Paper Sizing

The “GROWING UP GREAT flipbook for girls” and the “GROWING UP GREAT flipbook for boys” are created for Standard JIS B4 (10.12 x 14.33”) paper size and include a standard crop and bleed line. Scaled down and printed at Actual Size, the Flipbook will print on Standard Letter (8.5 x 11”) without the guiding crop lines.

Printing Instructions

The flipbooks are print-ready. The pages are intended to be printed double-sided in this order. This way, the story-teller can show an illustration while reading the corresponding story text on the reverse side. The flipbooks are designed to be spiral bound across the top of each page.
GROWING UP GREAT!
Flipbook for boys
Instructions for use by storytellers

1. This flipbook is intended for use with groups of boys between the ages of 10 and 14. It can then be read to a group with boys and girls of the same age. This helps girls and boys become knowledgeable and develop mutual understanding and respect for each other.

2. The flipbook can be used in any setting, including school clubs, religious groups, community meetings, or at home.

3. There are three short stories. Each story is expected to take up to 30 minutes. The storyteller can choose to tell one story or more than one story in the same session.

4. Any adult or older adolescent is welcome to be the storyteller. The text has been written simply enough for any caring adult to read to younger adolescents.

5. The flipbook can be held by the storyteller, placed on the ground or set on a table. On the front side of each page is a picture to show the adolescents. On the back of the page is the text to be read by the storyteller. The text pages include suggested questions to ask the groups.

6. Begin by showing the image to the adolescents and asking them to describe and explain what they see.

7. It is recommended that the story be told in a dramatic fashion, using character’s voices and actions. The storyteller can choose to read the story and questions as written, or add local experiences and questions. Real experiences and local details about the differences between boys and girls can help to spark reflection and discussion with the younger adolescents.

8. A list of common questions and answers about puberty is found at the back of the flipbook. This list can assist you to answer questions that adolescents may ask.

Background in brief for storytellers

The beginning of adolescence, between ages 10 to 14, is a time of changes in the body and mind. Younger adolescents sometimes feel confused and need to seek guidance from trusted adults. Parents, aunts and uncles, older siblings and leaders, such as club patrons and teachers, have an important role in guiding younger adolescents to grow up healthy and great. This set of stories is intended to help trusted adults talk with younger adolescents about what happens during puberty, decisions they may face and how to navigate their place in our great community. The stories centre on advice from the boy’s Nero (maternal uncle) at wang-oo/wii-gadi, a valued tradition.
This is a picture of a family from a town called GREAT. The girl is named Esther and the boy named Okidi. Okidi is Esther's friend from school. Okidi is 13 years old. Each day he wakes up early to dig in the garden before going to school. After school, Okidi does homework. He likes to play football with friends. Okidi's favorite time is at the wang-oo/wii-gadi when he hears stories from elders. He feels so proud to learn these stories about his culture.

Questions for the group:

- What special activities do you enjoy with your family, such as farming, time at wang-oo/wii-gadi or dances?
Story 1
When he is older, Okidi's family expects him to get married, have children and provide for his family. Okidi wants to become a teacher. Okidi thinks this future is possible if he listens to his parents and works hard.

Okidi's sister is 11. Sometimes Okidi wonders if she can also achieve her hopes for the future. When they were young, Okidi and his sister did nearly the same things. They attended school, did their chores and played. They often laughed and talked together. But these days, his sister has more work at home while he still has time for playing and studying.

Okidi loves his sister. He wants to help her perform well in school so they both have bright futures, but he fears what his friends would say. It seems like there is an invisible wall that separates him and his sister and keeps him from helping out. This wall cannot be seen, but it is there. Okidi can feel it. Okidi wonders, “If I break the wall to help my sister, will I be seen as a man when I grow up?”

Questions for the group:

- What chores do you usually do?
- Are chores the same or different for girls and boys?
- Do you think this is fair? Why?
Okidi sees that his sister’s many chores leave her little time for school work. He hears that it can be dangerous for girls to walk at night. Okidi wants to be a great brother. So, that evening, Okidi decides to fetch water for his sister. First, Okidi tells his father. “Father, I intend to fetch the water this evening. This will protect my sister and allow her time to revise lessons. We are both children of this family.” His father agrees.

