

Becoming Me!



A Workbook for BOYS

This workbook is for boys 10 to 14 years in Uganda to give information and guidance about growing up healthy, respectful and great!

Adolescence is a special time in life when girls and boys experience rapid physical, mental and emotional changes. The start of this period, very young adolescence from 10 to 14 years of age, is a time often filled with questions, changes and new experiences. Many very young adolescents want and need more information and guidance about growing up. This workbook is designed to provide this knowledge through fun and thought-provoking activities. It also tries to give answers to common questions about sexual and reproductive health, gender and life skills.

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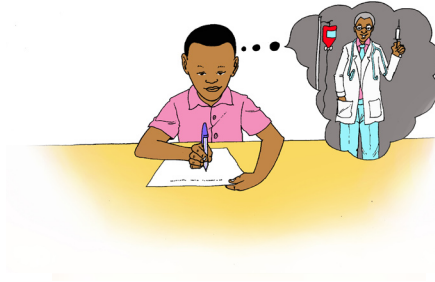
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TAMPAX

My HOPES for a Bright Future



What do you want to be or achieve in the future?
We call these your **HOPES** and **EXPECTATIONS** for your life.
What are you doing to realize your hopes and expectations?

Draw a picture or write a few about your expectations for your future and your life. Share it with your family, friends, brothers and sisters, cousins, and teachers.

They can help you to achieve your **hopes** and **expectations**.

Growing Up

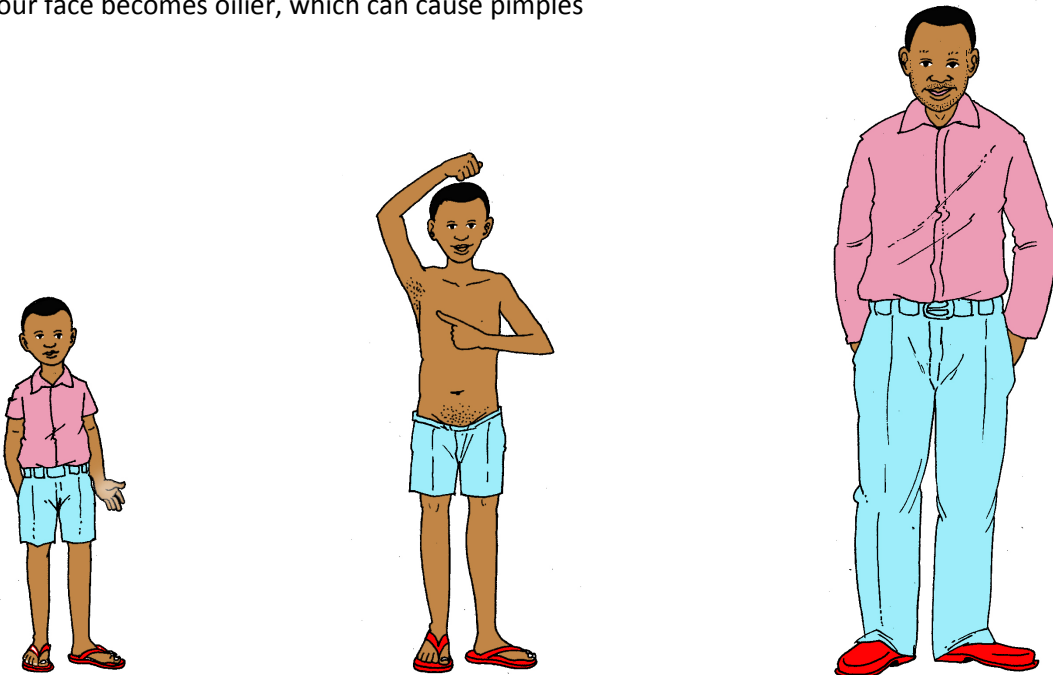
What is puberty?

There are different phases of growing up. From the ages of 10 to 19 years you experience the adolescent phase. During this time, your body, mind, and feelings are changing and growing. All of these changes together are called “puberty.” Some people may change at different times. Hormones in our bodies affect us differently, so this is very normal.

