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## YOU'RE CHANGING INSIDE AND OUT

When you start puberty, your body begins to grow faster than at any other time—with the exception of your first year of life. Back then, your brain and body were developing rapidly, and the same is true now. Your appetite might increase, as well as your need for sleep. That's because

your growing body requires lots of both rest and nutrients to support all the physical changes it's going through.

"If you're going through puberty at a different rate than your friends are, you might feel uncomfortable because you don't know who to talk to about what's happening. And sometimes, you might feel too small or too big or too gangly. But there's a good part—your parents start to see you as more grown-up, and they let you do more stuff."

ZOE, 12

Once you start puberty, you may notice that your shirtsleeves are getting shorter, or your socks are now sticking out below your pants. Is your entire wardrobe shrinking? No, what you're experiencing is known as a growth spurt. Your feet may seem to grow by as much as a shoe size each month, or your hands may grasp a basketball with greater ease. The middle-school years are filled with these kinds of surprises.

Keep in mind that you may start changing earlier or later, and more quickly or slowly than other kids. You'll develop at your own rate—you're growing at a pace that's right for *you*.

### Changes in Boys

Boys start going through puberty anywhere from about ages ten to fifteen, and the first sign is usually a major growth spurt. You'll be growing in inches and pounds, and you may start to hear, "You're getting so tall!" or "Look how big you are!" from relatives or other people who haven't seen you for a while.



You'll also notice your voice beginning to deepen. Many boys welcome this change because they sound more masculine for the first time (and they've gotten tired of being confused with their sisters when they answer the phone). Voice changes—like all the other changes of puberty—don't occur all at once. Changes in the voice take place gradually and may involve a lot of squeaking and croaking. You may be embarrassed if your voice cracks when you're answering a question out loud in class. These embarrassing moments can happen to *any* guy your age.

Other changes for boys during puberty include:

- the appearance of underarm and facial hair
- an increase in body hair
- the lengthening and widening of the penis
- the enlargement of the testes
- the growth of pubic hair (it gradually becomes darker and curlier)

# TOO OLD FOR THIS, TOO YOUNG FOR THAT!

## YOUR SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE MIDDLE-SCHOOL YEARS

No wonder it's called "middle school"! If you're in grades 6–9, you're not a child anymore . . . but you're not grown-up, either. You have more freedom . . . but not enough. Your life is more exciting . . . but it's more stressful, too.

Suddenly you have a ton of questions—about your body and your feelings, family and friends, school and life in general. You're facing a lot of new decisions, and it's hard to know where to go for advice. Your friends? They may be confused, too. Your parents? They might not understand everything you're going through.

This book can help. It's there when you need it, day or night. And it answers all kinds of questions. Like:

What's happening to my body? ■ What if I have to get braces or glasses? ■ What can I do to feel better about myself? ■ Why am I having mood swings? ■ What's stress, and how can I cope with it? ■ How can I handle my fears and strong feelings like anger, sadness, and grief? ■ Why is it so hard to talk to my parents lately? ■ How can I get more privacy? ■ How can I get along better with my friends? ■ What about cliques and peer pressure? ■ How can I be more popular? ■ How can I study smarter? ■ How can I handle school projects and reports, which are a lot bigger deal than they used to be? ■ How can I tell the difference between good risks and bad risks? ■ How can I manage my money and my time? ■ How can I prepare for the future?

Full of straight talk, helpful tips, good advice, and quotes from real kids, **TOO OLD FOR THIS, TOO YOUNG FOR THAT!** is just what you need to make the most of middle school—and beyond.

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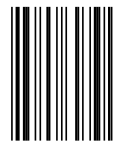
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