

## Notes for Parents and Carers from author Rachel Greener

*Growing Up: An Inclusive Guide to  
Puberty and Your Changing Body*  
By Rachel Greener  
Illustrated by Clare Owen  
978 1 83994 700 1 • HB

Deciding how and when to share information about puberty is different for every family. The best time to share this information is *before* puberty starts, to prevent any unnecessary confusion or worry for your child. The more comfortable and confident you feel as an adult sharing this information, the more comfortable and confident your child will feel discussing this topic and coming to you with questions or for support when puberty does begin.

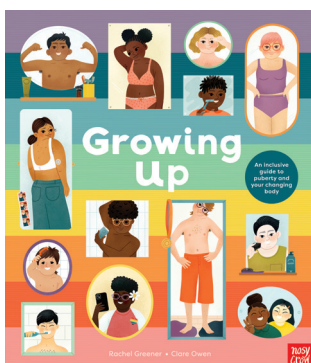
*Growing Up* has been designed to be an attractive, welcoming book for readers aged 6+, which we hope you will feel comfortable having on the bookshelf alongside all your other children's literature. This allows your child to pick up the book as and when they choose, and to come to you with any questions, as and when they occur.

The intention of this book is that it can work as a shared reading experience for readers who are not yet fully independent, as well as an engaging reference book for older, more confident readers. All of the subjects are addressed in an age-appropriate way and are intended as a jumping off point for more detailed discussion, as and when you feel this is appropriate for your child.

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## The main body of the book covers a range of subjects:

- An introduction to the concept of puberty
- An introduction to the concept of biological sex and gender identity
- An introduction to hormones, what they do and how they can make you feel
- An introduction to universal changes every child will experience in some way or form: growing taller, weight changes, growing hair in new places, body odour, skin changes
- An introduction to changes experienced by people born with a vulva: growing breasts, changing body shape and vaginal discharge
- An introduction to periods: what they are, how long they last, when they will start and stop
- An introduction to period products and how to manage period discomfort or changes in mood
- An introduction to changes experienced by people born with a penis: growing facial hair, voice changes, penis and testicle changes
- An introduction to erections and wet dreams
- An introduction to the concept of attraction (framed through the prism of friendship)
- An introduction to the concept of boundaries: both knowing your own and respecting the boundaries of others
- An introduction to the concept of online safety: both staying safe online and behaving appropriately online



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**The further reading section covers the following in more detail:**

- A more in-depth look at biological sex and gender identity
- A more in-depth look at online safety
- Safe places to find help

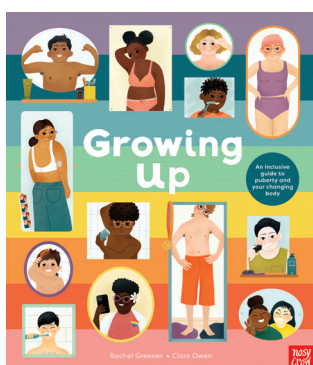
**A few suggestions of how to approach the content for different readerships are below:**

For children aged six to seven:

Even if your child is a confident reader by this age, we would recommend the first introduction to this book for younger readers should be a shared reading experience.

You may prefer to start by having a general discussion around the artwork based on your child's interest in particular scenes or images. Alternatively, you may find your child prefers to read all of the text chronologically, including the diagrams, or to dip in and out, focusing on just a few pages at a time.

By keeping this book alongside your other children's literature, we would hope that this is a title your child will want to return to again and again as they get older. As their level of understanding grows, the information given in the book will help you to provide more detailed answers to their questions.



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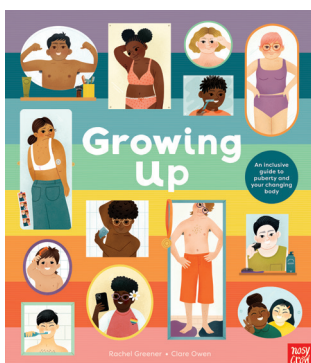
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For independent readers/children aged seven and above

Allowing independent readers free access to this title means that they can find the answers they want without adult intervention, although it is always helpful to remain available to answer any questions your child may have.

Sometimes, your child might ask a question that you know is explained in the book in more detail, and you can refer them to the correct page and read it with them. Alternatively, you could ask them to use the knowledge they have gained from reading the book to come up with a possible answer themselves and discuss their response together.

Every child's experience of puberty will be unique. Whatever the age of your child and whether or not they have already started going through puberty, we hope that you find this book a valuable tool for opening up the discussion around how a child's body, emotions, sense of self and ability to take ownership of their behaviour may change as they become older and more independent.



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