This is a time when you are no longer a child, but not yet an adult. It can be challenging and confusing, but also exciting. You are growing up!

You will see the following **body changes** during puberty:

- You will grow taller
- Your chest will grow wider
- Your voice will deepen
- Hair will grow on your armpits, around the private parts, and, for some boys, the face and chest
- You may experience ejaculations in your dreams, called “wet dreams”
- You will start to sweat more, which can make you smell bad
- Your face becomes oilier, which can cause pimples

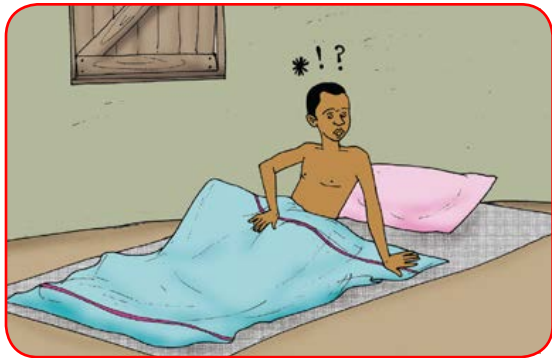


You will experience the following **mind changes** during puberty:

- You will find that you understand more about the world around you each and every year. Your mind is growing and developing fast during this time. It reaches maturity at the age of 25!

Ben's Story

Puberty is a period of body changes. I was 15 when I started seeing body changes. I grew very tall and slender, and I thought about girls all the time. I was confused I did not know if I was a boy or a man. One night I woke up and found that my pants were wet. Even my bed was wet.



I told friends at school. My friends said that they had also experienced the same thing. It is called a 'wet dream' that happens to older boys. They told me that I was now ready for

sex. I was even more confused! They also said that I can have a child. "What should I do?"

Then I asked my father. He told me that it is just part of growing up: the change from childhood to adulthood. He explained that I was not yet a man. After my father told me this, I thought about everything. I realized that just because hair started growing around my private part did not mean that I was now mature or ready for sex. These were only body changes and should not change my conduct.

Now that I am older, I know that wet dreams and body changes are normal. I advise boys:

Do not be afraid of these changes and do not change your character. At times, you may feel like having sex, but delay it and concentrate on your studies instead. Do not be pressured by friends to do something you are not ready to do.

What would you advise Ben to do?

Lukwago's Story

I did not experience body changes until I was 16 years old. Until then my friends laughed at me. They said I was stunted and I wouldn't get a girlfriend. They talked about experiencing wet dreams, ejaculation, and many other things.

I waited and waited. Finally, I grew fast! Then I felt ugly and old with my increasing body size. My voice started changing. I was laughed at as the grandfather of my class. I feared jokes made at my expense.

Who would you advise Lukwago to talk to about his concerns?



You may also experience **emotional changes**. You may feel happy one day, and then suddenly feel sad or confused the next day.

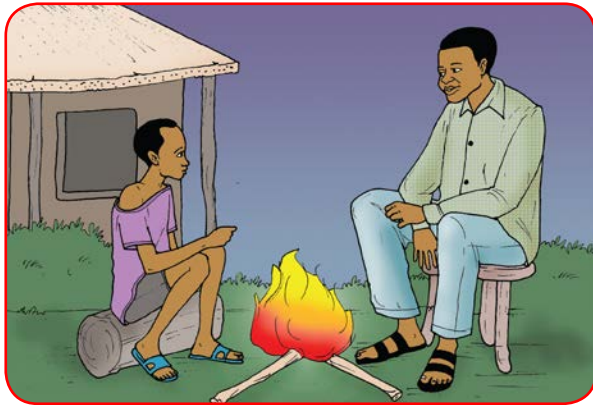
All of these changes are normal, and can cause some boys to have new desires. For example:

- The desire to please others and not feel different from friends
- The desire to want others to understand your feelings
- The desire to form your own groups with only boys
- The desire to be successful in school and feel competitive with friends
- Sexual desire that make you feel attracted toward girls

When you experience these changes, you may feel pressured or confused. These are normal, but you do not have to act on these feelings. You can make your own decisions. Talk to a trusted adult if you have questions or concerns.

