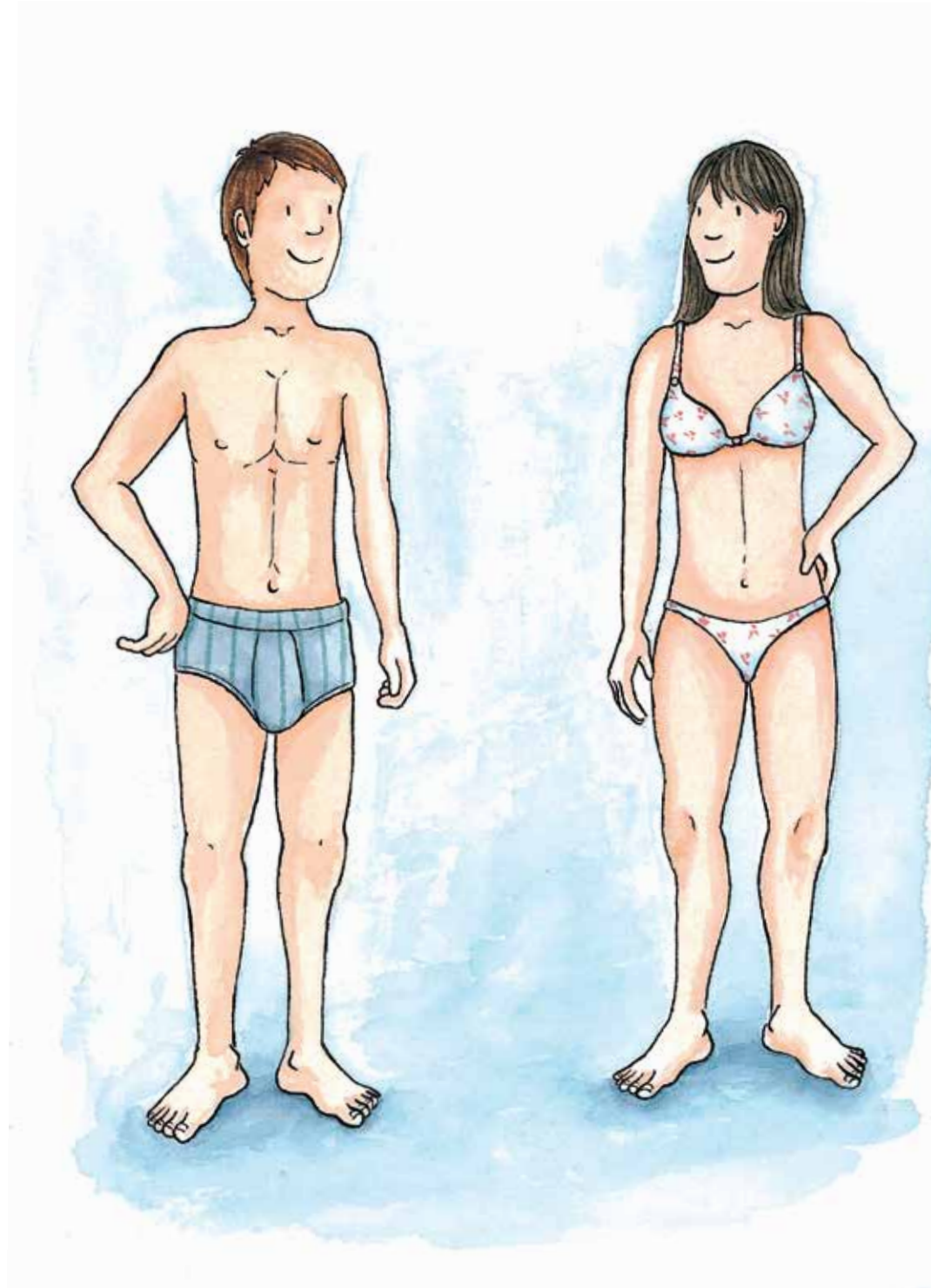


# What happens in puberty?

Changes, changes and more changes. Mom says I should celebrate it, because it means that everything is going well. I can see these changes in different parts of my body. Some take place very slowly while others are very fast and it looks like they take place overnight (maybe I'm exaggerating a little). These drawings show the most relevant changes that take place during puberty. What happens inside cannot be seen in the drawing, but it all prepares you to be able to have children.

## BOYS:

- \* They grow taller
- \* Their facial features change
- \* Acne appears
- \* They grow a beard and moustache
- \* Deeper voice
- \* Shoulders and chest broaden
- \* Hair appears in the armpits
- \* Their muscles become more developed
- \* Pubic hair grows
- \* They sweat more
- \* Their penis and testicles grow
- \* Ejaculations start



Fat accumulation in different parts of the body is normal in girls... Yeah, I've noticed. I look like a barrel with so much fat, I feel swollen! They say it's a question of hormones.

