

POWHER: First Period Guide

Intro: What This Guide Is

This guide helps parents, caregivers, mentors, friends, and teachers have open, shame-free conversations about the first period, and it supports individuals learning it on their own.

Checklist Before the Conversation

- ☐ Choose a private, comfortable, and relaxed setting.
- ☐ Have basic period supplies ready (pads, tampons, menstrual cup info).
- ☐ Be prepared to listen and answer questions honestly.
- ☐ Keep a calm, positive tone.
- ☐ Emphasize that periods are normal and a natural part of growing up.
- ☐ Let them know it's okay to feel any emotion: excitement, confusion, or even nervousness.
- ☐ Plan to follow up with more support as needed.

Additional Tips

- Use simple, age-appropriate language.
- Normalize the conversation by linking periods to overall health and growth.
- Avoid using shameful or negative words.
- Encourage open communication for ongoing support.
- Provide written resources or apps for tracking periods if interested.

For Moms

Show your support:

"Sweetheart, I want to talk with you about something special, your body is growing up, and soon you might get your first period..."

- Offer supplies like pads or tampons
- Share clear, simple facts about menstruation
- Provide emotional support and reassurance
- Help with tracking and managing symptoms

You might feel nervous, and that's okay. Just showing you're here making a difference.

Sample Dialogue: For Moms

Opening:

"Sweetheart, I want to talk with you about something special, your body is growing up, and soon you might get your first period. It's completely normal, and I want you to know I'm here for you every step of the way."

When It Happens:

"I'm so proud of you! Getting your period means your body is healthy and doing exactly what it should. If you need anything: pads, tampons, or just to chat, I'm right here."

Support:

"Sometimes your period might come with cramps or mood changes. That's okay! We can find ways to make you feel better, like heating pads or rest. Remember, no shame or embarrassment, this is part of life."

For Dads

Show your support:

"Hey kiddo, I want to talk about something important, when your body starts your period, it means you're growing and changing..."

- Stock some basic supplies
- Be open about learning together
- Create a shame-free, safe space to talk

You don't need to know everything, just be willing to listen and support.

Sample Dialogue: For Dads

Opening:

"Hey kiddo, I want to talk about something important, when your body starts your period, it means you're growing and changing. I want you to know this is a natural part of life, and I've got your back."

When It Happens:

"I know this might feel new or even a little weird, but it's totally normal. If you need supplies or want to ask questions, just come to me anytime."

Support:

"If you get cramps or feel tired, let me know. We'll figure out ways to help you feel better. I might not know everything, but I'll learn with you and support you.

For Friends

Offer kind words:

"If you ever start your period and feel nervous or confused, you're not alone. I've been there too..."

- Normalize the experience
- Be ready to offer a pad/tampon
- Support without judgment

Sample Dialogue: For Friends

Opening:

"Hey, just wanted to say, if you ever start your period and feel nervous or confused, you're not alone. I've been there too, and it's totally normal."

When It Happens:

"If you need anything: like pads or tampons, or just someone to talk to, I'm here. We can help each other figure it out."

Support:

"Sometimes it's uncomfortable or annoying, but it's just your body doing its thing. No shame at all. Let's keep it real and support each other."

For Teachers

Classroom Intro:

"Today, I want to talk about something many of you will experience, your first period. It's completely normal..."

- Give factual, inclusive info
- Provide practical tips for students
- Offer discreet support (nurse's office, supplies)

Sample Dialogue: For Teachers

Opening:

"Hi everyone! Today, I want to talk about something natural that many of you will experience: getting your first period. It's a healthy sign that your body is growing."

Key Info:

"A period is when blood comes from the uterus, usually lasting a few days each month. It's important to be prepared with supplies like pads or tampons, and it's okay to ask questions."

Support & Normalizing:

"If you start your period at school, don't worry. You can discreetly visit the nurse or ask me for help. Periods are nothing to be embarrassed about, they're a normal part of life."

For You: If No One Ever Told You

You're not late, weird, or alone. Your period is normal and healthy. Here's what you need to know:

- Your period may last 3–7 days and comes once a month
- Use pads, tampons, cups, or period underwear
- Cramps, mood swings, and fatigue are normal

You are not dirty. You are not broken. You are just growing and that's powerful.

Sample Dialogue: In General

Opening:

"Hey [Name], I wanted to check in with you about something important. Have you heard about periods before? It's totally normal to have questions or feel unsure, and I'm here to help you with anything you want to know."

When They Say They Have Their First Period (or You Notice):

"That's great you told me! Your body is going through a natural and healthy change. Getting your first period is a big step, it means your body is growing up and getting ready to do amazing things."

Explaining What's Happening:

"A period happens because your body is shedding the lining of the uterus, which comes out as blood through your vagina. It usually lasts around 3 to 7 days, and it might come every month or so once it starts."

Talking About Supplies:

"Here are some pads and tampons you can use, or if you want, I can tell you about menstrual cups too. It's important to change your pad or tampon every few hours to stay clean and comfortable."

Addressing Feelings:

"It's okay to feel happy, nervous, or even a bit worried. Lots of people feel that way the first time. Remember, having your period is a sign that your body is healthy and strong."

What To Do If It Happens at School or Unexpectedly:

"If you ever get your period and aren't prepared, you can always come to me or another adult you trust. You can also keep some supplies in your backpack or locker, just in case."

Closing & Encouragement:

"You're doing great. I'm proud of you, and I'm here for you anytime you want to talk or have questions. Periods can be a bit tricky at first, but you'll get the hang of it in no time."