Sometimes boys are shy to ask questions. They want to know everything already. But we all have to learn. It is better to learn from people who have experienced the situation already than to keep quiet and suffer.

*Who will you **ask your questions** about growing up?*



*Who will you **share your knowledge** with about growing up?*



Thank you for helping other boys be informed and confident like you!

Am I Normal?

1. I am 12 years and I already look big, but my voice is still high pitched. Am I normal?

Yes you are. Puberty is an ongoing process, so the body will continue to change as it goes through adolescence. Before you know it, your voice will deepen. However, it might start to crack when you are speaking as it starts to change.

2. How long will it take before I grow up, get a deeper voice, and stop experiencing body changes?

There is no way of knowing how long it will take for a boy to go through puberty completely because everyone is different. Some boys finish changing when they are 19 or 20 years old.

3. All my friends have hair around their private part and their voices are changing. When is that going to happen to me? I am 13 years old.

Be patient. Every boy is different. You will experience changes when your own body is ready. In the meantime, appreciate that your body lets you play, work and be alive.

4. When I sweat now, there is an odor under my arms. Am I normal?

You are normal. When puberty starts, you will start to sweat more which can give off a strong body odor. Wash your body and face every day with soap and water.

5. How can I make my private part grow bigger like my friends'?

There is no natural way to make a boy's private part bigger. It can grow during puberty, but size is not something to worry about. It does not make you a better man or a stronger man.

6. I am a boy of 14 years, and I'm developing breasts like girls. My friends laugh at me. Is it normal?

This is completely normal. Sometimes when a boy is going through puberty his estrogen level (a female hormone that men also produce) is a bit high, which increases the breast tissue. Do not worry, this is usually temporary. Friends should encourage and support each other because many boys that experience this. Look for friends who do not laugh and spend more time with them.

7. I had a wet dream. Friends tell me that it means I am ready for sex. Is that true?

No. Wet dreams mean that the body is growing. These are normal and harmless. Wet dreams do not mean that you are ready for sex.

8. What if I wake up and my penis was hard and there was a wet spot, but I didn't wet the bed?

Do not worry. What you experienced is called a "wet dream." A wet dream is



when semen is discharged from the penis during ejaculation while a boy is asleep. Often times the wet dream will occur during sexual dreams. They start happening during puberty and happen to all boys and men. A wet dream is the body's way of getting rid of extra semen in the private parts.

9. Can one ever continue to grow taller after puberty has passed?

It is possible, although not likely. Most of a person's height growth happens in before the age of 19 but some boys can grow a little even after the age of 20.

10. When a girl has monthly bleeding, she can get annoyed quickly. Why is this?

Monthly bleeding or menstruation can be a tiring experience for girls, especially when it is something new. Boys and girls alike can experience quick changes in their feelings or "mood swings" that make them difficult to get along with. Remember that everyone deserves respect, patience and care.

11. I am 15 and I get an erection whenever I see a beautiful girl or think about sex. Is it normal?

This is normal. Boys are usually going through puberty around your age. It is very normal to have sexual feelings which cause erections. Erections go away on their own without any harm. But know that the feelings do not mean you need to have sex.

12. What about masturbation?

Masturbation is something that many people do to release or explore sexual feelings. It is only a problem if it becomes too frequent, and interferes with learning or other responsibilities.

13. Sometimes I am not able to ejaculate when I masturbate. Is this okay?

Do not worry. You do not need to ejaculate every time you masturbate. Some reasons you might not ejaculate are stress, masturbating too frequently, or for no reason at all. It is okay.

Job's Story

The first time I had a wet dream was when I was 14 years old. When I woke up in the morning I found that my penis was wet with a white fluid which is thicker than urine which was smelly and my private parts (the forehead of my penis) was covered with that same white fluid. I was worrying so I asked a friend what it was and he said I could be sick!

I decided to ask my elder brother what happened. He said it is completely normal and it happens to all boys. He told me that when a boy reaches puberty, he may release semen through his penis in his sleep, which is called a wet dream. Then I wondered if this happens at night will I they will run out of semen? But my brother said that the body constantly makes semen so it will always be made again.

