

**Puberty
Girls
Edition**
SHINE_{SA}
 **Aboriginal Health Council**
of South Australia Ltd.



**This booklet is made for people
wanting to know more about puberty.**

It can also be used by parents or carers.

**The illustrations in this booklet were made by Savi Ross.
Savi Ross is an African American, Torres Strait Islander
illustrator based in Narm, Melbourne.**

**We acknowledge that this resource was made on the lands of the
Kurna people and we pay our respects to elders past and present.
We would like to thank the Aboriginal health workers and community
members for their support in the production of this resource.**

SHINE_{SA}



**Aboriginal Health Council
of South Australia Ltd.**

What is puberty?

Puberty is the time when we go from being a **child** to being an **adult**.

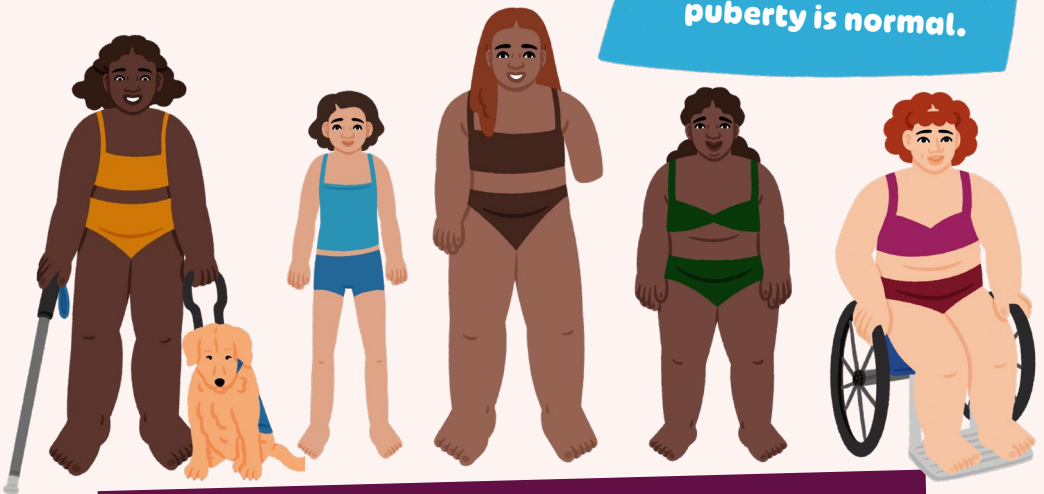
It is caused by **hormones** sending messages to different parts of our bodies.

Puberty can change the way our body looks and feels and it can change our thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Puberty can also change how we feel about our relationships.

Puberty usually starts between the ages of 8 and 16 years. It can last anywhere from 18 months to 5 years.

Some of the changes we experience during puberty can feel confusing and uncomfortable, but puberty is normal.



Everyone's body is different!

The information in this booklet is for most people however some people may be intersex and their bodies can be different from others. Other people may be transgender or non-binary and this is OK.

Body changes during puberty

Most people will experience changes to their body during puberty.

We're going to look at some you might experience.

Remember: Some of the changes we experience during puberty can feel *confusing* and *weird* but these are normal!

Body shape changes

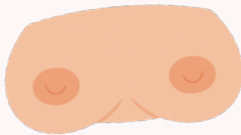
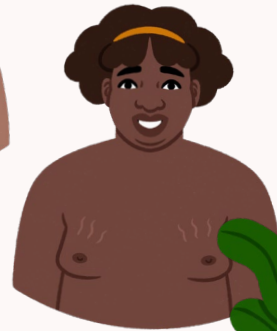
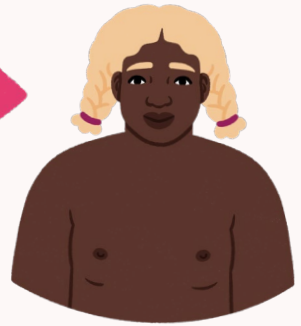
Your body will grow and change.