Okidi fills jerry cans with water at the borehole. Although the cans are heavy, Okidi is strong and manages to carry them without spilling. Along the way home, some boys tease him. One boy laughs. Another boy says, “Hey Okidi. Are you a girl now?” Okidi replies, “Look how strong I am!”

Okidi still thinks about his friends’ words. But when he reaches home, his mother and sister look so happy. That night, he feels a little different. Something inside his heart is a bit stronger.
Another day, when Okidi returns from playing football, he sees that his sister is struggling with school work so he stops to help her. He goes inside and tells his parents that he wants his sister to complete school. He promises to help her keep up in school so she can finish. Later that evening, he feels even better in his heart. What is happening, he wonders?

Questions for the group:

- Could you help your sister with chores and schoolwork? What could you do?
- How would your sister feel if you helped her?
The next day, Okidi walks home from school with friends. They meet a girl along the way. Okidi’s friend likes this girl.

His friend asks the girl to be his girlfriend and go to a quiet place together. She does not say anything. Another boy says, “She is keeping quiet. That means she likes you!” So the friend tries to force the girl to go with him.

Okidi thinks, “What should I do?”

Okidi steps in, and says, “Friend, silence does not mean that she accepts. You need to show respect to earn respect. Here is a tip I learned from my Uncle. Get to know each other first. Then she may like you, too.” The girl thanks Okidi and leaves quickly.

Okidi’s friend says, “Okidi, you seem different these days. You are more confident and grown up. Tell us your secret!”

**Questions for the group:**

- What do you think is Okidi’s secret to inner strength?
- Could you help friends learn how to respect girls? How?
Okidi takes the chance to talk to his uncle at the wang-oo/wii-gadi.

Okidi asks, “Uncle, recently I have helped my sister by fetching water in the evening. Sometimes I also help her to collect firewood, and revise school work. Now she has time to revise her lessons. Also she is not so tired when doing her school work. She told me that I am a great brother.”

“These days I feel stronger in my heart. Can you tell me why?”

After hearing what happened, his Uncle says, “You have broken the invisible wall, Okidi. You have broken it by doing what you know is fair, no matter what others think. Each time you do this, you gain great inner strength. I am proud of you!”

Okidi is so surprised!
Okidi wants to go tell his friends the secret. But his Uncle continues giving advice, so Okidi tries to remember everything to tell his friends later.

Okidi’s Uncle shares, “Let me explain to you about men and women. You can see that there are some physical differences in our bodies between girls and boys. For example, men’s parts and women’s parts are different. These differences are fixed by nature.

But if you look around, you will also notice that boys and girls usually do different things and wear different clothes. But these differences are not fixed by nature. These are taught to us by society.

Women who do unexpected things, such as own land, are still women. Men who do unexpected things, such as cook and clean, are still men. Because roles are learned, we can change what we want to make our life better.”
Okidi’s Uncle continues. “My nephew, being a boy is just different than being a girl. It is not better, or worse. We boys and men have challenges just like girls and women have challenges.

In fact, we are born nearly the same. Girls and boys have healthy bodies and intelligent minds. Girls and boys have blood and bones. Girls and boys have hopes for their futures. Girls and boys deserve the same opportunities to become their best selves.

This is why we must break down the invisible walls. Start with small, simple steps, just as you did, and never stop. Stay true to yourself. In this way, you will be strong and respected.”

Questions for the group:

• What is a difference between boys and girls? Is this fixed by nature or taught?
• How will you break invisible walls between boys and girls? Why is this important to try?
• How will you be great every day?
Okidi’s Uncle says, “My nephew, now you know the power of being great every day. Let me also hear about your hopes for the future. Share your hopes with adults so we can help you achieve them. So tell me, what would you like to be in the future?”

“I want to be respected. I want to be a good husband and father with a peaceful home. I want to become a teacher,” says Okidi.

“My nephew,” says Okidi’s Uncle, “I am glad to know. This is the time of life to make a plan, work hard and continue practising great things every day.”

