Getting bigger

Year: R

About the Growing and Changing Unit

This unit provides the initial building blocks for learning about reproduction in plants and animals, including humans. Please review the material to decide whether it's appropriate for the needs of your children. If you don't have nursery age children in your school you can also draw on the SCARF nursery plans for Growing and Changing for extra/different foundational material.

Introduction - whole class

Read a story about getting bigger, such as *You'll Soon Grow into Them, Titch* by Pat Hutchins (several versions can be found in film clips online).

Focus for questions:

- How much have you changed since you were a baby? (A lot, look different, can do more things, are taller.)
- How do you know you have grown? (Could use props such as baby clothes to help stimulate discussion e.g. need bigger shoes; now sleep in a bigger bed not a cot. Have different clothes from when you were a baby.)
- Which parts have grown? (Body, legs, arms, head, fingers, toes, teeth - getting/soon to get wobbly, losing baby teeth.)
- What has helped us to grow? (Eating food that gives us energy and the right vitamins and minerals to help us grow; getting rest and sleep - our bodies grow when we're asleep.)
- What can you do now that you couldn't do as a baby? (Can reach cupboards without help/footstool, can open doors, can walk everywhere, play football, ride a bike, bounce on a trampoline, swing on a swing without help, climb a climbing frame,

swim/play in the swimming pool with your feet touching the bottom - stress that this should only be done when safely supervised.)

Conclude with a circle that celebrates things we can do now that we couldn't do when we were a baby.

Adult-guided activities (individual or small groups)

Activity 1 - Getting bigger

Explain to the children that we don’t just grow straight from babies into adults. That there are a couple of stages first. Can they remember what they are? (Child and teenager.)

Give the children different photos of babies, children, and adults and ask them to point out what they can see that the people have in common, e.g. do they all have blonde hair? Blue eyes?

Explain that sometimes we don’t have the same looks as our family. Sometimes this is because we may have some parts of us that came from our grandparents, e.g. the messages that our body got which told it to have red hair made have come from our grandparents, rather than our own mum or dad. That is because our own parents' bodies carry messages that came from their mum or dad - and sometimes these get passed on to us.

Sometimes we don’t look the same as our parents because other people helped make us and so we will have messages from their bodies instead. This might be because we are adopted or our parents had help from other people to make us.

However there are other things about us that will be the same as our family that you can’t see so well. For example, the religion or beliefs we might have, or the football team we support, or the type of food we like to eat. Our families help make us who we are, both how we look and how we behave. As we get older and bigger, some of these may stay the same and some things may change.

Using the Activity sheet *Getting Bigger* (see Resources needed area), children can write one new thing they can do now that they couldn't do when they were a baby and when they were a toddler, and one new thing they might be able to do in the future, as a teenager.

Activity 2 - Comparing sizes

Measuring hands and feet, comparing these with adults, discussing how they get bigger.

Measuring head - this could be linked to the story *Jim and the Beanstalk* by Raymond Briggs.

Read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. Children to talk about their favourite foods that help them to grow and why they like them. Teacher to make a list. Foods can be drawn and then made into a caterpillar shape to go around the classroom wall.

Enhancements for continuous provision

Small World play to show characters doing different things at different ages, e.g. baby crawling, teenager playing football, adult driving car.

Children play with dolls of naked baby boys and girls.

Play being different ages - a teenager and an adult, taking turns being the adult.

Roleplay using puppets, mummies, babies, children etc.

Dolls house, looking after babies and children.

SCARF schools - your suggestions

"We are inviting an elderly visitor in to talk about their life and show images of them as a baby and growing up over time. We are also making links with the local care home. Last year we gave a sheet of the human life cycle and asked children to label or write a fact about themselves as a baby including what they could and couldn't do for themselves."

"Some children think that the bigger you are the older you are, so I sometimes talk about things we are allowed to do

when we are teenagers (discussing what this means) adults, different ages."

Talking points

Cut up the images from the Human life cycle - Teacher resource and provide them for the children to order, independently. (This resources is used in the Life Stages: Human life stage - Who will I be? plan but you'll also find it in the Resources needed area of this plan.)

SCARF Time

Use SCARF time to explore the SCARF values of Achievement and Resilience with circles focusing on new skills that the children have learnt - recently or in the past - and things that they would like to improve at over the next year.

Share your ideas

We'd really like to hear - and with your permission, share - any other ideas for enhancements for continuous provision that have worked well for you.

Please email us at CLE@coram.org.uk with your ideas if something has worked well and you think other teachers would like to try them.

Version History

Wed, 08 Apr 2026

- New activity added to highlight importance of healthy relationship with food

Learning Outcomes

Overarching learning intentions across this unit

Children will be able to:

- Understand that there are changes in nature and humans.
- Name the different stages in childhood and growing up.
- Understand that babies are made by a man and a woman.
- Use the correct vocabulary when naming the different parts of the body.
- Know how to keep themselves safe.

Learning outcomes specific to this plan

Children will be able to:

- Talk about how they have changed as they have grown.
- Explain the differences between babies, children, and adults.
- Understand that we are all unique.

Key Vocabulary

baby
child
teenager
adult
grow
messages (DNA/Genes)
families of different beliefs
adoption
surrogacy
IVF

Resources needed

A story about getting bigger, such as You'll Soon Grow into Them, Titch - versions of this are available online.

Getting Bigger - Activity sheet - enough copies for one each

Human life cycle - Teacher resource - show on IWB or print.

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements

- Relationships Education Families and people who care for me 1.
  That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- Relationships Education Families and people who care for me 3.
  That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

- Relationships Education Families and people who care for me 4. That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- Relationships Education Respectful relationships 1. The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education) Healthy eating 1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education) Healthy eating 3. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).
- Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education) Health and prevention 3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education) Changing adolescent body 1. Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.

DfE Relationships Education and Health Education statutory requirements (2025)

- Developing bodies 1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
- Developing bodies 2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of

the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.

- **Developing bodies** 3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.
- **Families and people who care for me** 3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- **Healthy eating** 1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- **Healthy eating** 2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
- **Physical health and fitness** 2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.