Some people get taller, some gain weight.

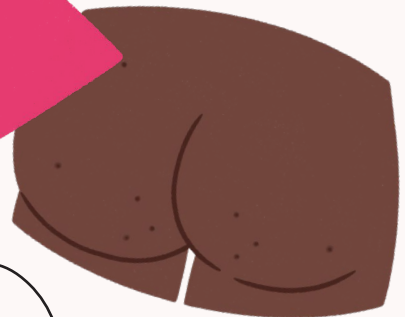
Some people get wider around their hips, some grow boobs/breasts.



**Everybody's boobs look different!
Also it's normal for one breast to be larger than the other!**



You might notice your body getting bigger and your hips getting wider. You might even have some stretch marks.




Stretch marks



Body hair changes



More hair might grow on your body, in your armpits and around your private parts.



All this hair is normal. Some people shave or remove their body hair or while others choose to leave it. It's your choice.



Everybody looks different

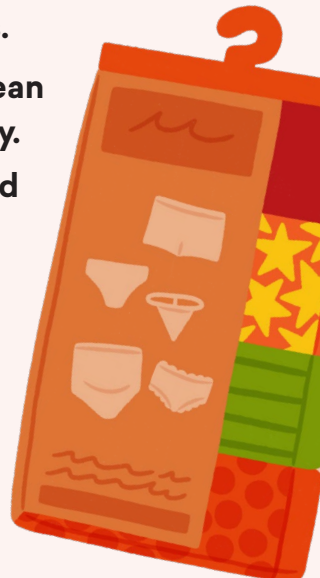


The **vulva** is the **outside parts** of the genitals.

Some people say **vagina** when they actually mean **vulva**, but these are different parts of the body.

The vulva includes the pubic hair, the inner and outer vaginal lips (labia), the clitoris, and the openings for the vagina and the urethra (for wee/urine).

The vulva can be different sizes, shapes and colours. This is normal!



skin and sweat changes

It's common to have more body **smells** and **sweat** during puberty.

Your skin can also change, with more oil causing **pimples** and greasy hair.



Washing your clothes and body often will help manage these changes.



Soap and deodorant work well but private parts (genitals) should be washed with water only!

What do you call these?

Words your health worker would use:

Your words:



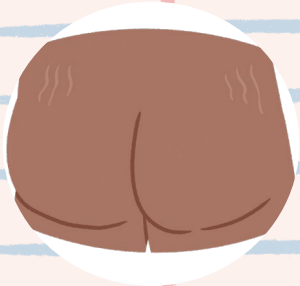
Breasts

mimmies

boobs



Vulva



Bottom



Period

Menstruation

Feelings and emotions during puberty

Hormone changes during puberty can cause your emotions to be all over the place.

You may have feelings like **happiness** and joy one moment, but then **sadness** or **anger** the next. You might have bigger or smaller feelings than you're used to.

This can be really confusing and frustrating for you and the people around you.



Talking with your friends and family about how your mood is changing can help.



It is also important to get enough sleep and to do some things you enjoy, like art, sport, music or playing a game.

Going through puberty you might experience:

Friendship
changes



Mood
swings



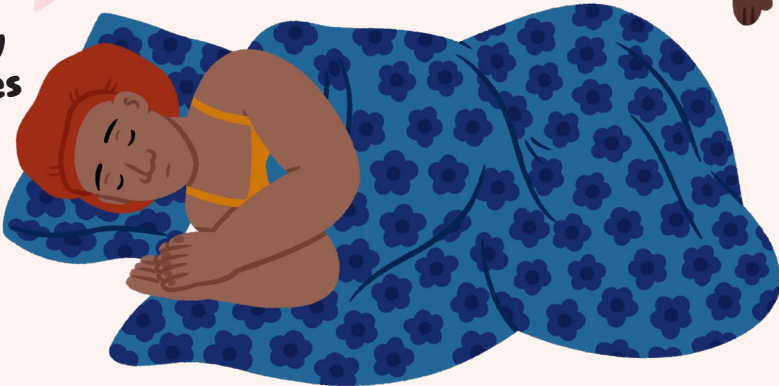
Feelings of
attraction



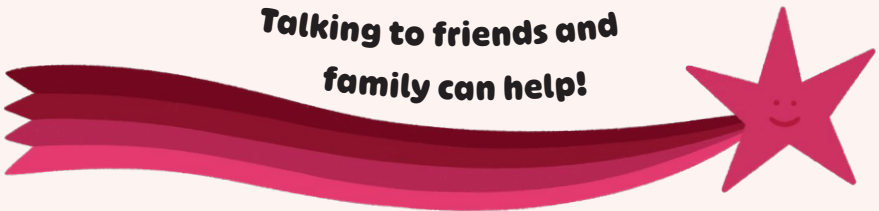
Interests
changes



Energy
changes



Talking to friends and
family can help!



Sexual feelings

During puberty you might start having sexual feelings and thoughts. Sexual feelings can look like sensitive skin, **wetness**, or feeling excited.

Sometimes they might seem to just happen for no reason.




Some people don't experience any sexual feelings.

Wet dreams

You might experience a wet dream. It might feel slippery or wet between your legs. Some people have them occasionally, while for others they may happen more often.

It's a normal part of growing up.

Masturbation



Touching or rubbing your own genital area so that it feels good is called masturbation.

Masturbation is a private activity and **should be done in a private place**, such as in your bedroom or bathroom with the door closed.

Self-care

Puberty is a time when you go from being a child to an adult, and this includes learning how to look after yourself.

There are different things to think about:

Body hygiene

Washing your body

Clean clothes/
underwear

Washing hands
regularly

Taking care of yourself



Sleep Try to get 8-10 hours a day.



Eat You might feel more or less hungry during puberty because of all the changes.

Try to pay attention to your body and give it what it needs.



Move Some days you will have lots of energy and others you'll have none!

Moving your body is a good way to have more feelings of focus and calm.



Talk/yarn Talking to people you care about can help you feel better about the changes that are happening.

Periods

Periods are part of the **menstrual cycle**, which is a hormonal and physical cycle that our body usually goes through to get ready for pregnancy.

Periods usually happens every 21-35 days (for most people about **once a month**).

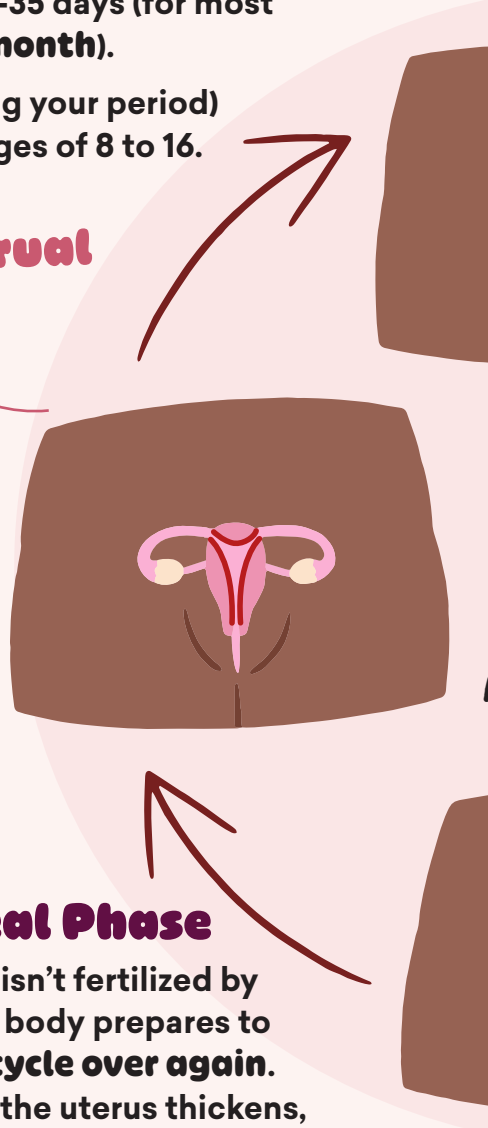
The menstrual cycle (including your period) usually starts between the ages of 8 to 16.