Questions for the group:

- What kind of person do you want to be in the future?
- What kind of work do you want to do in the future?
- Who will you talk to about your hopes?
- What did you learn from Okidi’s story?
Story 2
One morning, Okidi wakes up to find that his shorts and sleeping area are wet. It is a sticky wetness, and does not smell like urine. He is so confused! “Am I sick?” Okidi worries all day.

Questions for the group:

- What do you think happened to Okidi?
- Do you know anyone who has experienced this?
At the wang-oo/wii-gadi, that evening, he tells his uncle what happened. Okidi’s Uncle says, “My nephew, do not fear. I will tell you about this, and everything about growing up. I remember going through all of this myself.

What you experienced last night is called a “wet dream”. Boys and men often have this while asleep. It is possible to wake up when the fluid comes out (ejaculation), or to realize it after you wake up. This is normal and cannot be controlled.

You are now in a special time of life called puberty. This is a time when your body and mind are growing and changing. Puberty can start at different times for different children. Some boys start as early as age 10, while others start by age 15. Body and mind changes continue until you are 21 years old. My nephew, you have started a long journey to becoming an adult.”

Okidi feels relieved!
Okidi now feels brave to tell his Uncle about another concern. “The other day in class, I tried to answer the teacher's question. But my voice suddenly sounded strange and I felt like I had to cough. Uncle, what is happening to me?” asks Okidi.

His Uncle laughs. “You should have seen me when I was younger! I had the hairiest legs in my class before anyone else developed! So, do not worry. Voice changes are just one change you will experience.

Also, your man parts will get bigger. You will grow hair under your arms, on your face and chest, and like me, on your legs. You will grow taller, develop muscles and sweat more.

You will also get erections. This is when the man part gets hard. Erections can happen at night or during the day. Just like wet dreams, erections cannot be controlled. If you wait, the erection will go down on its own. You do not have to have sex or even ejaculate. This will not cause you any harm.

Body changes are completely normal. They are signs that your body is growing and changing. Do not be embarrassed. Be proud of your strong and healthy body and mind!”

Questions for the group:

- What are some body changes that boys experience during puberty?
- Have you experienced any of these changes yet?
- Do you think that having wet dreams or other body changes means that a boy is ready to have sex? Why?
Okidi asks, “Uncle, my friends said that these days I get big-headed sometimes. Like when a boy is cheating on the football pitch. I want to fix the game whereas I used to let it go. You know, Uncle, I was not like that before. Why do I do that?”

Okidi’s Uncle reassures him. “Just keep your cool. Don’t worry, you may feel different sometimes during this time of changes. You may feel like others do not understand you. You may feel happy one minute and sad the next. Be patient with yourself. You will become used to this new you.”

Questions for the group:

• What emotional changes do adolescents experience during puberty?
• Have you experienced any of these changes yet?
Okidi’s Uncle continues. “My nephew, you may also feel romantic or sexual attraction toward girls. But acting on such feelings is a big responsibility, and you should wait until you are older.

Now let me tell you about girls’ body changes so that you are knowledgeable about girls and boys. Compared to boys, girls experience some similar and some different changes. Like boys, girls get taller and grow body hair under their arms and around their woman parts. Girls also sweat more, and may get pimples.

Unlike boys, girls grow breasts and hips, and start monthly bleeding. Monthly bleeding can start between the ages of 9 to 14 years. Bleeding happens each month for 3 to 7 days. Although girls can get pregnant once monthly bleeding starts, their bodies and minds are not ready for pregnancy. Like boys, they need to grow and develop during puberty as they prepare to become adults.”
“Okidi, now I will teach you how babies are made. Hold up your right hand and wave it back and forward like a worm. This represents the sperm in men. Hold up your other hand like a fist. This hand represents the egg inside the woman. Now repeat after me:

‘I was conceived when my parents had sex and the sperm from my father (wave the right hand like a worm or sperm) and the egg from my mother (fist the left hand) came together (join your hands) and created me.’ Sperm is in the fluid that comes out of a boy’s hard man parts. Boys are not born with sperm. Boys begin to produce sperm during puberty and continue their entire life. When a boy’s man parts gets hard and releases sperm, he can cause a girl to become pregnant.