Now that I am older, I advise boys: *When you experience changes on your own body's schedule, do not worry and do not be embarrassed. All of those things are normal. They means you are now maturing and getting prepared for the future.*



Do not worry! You are completely normal.

Girls and Puberty

Girls experience body, mind and emotional changes just like boys do. Some of their changes are different.

Girls experience the **body changes** during puberty below:

- Grow taller
- Hips get wider
- Hair grows under the armpits, and on the around their private parts
- Breasts grow and become more sensitive
- Voice becomes more mature
- Face becomes oilier which can cause pimples
- Start to sweat more, which can make them smell bad
- Monthly bleeding or menstruation begins

What is menstruation?

Just like when boys experience wet dreams during puberty because of changing hormones, girls also experience something special that helps prepare them for the future when they are ready to have children. This is monthly bleeding, also called menstruation.

Menstruation is when blood trickles out from a girl's vagina for three to five days. This happens once a month. Many girls are scared when they menstruate for the first time because they do not know what it is. They also fear that boys will make fun of them in school when they are experiencing menstruation.

During this time girls can become pregnant, although their bodies and minds are not ready.

Why should boys know about the changes that girls experience?

It is important for everyone to know that menstruation does not mean that a girl is ready to have sex or get pregnant. It only means that her body is preparing to become an adult. Also, it is good to know that changes are normal. You as a boy can encourage girls to go to school every day so that boys and girls grow up to be their best selves.

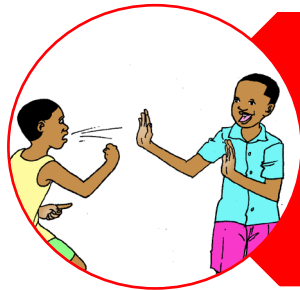


Being a Boy

Have you ever heard someone say, “Act like a boy!” What was that boy expected to do?

There are beliefs about how boys and girls should act. Do you think they are all useful today?

If a boy does something different, is he still a boy?

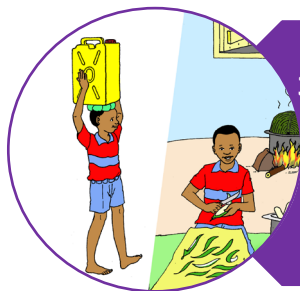


1. Some people say that boys should fight to prove they are strong.

**Sam does not want to fight.
Isn't he still a boy?**

**2. People say that a man must have a wife and children.
Jacob does not want a family until he has a job and feels
ready to care for a family.**

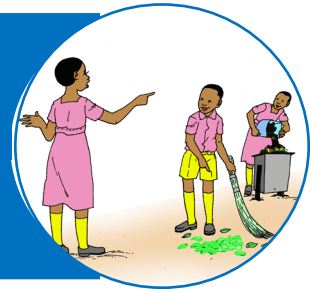
Isn't Jacob still a man?



**3. People say that girls are responsible for collecting water and
preparing food.**

**John collects water and prepares food.
Isn't John still a boy?**

4. People say that boys cannot take orders from a girl.
Stephen is a club member who follows the instructions
of the club leader who is a girl.
Isn't he still a boy?



4. People say that men make the final decisions at home.
Thomas discuss and makes decisions together
with his wife.
Isn't he still a man?



4. Some people say boys should not accept it when girls
say now. Ben never pressures a girl.
Isn't he still a boy?



What actually makes someone a girl or a boy is fixed by nature and does not change no matter what someone says or does. It is biology. It is called sex.

There are many social expectations about what boys and girls can do. But these are *not fixed* by nature. These are called gender. These roles can be changed. In fact, boys and girls should get an equal opportunity to do work and activities based on their interests and skills.

You can do anything you put your heart and mind to!

Who Cleans the Dishes?

A quiz about the roles of boys and girls

Men and women, and boys and girls, often take on different roles and responsibilities in our community. Why do you think this is? Do you think it is fair? Can these rules be changed?

Below you will read the beginning of a statement and possible answers. Tick the ending to the sentence that you consider to be most appropriate. Then write your answer to the question.