The Menstrual Cycle

Luteal Phase

If the egg isn't fertilized by sperm, the body prepares to **start the cycle over again**. The lining of the uterus thickens, and the cycle will start again with another period.

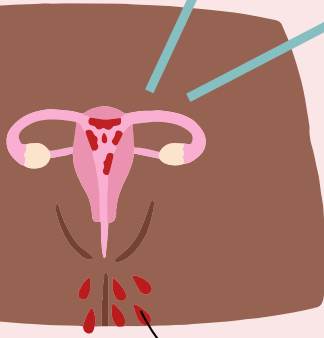


Menstruation (Period!) & Follicular Phase

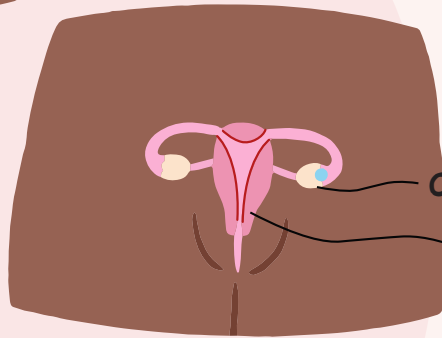
The period part

This is when the body sheds the lining of the uterus, and **blood**/menstrual fluid comes out of the vagina.

This usually lasts a few days.



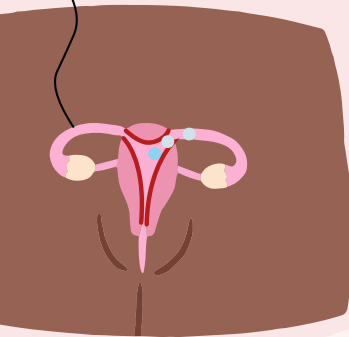
Blood/
Menstrual
Fluid



Ovaries

Uterus

Fallopian
Tubes



Ovulation

About halfway through the cycle, an egg is released from the ovary and travels down the fallopian tube. This is the time when someone can become pregnant if the egg meets a sperm.



Period products

Periods can be messy! Period products help manage the period blood. There are many different options for period products.

The best period products to use are those that work well for you!



Pads Easy to use! Attach to your underwear with a sticky strip. They should be changed when full/wet.



Period underwear Easy to use! Reusable underwear that absorbs menstrual blood. They need to be rinsed and then washed.



Tampons Need a bit of practice - they are inserted in the vagina and removed by pulling the strings. Tampons shouldn't be kept in for more than 8 hours.



Menstrual cup Need a bit of practice - they are folded up and inserted in the vagina and removed by pulling the stem.

Period pain

Feeling uncomfortable below your belly button can be a normal part of periods, these can be **period cramps**.

To help with cramps you can take pain medication from the chemist (like ibuprofen/Nurofen), use a heat pack, or try to move your body.

You should see a doctor or health worker for advice if the pain is really bad and won't go away with pain medication.