A boy can get a girl pregnant any time they have sexual relations without using a condom or another method of contraception.

Being able to get a girl pregnant does not mean that you are ready for sex or pregnancy. When you have finished growing, you will be better prepared to be a father and have a family of your own.

So, Okidi, remember this well for your future. When you are in a relationship and you both agree that it is time, visit a health worker. Learn and discuss your options for planning when to get pregnant and have children. There are many methods available to help a couple plan for pregnancy and avoid unintended pregnancy. Will you do this for me and for your family?”

Okidi agrees.
With his Uncle’s advice, Okidi is not worried about body changes now. He is ready to share his experiences with other children.

The next day while playing football, Okidi sees that his cousin is acting different than usual. Instead of playing hard, his cousin quietly sits on the side. He asks, “Hey, what is wrong with you?”

Okidi’s cousin reveals, “Cousin, something confusing happened last night. I woke up to find that I had wet underpants. I think I may be sick.”

Okidi smiles. He says, “Cousin, you are experiencing things like I have. This is called a wet dream. It happens during puberty when your body and mind are growing up. It is very normal for boys. I am some years older than you, so I can tell you about it and other changes coming. Obongdyan ma malolubu ma piny. (The cow’s hind hooves step in the same spot as the front hooves.)”

Questions for the group:

• Can you support friends who experience body changes? How?
• What would you say to a friend who has concerns about body changes?
• What did you learn from Okidi’s story?
Story 3
Story 3  Making great decisions

Okidi walks home with some friends after a football game. The friends notice that Okidi has hair on his legs. “Hey! You are now a man. You should go for sex with a girl. You will enjoy it!” Okidi wonders, “Am I a man?”

Questions for the group:

- Does having hair on the body mean that Okidi is now a man? Why?
That evening at the wang-oo/wii-gadi, Okidi sits on a large stone. He wants to signal to the others that he is becoming a man. But the men around the fireside look at him sternly. Okidi gets the idea that he should move onto a log, with other age-mates.

Then Okidi quietly asks his uncle, “Am I now a man?”

His Uncle replies, “My nephew, just look at yourself. Do you look like me? No, this is a special time to learn and grow. You are not a young child and not yet an adult. So you are not yet ready to have sex, or a wife. Ojukweecetiokicetiot a maro.” (When you are still young, you shouldn't hurry to have a woman early.)
His Uncle continues, “Okidi, as you grow older there will be many decisions ahead of you. I know you will always try to make good decisions. Before you make one ask yourself, ‘Is this a good decision or a great decision?’ This simple question will guide you to make the best choice.

One decision you will have to make over and over in your life is whether or not to do what friends suggest.

If friends pressure you to have sex when you are not ready, they are using their power in a bad way. Even though this may not leave a physical scar, it affects people in a bad way. In this case, a good decision would be to tell them that you are not ready. You can ‘agree to disagree’. A great decision would be to explain to them why you are not ready to have sex yet, and encourage them to think about their own decision, too.”

Questions for the group:

• Is it easy to do different things from your friends? Why?
• What can help you to make a great decision for yourself?
Okidi asks, “Uncle, I understand that I am not a man and not ready for sex. But I really like a girl at school. She is pretty and intelligent. How can I show this girl that I like her without confusing her or me?”

His Uncle answers, “Oh yes! There are many ways to show love to someone. Consider your parents and friends. You care for and love them, don’t you? You show them love in different ways.

As you grow older, you can decide what type of relationship to have with a girl. If a girl you like feels the same way about you, you can express your feelings to each other in many ways without sex. You can write letters and poems. Share secrets and stories. Sing songs. If you feel a desire to have sex, exercise to clear your mind.

Okidi’s Uncle continues. “Do you know that it is not acceptable for you or any boy to confuse, pressure, or force himself on a girl? No one has the right to touch another person’s private parts if the other person does not agree. Is it also not acceptable to pressure any boy or girl to have sex. These are forms of violence.

Violence harms everyone. Using violence makes boys lose respect and separates them from other people.

