

# Periods can come up in everyday conversations with your child, often when you least expect it

**Being prepared can help you respond calmly and confidently.**

Most girls in Australia get their first period between 12 and 13 years, but it can happen as early as 9. Talking about periods early can help your daughter feel prepared and less anxious. If you have a son, these conversations also help normalise periods and reduce stigma.

You don't need to have one big, formal talk. Small, simple conversations over time are often best.

## **At home**

Periods might come up when:

- your child sees pads or tampons in the bathroom or at the supermarket
- someone on TV or in a movie mentions their period
- a family member has period pain or symptoms
- your child hears something about periods at school and asks questions.

If talking about periods wasn't common in your own family when you were young, this might feel new. That's OK. Starting gently helps your child understand what to expect and shows that it's safe to ask questions.

## **At school**

Many primary schools in Australia teach about body changes and periods. You can ask your child's teacher when this will happen so you can continue the conversation at home.

Some children get their first period at school. Packing pads, period underwear and spare underwear in your child's school bag can help her feel prepared. Show her how to use them and let her know she can talk to you if she feels unsure or uncomfortable.

## **With friends**

Children develop at different times. Your daughter may have friends who get their period before she does, or she may learn about it through conversations, social media or online videos.

These moments are opportunities to check in and provide accurate information. Keeping the conversation open helps her feel supported and confident.

## **How to respond**

Keep your tone calm, kind and factual. You don't need to give too much information at once.

You might say:

- "What do you already know about periods?"
- "Periods are normal and natural."
- "You can talk to me about this anytime."

Ask questions to understand what your child knows and correct any misinformation gently. Simple explanations are often enough.

You don't need to have all the answers. It's OK to say, "I'm not sure, let's find out together."

Some parents find books helpful. You can read them together or leave them for your child to explore independently.

If you have concerns about any period symptoms, such as pain or heavy bleeding, a nurse or doctor can provide advice.

The most important thing is that your child knows periods are a normal part of growing up, and that you are there to support her.