

10 TO 12 YEARS

Boys to Men

You've noticed that the girls in your son's class are maturing quickly, but most of the boys look like, well, boys. That doesn't mean they aren't suffering from their own hormonal angst, however: "Parents have a tendency to think puberty isn't such a big deal for guys, but it is—it can be very confusing for them," explains Lynda Madaras, a puberty educator and coauthor of *The "What's Happening to My Body?" Book for Boys*. Now is the time to start talking about all those changes that are just around the corner (and moms can do it just as well as dads!). Here's how to get the conversation started:

Don't wait till puberty puts him through the wringer.

Most boys are more comfortable asking questions before their bodies begin changing (which can happen anywhere between the ages of 9 and 15) because the questions won't be about them personally. Ask your son what details he learned about puberty in health class, then fill in any blanks (think about all the stuff you wish your own parents had told you!). If you're embarrassed, it's fine to say so. There's a very good chance that he's embarrassed, too.

Hit the bookstore for help.

You don't have to know all the answers, you just have to be willing to find them out. Try giving him a puberty book like Madaras's—he can read up on his questions and concerns in the privacy of his room and you can use it as a resource whenever you're stumped.

Offer reassurance when the changes start to kick in.

Your son may suddenly become very modest as his body begins to transform. Two of the first signs he's hitting puberty are testicle and scrotum enlargement. Penis growth happens later, and many boys worry theirs won't grow, so let him know that will come next. Some boys also experience temporary breast swelling due to changing hormones; be ready to explain that it isn't permanent.

—J.N.

SEPTEMBER SWEEPSTAKES

No purchase is necessary to enter. All giveaways are sponsored by *Parenting* magazine, a division of Bonnier Corporation. Prizes and retail values are indicated throughout the magazine where you see the **win!** icon.

Giveaways are open to adult residents (18 years and over) of the 50 United States and the District of Columbia and are void where prohibited by law. For official rules and to enter, go to **Parenting.com**.

WONKA Exceptionals Gift Basket Giveaway

Giveaway ends September 13, 2010 (page 16)

GLYSTONE Skin Clarifying Kit Giveaway

Giveaway ends September 13, 2010 (page 38)

Zoombak GPS Dog Protection System & PetFINDER ID Tag System Giveaway

Giveaway ends September 13, 2010 (page 101)

Parenting magazine, Vol. XXIV, No. 8 (ISSN 0890-247X), is published monthly (except for a combined December/January issue) by The Parenting Group Inc., 2 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Copyright © 2010 by The Parenting Group Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinting in whole or in part is forbidden except by permission of The Parenting Group Inc. **Mailing List:** We make a portion of our mailing list available to reputable firms. If you would prefer that we don't include your name, please write us at the Palm Coast, FL address. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Parenting* magazine, P.O. Box 420235, Palm Coast, FL 32142-0235. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Subscription rates: \$14.97 per year (11 issues); outside the U.S., please add \$10.00 per year payable in U.S. funds only. Canada Post Publications agreement number 40612608. Canada Return Mail: Pitney Bowes, P.O. Box 25542, London, ON, N6C 6B2. Printed in the USA. All unsolicited submissions must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. *Parenting* magazine cannot be responsible for unsolicited materials. **Parenting**, **Parenting Mom Squad**, and **Parenting Mom-Tested** are registered trademarks of The Parenting Group Inc., a subsidiary of Bonnier Corporation.



BEFORE



AFTER

BELIEVE IT OR NOT.
THEY DO LISTEN.
WHEN YOU TALK TO
YOUR KIDS ABOUT DRUGS,
THEY'RE UP TO 50% LESS
LIKELY TO USE THEM.

TimeToTalk.org

THE PARTNERSHIP
AT DRUGFREE.ORG