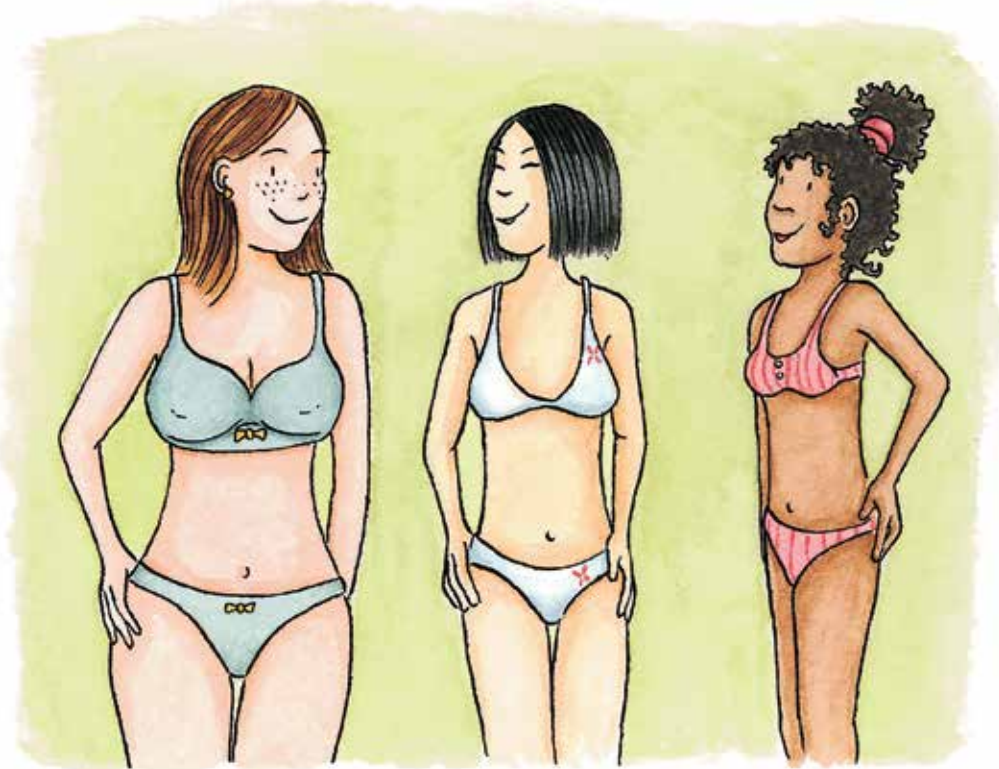
*Mankind needs  
all these  
changes to be  
able to reproduce.*

## GIRLS:

- \* They grow taller in a short time
- \* Facial features change
- \* Breasts start growing
- \* Hair appears in the armpits
- \* Hips grow wider
- \* Pubic hair appears
- \* Legs and buttocks get rounder
- \* They sweat more
- \* Sexual organs grow and start working
- \* Menstruation starts

# Big breasts, small breasts

Then one day I realized it was uncomfortable sleeping face down, that my breasts hurt. Since they have started growing, I notice the breasts on other women a lot. I know I should not make comparisons, but I can't help it. I look at mine and they seem enormous to me! I went shopping for a bra but I could not decide which to choose: With or without underwire, made of cotton, with or without shoulder straps, padded, with vertical or horizontal seams. Fortunately the salesgirl helped me and assured me I will soon find out which kind suits me best. I am not very happy about having large breasts.



There are cultures for which breasts are not so important, they are just useful for feeding babies and that's all, but this is not my case. Most of my girl friends complain about the size and shape of their breasts, if they are firm or sagging or if their nipples are too big. I don't think we can't do much about the change the shape of our breasts. Swimming, exercising or wearing bras is good to avoid sagging breasts, but there is nothing to make them bigger or smaller, not even dieting. We inherit the shape of our breasts from our parents, so when your breasts start growing, they will probably look similar to the breasts of other women in the family. The important thing is that besides being very sensitive to touch, they will be useful for feeding a baby and that does not depend on either shape or size.

• Breasts make us different from boys. Theirs are usually less sensitive to touch and much flatter.



# Do I like boys?

I not only notice I am growing up in my physical changes, but also in my changing attitude toward boys. Up until now they used to be my playmates but now I no longer feel as comfortable with them as before. Some of my girl friends say that is because I like boys, but I'm not so sure. After all, how can you know if you fall in love? Everybody says I will know when I fall in love even without thinking about it. But what if I'm different? I know there are boys who feel attracted to other boys and girls who like girls. What if I like girls? What do you call that?

My feelings are confusing: Sometimes I am happy with my friends and sometimes I get very mad at them. It must be the hormones again.

I like being with my friends.



First of all I want to be clear about names because I'm all mixed up. Heterosexual means you like people of the opposite sex, homosexual means you are attracted to people of your own sex and bisexual means you like people of both sexes and transsexuals believe they were born the wrong sex. Female homosexuals are called lesbians. But, what do you feel when you are sexually attracted to another person? I can imagine, but will it be as I imagine it? I'm anxious and at the same time afraid to find out.



It must be hard accepting you are a homosexual person, that is, that you are attracted to people of your same sex. But if you are, what good is it to hide it?