illustration of the human uterus](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 17: [Two girls skipping and exercising](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 18: [Two adolescent boys with changes in their bodies](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 19: [A child talking to an adult about their feelings](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license. Page 20: [Curious adolescent children](#), by [Aindri C](#) © Pratham Books, 2024. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY 4.0 license.

Disclaimer: https://www.storyweaver.org.in/terms_and_conditions



Some rights reserved. This book is CC-BY-4.0 licensed. You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, all without asking permission. For full terms of use and attribution, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

The Growing Up Book

(English)

Dealing with the changes that come with puberty can be confusing and difficult. This engaging and informative book prepares preteens and teens for some of the most complex years of their lives.

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.



Pratham Books goes digital to weave a whole new chapter in the realm of multilingual children's stories. Knitting together children, authors, illustrators and publishers. Folding in teachers, and translators. To create a rich fabric of openly licensed multilingual stories for the children of India and the world. Our unique online platform, StoryWeaver, is a playground where children, parents, teachers and librarians can get creative. Come, start weaving today, and help us get a book in every child's hand!