So, Okidi, do you think you are ready to practise making great decisions about relationships?”

Questions for the group:

- Do you think Okidi is ready to make great decisions? Why?
- Do you show love to your family and friends? How?
- Can someone express love to a girlfriend or boyfriend without sex? How?
Okidi says, “I am ready!”

The next day at school, Okidi’s friend hears that the girl likes him. Okidi is excited, but nervous. He asks his friend, “So what do I do now?”

His friend suggests, “Just send a letter to the girl and invite her to meet you here at school tonight. Then you can tell her that you like her.”

Okidi remembers what his Uncle advised. A good decision would be to invite her to talk during the daytime. A great decision would be to get to know her better while developing strong trust and friendship.

Okidi thinks for a minute. Then he sends the girl a letter to explain that he likes her and he respects her. He asks to become her boyfriend, and promises to show love in many ways without sex now.

Questions for the group:

• Do you think the girl accepted his letter? Why?
• Did Okidi make a good decision or a great decision?
• What great decision could you make in this situation?
One rainy day, Okidi and his friends are standing under a tree. They cannot play football due to the rain and mud on the pitch.

One of the friends says, “My older brother has offered to buy us alcohol. Shall we go and try?”

Okidi looks at the other boys who stay quiet. He remembers what his Uncle advised. A good decision would be to go with his friends, but not drink the alcohol. But a great decision would be to suggest a different fun activity. Okidi wonders what his friends will say.

“Friends, we are still young to drink alcohol. It does not make us look like men. We would just look foolish and others would laugh at us. Let’s go play a game together.”

The friends agree, and Okidi is happy!

Questions for the group:

• Did Okidi make a good decision or a great decision?
• What great decision could you make in this situation?
Another day, Okidi returns home to find his sister leaving for the market. Okidi asks, “Where are you going?” His sister replies, “Mother has given us extra money. I am going to the market to buy a new dress.”

Okidi feels unhappy because he wants to buy a football. Then he starts to get angry. As the brother he should be part of the decision!

Okidi considers his choices. A good decision would be to ask his sister to split the money. That could resolve the conflict peacefully. But, a great decision would be to listen to his sister’s side, discuss and come to mutual agreement. After all, he has two ears and one mouth for a reason.

Okidi asks, “Why do you want a new dress?” She explains, “Brother, girls at school laughed at me because of the holes in my dress. I felt ashamed.” Okidi now understands. “Sister, thank you for sharing that. I would like something, too. Can we use the money to benefit both of us? What are your ideas?” His sister thinks and then says, “We could get my dress repaired and get a used football.”

Okidi realizes that he and his sister rarely talk together, but she has some great ideas!

Questions for the group:

- Did Okidi make a good decision or a great decision?
- What great decision could you make in this situation?
“My nephew,” Uncle says to Okidi, “I am proud of you. You have been thinking about your choices and decisions. You are learning to make great decisions. You are growing up, but not yet a man. There are many things ahead of you in life.”

“You are so special. Believe in yourself. I believe in you!”

Questions for the group:

- Will you do anything differently after learning Okidi’s story? What?
Okidi grew up great! By trying hard, Okidi became a respected teacher and role model in his community.

Okidi got married to a woman he liked talking to. They have a peaceful home. After two children, they decided that two children are enough. They visited a health centre to learn how to stop having children.

Okidi remained an important person in his sister’s life. He encouraged his sister to finish school. When she married, he spoke at the marriage ceremony. When she had children, Okidi took his role as their maternal uncle seriously. Whenever they had questions, the children talked with their uncle, just as Okidi did while growing up.

Okidi and his wife treat their daughter and son equally. Every night, Okidi says to the daughter and son,

“You are so special. Believe in yourself. I believe in you!”
Common questions & answers

What is puberty?
Puberty is a time when children are no longer young children and not yet adults. During puberty the bodies of boys and girls physically change—bodies grow bigger and taller, genitals mature, and hair often starts growing in new places on the body. During puberty, a girl becomes physically able to become pregnant and a young boy becomes physically able to father a child.