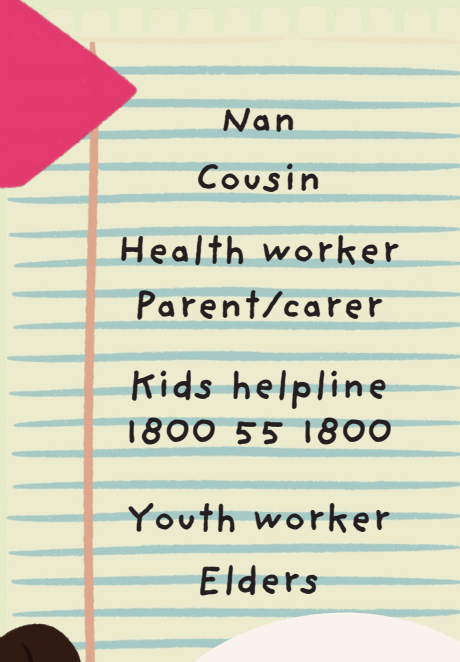
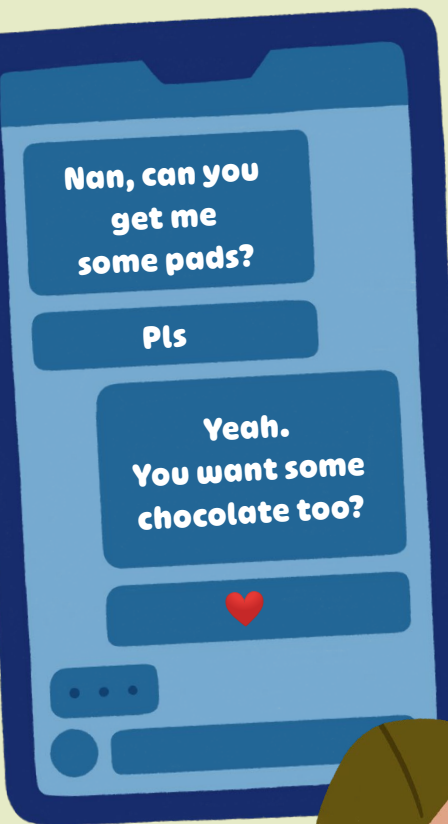
It's a good idea to see a doctor if the pain is stopping you from doing things like going to school or playing sport.

**Periods can be annoying but they shouldn't be really painful!
There's people that can help if they are.**



Where can I get help during puberty?

Think about who you can speak to about changes during puberty.



Aboriginal Health Clinics/Services can help you if you have questions about puberty.

Where can I learn more?

Kids Helpline

More information on teens stuff like puberty, mood swings, relationships and more.

www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens



Yarn Safe

Learn more about your feelings and relationships.

www.headspace.org.au/yarn-safe



Young Deadly Free for Young Mob

For older teens, Young Deadly Free has information about relationships and more.

www.youngdeadlyfree.org.au/young-people



Puberty Boys Edition

Learn more about puberty and what puberty is like for boys.