1. Boys do not usually clean dishes because...

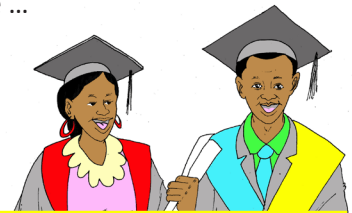
- It is not considered to be a boy's responsibility.
- They do not know how.
- They have to study and revise lessons.



Do you think it is fair that girls have the responsibility to clean the dishes? What would happen if you helped your sisters to clean the dishes? What could you say to others to explain that cleaning dishes means you are a great boy?

2. Boys often get priority over girls for higher education over girls because ...

- Girls do not have expectations for their future like boys.
- Girls are not as intelligent.
- Girls' education is not given as much importance as boys'.



Do you think it is easier for you to realise your goals for your future than girls? Explain your answer.

3. Men cannot look after children because...

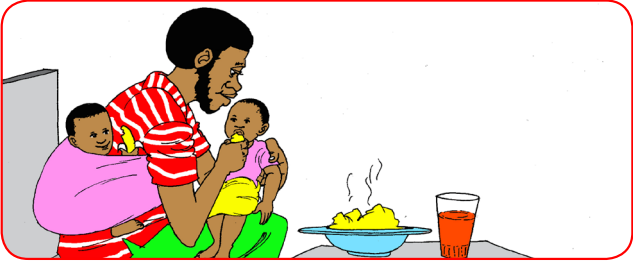
- They are not born with the skills to care for children.
- It is not considered to be a man's responsibility.
- They would not do it right.



Do you think that men are capable of caring for children? Explain your answer.

You Have the Ability, so Take Responsibility!

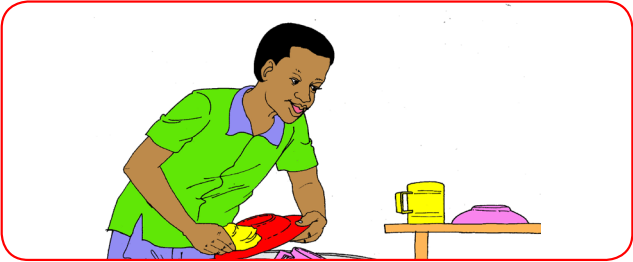
Why can some men do tasks outside the home to earn money that they will not do at home? Look at the pictures below and decide if a man can do it.



Serving food at home Yes No



Serving food in a hotel Yes No



Cleaning dishes at home Yes No



Cleaning dishes in a restaurant Yes No

Do you agree that men can do all of these tasks at home and outside home? YES NO

Did you see that men can do all of these tasks? Although some people say that there are tasks for women and tasks for men, boys and men have the ability to do any task! Men who share tasks at home are still men. In fact, they are respected and loved even more, and there will be peace in the home, because they show care for their family.

➤ **Try this!** Look around your community. Notice how boys and girls, and men and women, can actually do many things. You will notice more as you become more aware!

Write down as many tasks as you can that boys can do, although people may say that those tasks are not usual for boys to do.

Did you write these tasks? Collect water, wash clothes, cook food, prepare tea, collect firewood. If you wrote even more, well done!



Boys and girls can do anything according to their interests and opportunities. Boys and men who share tasks are respected and build a peaceful and productive family.

Boys and Girls are Different but Equal

Okidi's Story

Okidi is 14 years old. He has a big family with younger sisters and brothers. After school he helps his sisters with their chores. He knows that cooking, washing clothes and taking care of his younger brothers is no small task. So Okidi helps his sisters clean up after supper and fetch water. Okidi's friends always invite him to play football after school, but he does not always join them. His friends do not understand why Okidi helps his sisters, although it is not his duty.



Okidi explains that, "We are all of the same family. I feel happy helping my family and sharing the tasks." He knows that he can play after helping his family, and besides, he would feel bad playing when his sisters are working.

Have you ever felt this way? What would you tell your friends if they laughed when you help your sisters?