At what age do boys and girls go through puberty?
Puberty describes all the physical changes that children go through as they grow into adults. Girls usually begin changes earlier than boys. Most girls notice that changes start between 8 to 13 years old, and boys notice that changes start between 10 to 15 years old. It might be sooner or it might be later. Each person is a little different, so everyone goes through puberty at one’s own pace. Changes in mind and body continue until 19 or even 20 years of age.

Is it normal for some boys and girls to mature earlier than others?
Yes. Some boys start puberty as early as 10 years old, others not until they are 15. Some girls start puberty as early as age eight, others not until they are 13 or later. Each person is normal for themselves.

Why do some parts of the body mature more quickly than others?
During puberty, there is an order in which certain physical changes usually occur: For boys, growth of the testicles is usually the earliest sign. However, bodily changes can occur in a different order and still be considered normal.

What is an erection?
An erection is when the penis gets hard with blood. Boys and men usually have several night-time erections. It is common to wake up with an erection. This is normal. Boys and men can also get an erection when they are not expecting it during the day, even when they’re not sexually excited. Boys and men cannot control when they have erections. This is a normal part of sexual development and growing up.
What is the normal size and angle of a penis?

Penis size is not important and does not determine a man’s ability to father a child and be a good lover. For adults, the average penis size is about 14 to 16cm when erect. For adolescents, there is no average length because boys develop at different ages and rates. During puberty between the ages of 10 to 18, the penis and testicles develop more rapidly, although the penis doesn’t stop growing until the age of 21. There is no correct angle when hard.

Can semen and urine leave the body at the same time?

The same passage is used for both urine and semen, the fluid that comes from a man’s penis when hard. However, a valve at the base of the urethra, a short tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body, makes it impossible for urine and semen to travel through this tube at the same time.

What is circumcision?

Circumcision is an operation to remove the piece of skin (the foreskin) that covers the tip of the penis. If a boy gets circumcised, it’s nothing to worry about. It does not affect sex in the future.

How should the penis (man parts) be cleaned?

Gently wash the penis with water and soap each day. If a boy has not been circumcised, he should pull back the foreskin gently and wash underneath.

What is sperm?

A sperm is the male sex cell. Sperm are produced in the testicles and released in fluid called semen from a boy’s hard penis. There are millions of sperm in each drop of fluid. If the fluid enters a girl, she can get pregnant. If a boy has sex with a girl but pulls his penis out before releasing fluid, he can still get her pregnant. This is because it can be hard to pull out early enough, and there may be sperm from the previous release of fluid remaining in the urethra that get carried in pre-ejaculate.
What is masturbation?
Masturbation is when someone gets sexual pleasure from touching their genitals (man parts). Masturbation usually leads to an orgasm and ejaculation. There is no right or wrong way to masturbate.

Can masturbating cause health problems?
It is safe. Masturbation does not cause any harm even if it is done often. Also, there is no risk of pregnancy, HIV or other sexually transmitted infections. Masturbating will not affect a man’s ability to produce sperm. Men produce sperm continuously and never run out. After a man has ejaculated, it will take some time before he can ejaculate again. This is normal and doesn’t mean there is anything wrong with his sperm. It is only a problem if it happens so often that it keeps someone from their daily activities. Soreness, cuts or bruising can happen if masturbation is done too roughly. Although people may be embarrassed to talk about it, there is no shame in it.

What is needed for pregnancy to occur?
Although pregnancy does not occur with every act of sex, it is likely to occur when three things happen: 1) an egg must be present in the woman’s fallopian tubes, the tubes that carry the egg to the womb where babies grow; 2) sperm from the male must join the egg to fertilize it; and 3) the fertilized egg must attach itself to the lining of the woman’s womb.

How can pregnancy be prevented?
When a man and a woman want to have sex without having a child, they can use a method of contraception to prevent pregnancy. There are many types of methods including condoms, oral contraceptive pills, injectables, intrauterine device (IUD) and natural methods. Talk with a health worker for information about the methods available. When a couple is using a method correctly, this means they are “protected” from pregnancy. When they use a condom in addition to another method of contraception, it means they are “protected” from pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections like HIV.