www.shinesa.org.au/puberty



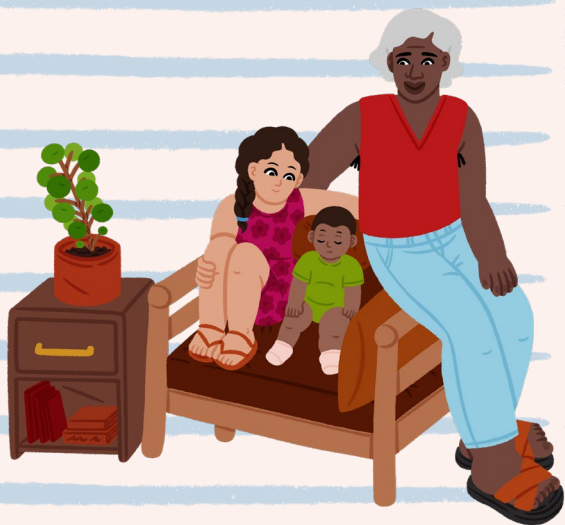
A Quick Guide to Periods

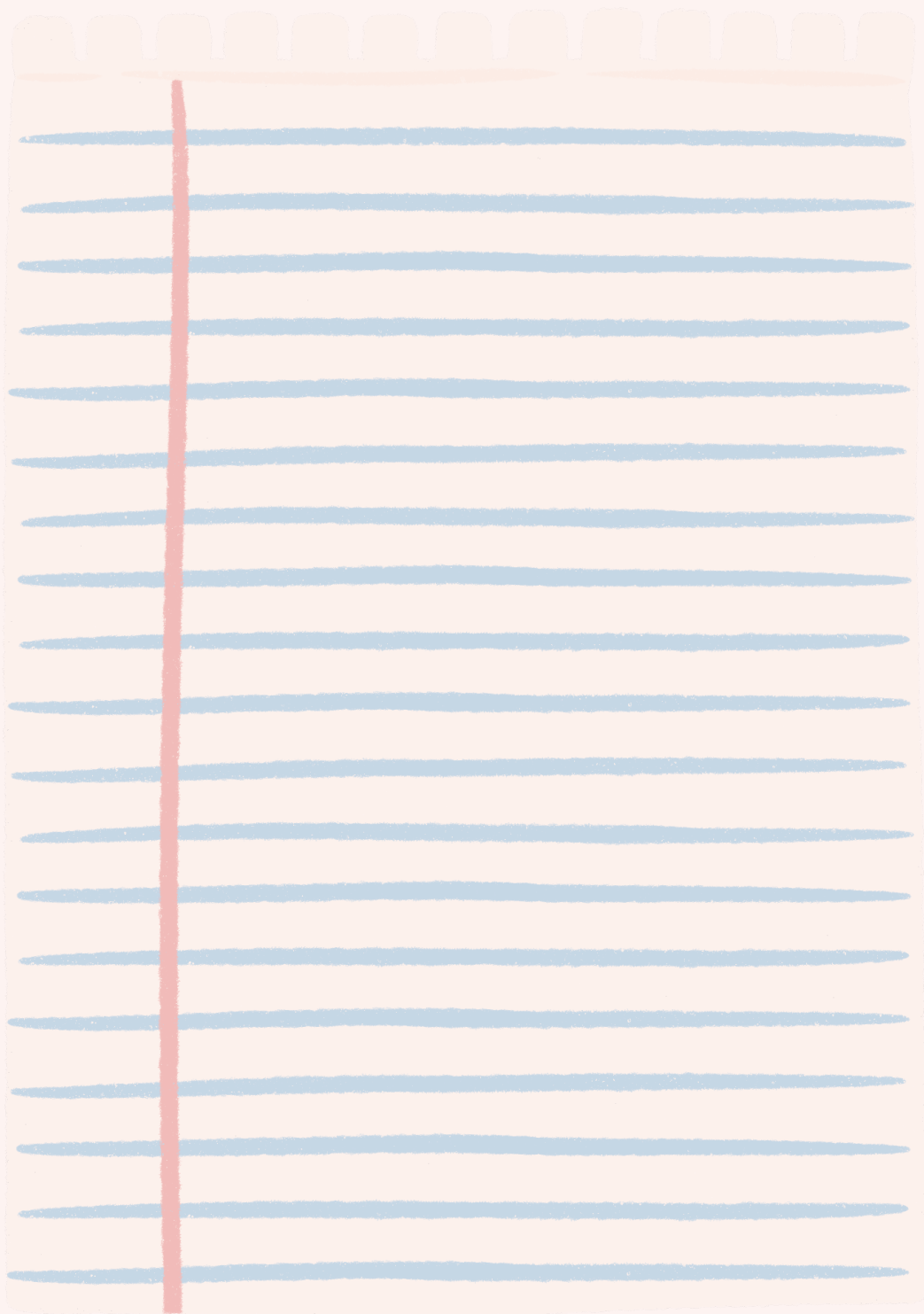
Learn more about what periods and the menstrual cycle.