David's Story

David is also 14 years old. He has a sister, mother, father, and himself. David goes to school every day after completing his morning chores. After school, plays football with his friends, while his sister does more chores. David does not help his sisters with chores because his parents have not asked him.

Based on the stories of Okidi and David, who do you agree with? Would you like to be like Okidi or David?

Okidi

David

What type of son and brother do you want to be? Share it with your family!

Boy and girls are different due to biology. But boy and girls deserve to be treated equally in society and get equal chances to realise their hopes and expectations.



All boys have the choice to help everyone, both boys and girls, achieve their hopes and expectations for a bright future.

Who is More Respectable?

Choose one behavior for each question that you think will earn you the most respect.

1. **Who is more respectable?**

- Boys who laugh at other boys who help wash clothes and cook
- Boys who help their sisters with washing clothes or cooking



2. **Who is more respectable?**

- The boys who clean up after themselves
- The boys who leave a mess for their mother or sisters to clean



3. **Who is more respectable?**

- Those who send sisters out at night to fetch water
- Those who fetch water for their family



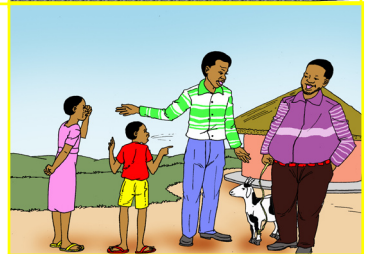
4. **Who is more respectable?**

- The boy who makes decisions related to his family without listening or talking to his sisters
- The boy who listens to and discusses issues with his sisters



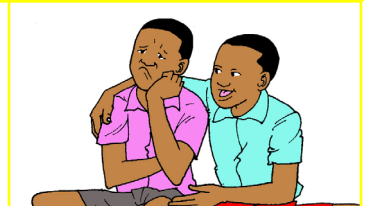
5. **Who is more respectable?**

- The boy who opposes early marriage for his sister, so she can finish school and reach her goals in life
- The boy who does nothing when his sister is sent for early marriage



6. **Who is more respectable?**

- Those who solve problems by using respectful words
- Those who solve problems through fighting



7. **Who is more respectable?**

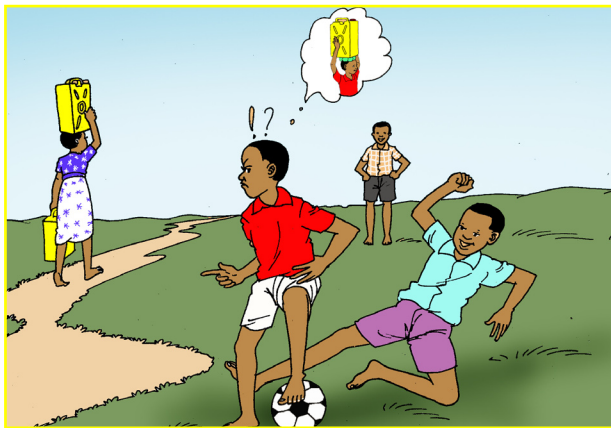
- A man who moves up and down with women
- A man who marries one woman and stays close to home to take care of the family



Invisible Wall

Have you ever heard of an **invisible wall**? They are all around us. They are the walls that keep us from sticking to our beliefs about what is right, and how we want to act.

Sam is in primary 7. His parents asked him to leave school and become a farmer. Sam dreams of becoming a health worker but also wants to follow his parents' guidance. Sam wanted to tell them how he felt, but they he felt an invisible wall, making it difficult for him to tell his parents his plans. Sam decided to say nothing and accept his parents' decision.

