

LEARNING

for the
Christian
family

ABOUT SEX

Sex & the New You

For young women
ages 13–15

CONCORDIA PUBLISHING HOUSE • SAINT LOUIS

For Discussion or Individual Use

Book 4 of the Learning About Sex Series for Girls

The titles in the series:

Book 1: *Why Boys and Girls Are Different*

Book 2: *Where Do Babies Come From?*

Book 3: *How You Are Changing*

Book 4: *Sex and the New You*

Book 5: *Love, Sex, and God*

Book 6: *How to Talk Confidently with Your Child about Sex*

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contents

Editors' Foreword	4
1 You've Heard and You've Wondered	5
2 You're a Special Young Woman!	9
3 Gender Is More Than Body Parts	12
4 Is Sex a Secret?	14
5 You're Changing into a New You	16
6 Becoming a Woman	22
7 About Boys and Men	26
8 The Miracle of Birth	30
9 Men and Women Are Different, Aren't They?	36
10 Getting Along with Friends	39
11 Getting Along with Family	47
12 Special Questions	50
13 The New You	59
Word List	61



**Sometimes I think God made
me weird and dumb!**

**Because I'm always messing things up.
I don't do anything right.
Do you ever feel that way?**

**Are you kidding? That's just my luck.
I found the second person in the world
who is weird and dumb!**

Why do you say that?

**Sure. Lots of times. I think
everybody feels that way sometimes.**

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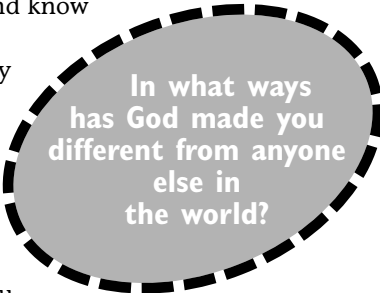
You're a Special Young Woman!

“Am I normal?” many young people ask. It’s so easy to feel alone and different. It’s easy to think that you are the only person feeling the way you do—about your body, your family, yourself. Maybe you feel this way because of the changes in your body. You may feel this way because your body is not growing as rapidly as other girls around you. Or perhaps your body is way ahead of the pack, and that doesn’t feel so good either. Perhaps you are experiencing a growing awareness of sexual thoughts and feelings. You wonder: Are such thoughts normal?

It’s good to have a friend you can talk with when you’re not feeling good about yourself or are confused or puzzled. But it’s especially great to know Jesus as our Friend! He can actually “sympathize with our weaknesses,” the Bible reminds us, because He was “tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). He really *knows* how we feel, because He was born and grew and went through the teen years too. That’s why we can talk to Him and know He’ll understand.

Even more, as your Savior, He can really help! He lived and died and rose again to make you a child of the heavenly Father. He’s living proof that “the Father Himself loves you” (John 16:27). That’s good to remember when you’re feeling unlovable or guilty or anxious or scared.

The God who loves you and forgives you is the same God who made you. No one else—not even an identical twin—is exactly like you. You are special; you are not a carbon copy of someone



In what ways
has God made you
different from anyone
else in
the world?

else. You look different, you feel different, you think differently than anyone else. You grow at a different rate—maybe in spurts, maybe at a fairly regular pace. But whatever your growth pattern, it's just right for you because God made you and set your pattern into motion. When you accept that, you can accept a lot of the other things about yourself.

So don't quit on yourself! Don't give up hope and quit trying. Perhaps you won't ever be the glamorous model you wish you could be, but you can do a lot with what you've got. Once you accept yourself as you are and decide you're worth taking care of, ask yourself the following questions. The answers you give will suggest what you can do to take care of your body—and your feelings about yourself.

1. How much sleep do I get each night? Do I sometimes harm my body with a lack of rest? How can I improve on this?
2. What are my eating habits? Do they hinder the growth of my body or help it? Am I a junk food addict, or do I eat good, solid, nourishing food? Do I sometimes eat too little or too much? What can I do to help my body by changing some of my eating habits?
3. Are some of my complexion problems caused by what I eat? And

do I wash often enough to keep my skin from being too greasy and oily? Should I see a doctor about my skin problems?

4. What about exercise? Is my body mistreated with too much jogging and too much exertion? Or do I get most of my exercise sharpening my pencil or falling out of bed?
5. What are my feelings about smoking? Do I think that doing it will make me one of the group? Or do I take seriously the studies that show the harm and danger in smoking? Am I or will I become one of those teens who smoke, even though it is a fact that smoking is harmful to me and to those around me?
6. And what about drugs? And alcohol? Do I abuse my body by taking drugs and drinking alcohol?

To which of the following do you relate?

- “What is happening to my body?”
- “Why isn't my body changing yet?”
- “I feel like I am too tall.”
- “I feel like I am too short.”
- “I'm so awkward! I keep tripping over my feet!”
- “I'm so awkward! I keep tripping over my tongue!”
- “My face has zits.”
- “No one else has the problems I have; no one ever did.”
- “No one understands me.”
- “I don't understand me.”

How do you know
you are special to
Jesus?

Even if your answers show that you sometimes misuse your body and don't show the concern about it you might, God cares. After all, He formed your body and programmed it to work in a certain way, and He gave you common sense to take care of it. Sure, you forget now and then, but He doesn't. Remember, He's got quite an investment in you. "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body," writes St. Paul (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

Even if your complexion is poor right now, even if you're a bit overweight, even if you're carrying a physical handicap every moment of the day, you are His, and He's proud of that. Peek in the mirror again. Go ahead—it won't hurt. Look beyond the familiar surface and find the hand of God there. See if you don't feel a little different now—maybe even a little proud. Remember, you are a "work in progress." God is changing you into an adult. But He's not done with you yet!

How do you
honor God in the
care of
your body?