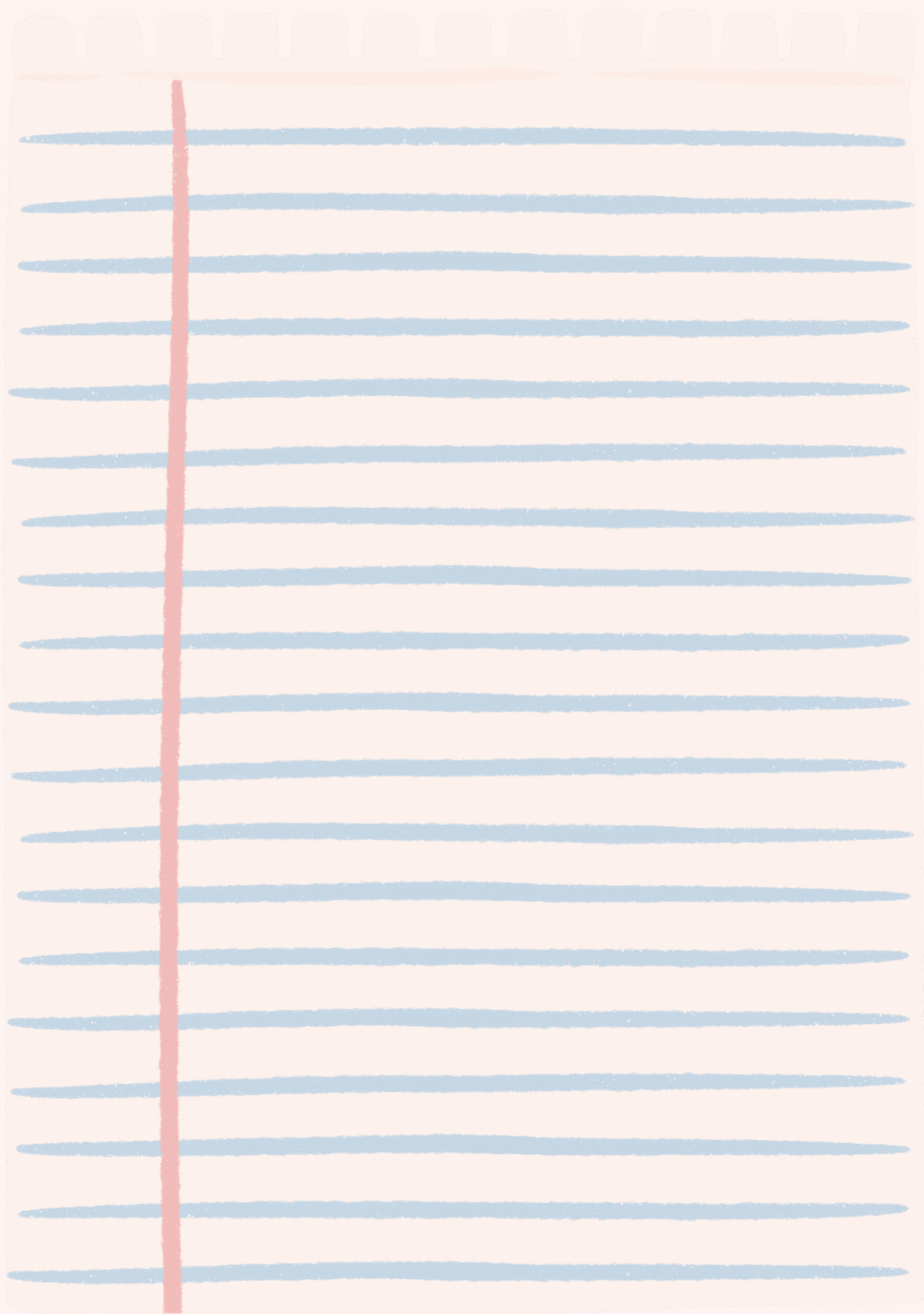
www.shinesa.org.au/online-shop



Your notes







More information for parents/carers

Young Deadly Free for Adults

For adults/parents/carers supporting young people with their sexual health and relationships.

www.youngdeadlyfree.org.au/for-elders-parents-youth-workers



Yarning Quiet Ways

A resource for adults to help kids learn about their bodies and strong, safe and healthy relationships.

www.letsyarn.health.wa.gov.au/for-parents/yarning-quiet-ways



Consent and Young People

This conversation guide has tips to help you yarn about consent.

www.consent.gov.au/first-nations-conversation-guide