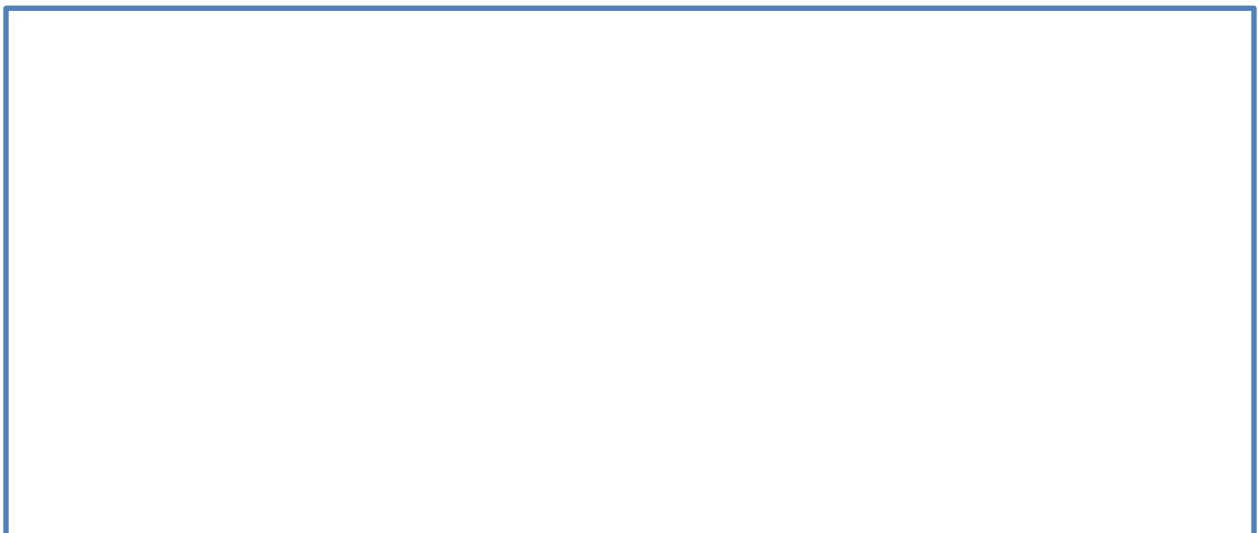


David is outside playing football when he sees his sister struggling to carry a heavy jerry can of water.

He is tempted to stop playing to go help her carry it back to their house, but he is worried that his friends will laugh at him.

David feels an invisible wall between him and his sister.

Have you ever felt this way? Draw a picture of the situation below. Share it with your friends and family.



What will you do to break down these invisible walls?

Journey of Respect

Follow the maize below through the journey of respect.

Respect sisters as much as brothers



Help sister fetch water at night



Learn to communicate with girls respect



Accept when a girl says 'no'



Help friends learn about treating girls with respect



Stop friends from conning girls



Congratulations! You have earned respect for respecting yourself and girls and helping everyone have equal opportunities.

What will **YOU** do to help boys and girls have equal opportunities? Tell your friends and family!

How will these actions help you earn respect?



Both boys and girls deserve an equal chance to realise their hopes and expectations! Your actions every day can help you earn respect.

Robert Learns about Respect

In my adolescent period I started becoming big-headed. I saw my friends calling girls, but I refused. My friends would always laugh at me and tell me that I am not normal because I was afraid of girls. Sometimes they asked me if I had ever had sex and I told them “no” and “Let it be”. But inside I felt weird because I thought that my friends were doing it while I was not.

When I asked my teacher he told me that it is not time for sex. He assured me that so many boys were like me and had not had sex, and that changes are normal so I should not get confused. He also told me that these friends were bullying me and that people need to show respect to earn respect and these friends were not being respectful to me or to girls.

Now that I am older, I realise that life is a journey of respect. Through our behaviors we show respect. When boys pressure their friends to go and play sex, this is not showing respect. When boys pressure girls to have sex, this is also not showing respect. When we show respect to other people we earn respect ourselves.

How would you describe Robert?

Do you want to be like Robert? How will you do this?



The opposite of respect is violence. Every boy, including you, should know what violence is so that you can speak up and take action to stop it – and earn respect!

QUIZ	True or False?
Violence can be touching or physical force without agreement	
Violence only harms the survivor, not the perpetrator	
Speaking up against violence is not respectable	
No one has a right to touch anyone without their agreement	

WORD FIND

Circle all of the types of violence among the words below.

