Personal Hygiene

Does your child go to primary school?

Although your child may not yet be going through any physical changes, it’s never too early to start establishing healthy personal hygiene habits. The guidance provided in the sections below can still apply where appropriate age-wise.

Does your child go to secondary school, sixth form or college?

Your child will be going through a number of physical and emotional changes during puberty, and so it’s important to use this time to help them build on their personal hygiene habits and to get in to routines.

Skin and spots

You can help your child to work out what skin type they have. For example, combination/normal, dry or oily. This will help you to identify the best products to use.  
  
Make sure or advise that they:

* Thoroughly wash their face with cleanser in the morning and evening and tone after this
* Remove any make up before bed
* Hydrate and moisturise the skin
* Drink plenty of water and eat a healthy, balanced diet.

Body odour

During puberty, the sweat glands start to develop. Body odour occurs as a result of bacteria feeding on and breaking down the sweat on the body.  
  
You can help young people to manage this by making sure or advising that they:

* Shower daily and wearing clean clothing to avoid bacterial build up, particularly after periods of physical activity
* Use deodorant, roll on or spray. Some deodorants are also antiperspirants, which could cause people to sweat less.

If you’re worried about body odour or sweating, then you can speak to your child’s GP for advice.

Dental hygiene

Good dental hygiene is key to avoiding bad breath and other issues such as gum disease.  
  
This includes:

* Brushing their teeth twice day
* Flossing
* Visiting the dentist regularly.

Smelly feet

Young people can be prone to smelly feet, even if they are not doing lots of sports.  
  
To avoid or manage this you can make sure or advise that they:

* Wash their feet properly when in the shower
* Completely dry their feet before putting on socks and shoes
* Visit their GP if they feel it is getting worse or not getting any better.

**Remember, personal hygiene issues can be an additional source of anxiety for young people who are already dealing with the emotional and physical changes of puberty, and it can really impact their confidence and social skills. It’s a good idea to start bringing up these conversations and making sure they establish good personal hygiene habits early on.**