Touch without agreement

Write a letter

Con girls

Share poems

Persuade girls

Grab

Bullying

Help with chores

Rape

Bring water

Hit with a stick

Encourage

Chat

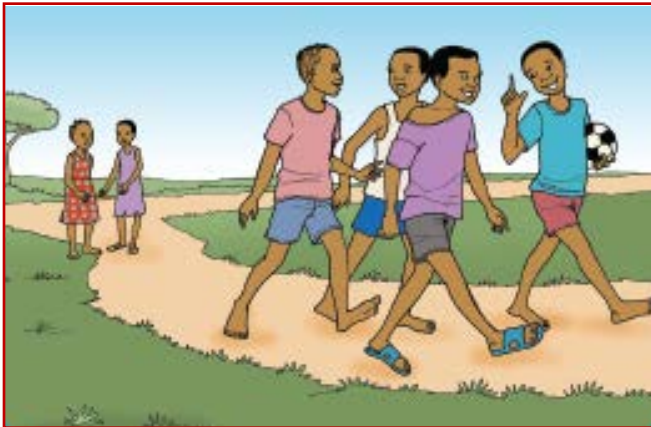
In the Quiz, did you answer True, False, False, True? In the Word Find, did you circle 7 words? Well done!

Make Great Decisions

You can!

You make decisions every day. As you grow up, you have more and more decisions to make. Some decisions are important for your life and will require careful consideration. Using a decision tree can help you make a great decision.

practice making decisions



Okidi's friends see that he is growing up. One day, his friends say, "Okidi! It is time for you to experience a girlfriend. Go and talk to that girl."

Okidi is surprised, but he stops to think about what to do. If he talks to the girl just because his friends tell him to, he may get into a situation he is not ready for. If he does not talk to the girl, his friends may laugh at him.

What should he do?

Circle the words in the story above that tell you when Okidi realized he could make a decision. Would do you advise Okidi to do? Explain your answer.

Okidi decides not to talk to the girl. He realizes that his friends will still be his friends. He can wait and feel proud of his decision. They may even respect him more after his decision!

Do you agree with Okidi's decision? YES NO

Explain your answer.

What decisions will you have to make in the future?

How will you make the decisions?

Tell your family and friends!



Congratulate yourself for making a great decision!

OKIDI'S JOURNEY

Okidi does well in school, enjoys football with his friends, and has hopes for a bright future.



Okidi wants to be a mechanic and have a garden.



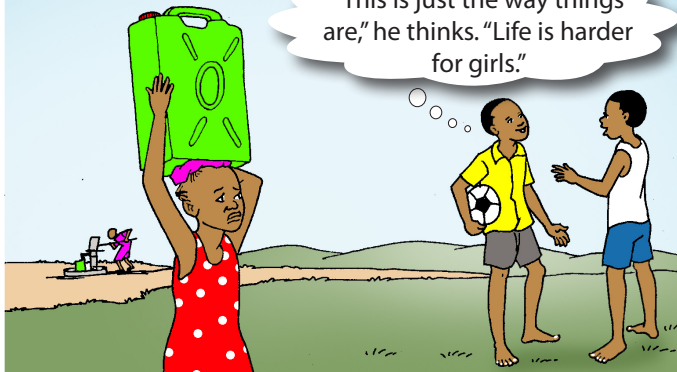
One day...

We played the best today!



Okidi watches his sister Esther do more and more household chores as they grow older.

"This is just the way things are," he thinks. "Life is harder for girls."

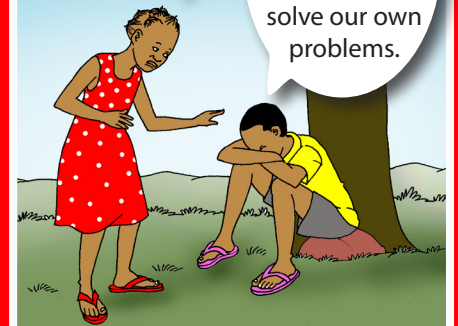


Okidi got in trouble because he did not pay attention in class. He felt ashamed!



Brother, what's the matter?

Go away! You are a girl. You do not understand that we boys solve our own problems.



Brother, I know that no one is alone. Sharing concerns is good for everyone.

You can talk to me about it.



Sister, we can do the work together. We are all children of the same family.



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