

## JACK'S CORNER

**QUESTION:** Our daughter is only in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and she just started her period. She is so embarrassed and uncomfortable. What can we do to help her?

**ANSWER:** Generally, girls are maturing early these days. Whether it is because of improved nutrition or growth hormones in our foods or something else, the bottom line is that many girls don't have the emotional, social and cognitive maturity to handle this life change well. Parents can help their daughters immensely by doing the following:

Note: The following points are not necessarily "steps" to be completed chronologically.

1. **Prepare your daughter** by educating her regarding the physical aspects of menstruation. Be frank, **up-beat**, and use kid-friendly language. Daughters need to be well informed. If you are unsure, get more info. from her pediatrician.
2. **Prepare her** for the emotional aspects of menstruation; knowing this aspect varies from woman to woman.
3. Help her be prepared by giving her sanitary pads (a "special case" is nice) that she can have with her when she is not at home. Show her how to use them.
4. **Have a plan!** Talk about what to do if she begins to spot while at school, at a friend's house or away from home. Identify "safe" adults at school with whom she can talk if she needs some extra help.
5. **Celebrate!** Yes, celebrate this wondrous transformation that is part of God's unique plan for her. Have a special night with mom and dad, go out to eat at a fancy place, dress up. Possible give her a special ring, pin or necklace commemorating this special time. Do it up big!
6. Understand the **importance of your attitude** toward this time of change. Fathers can really make a difference in how

their daughters perceive their “new” body. Be excited for her! Pray with her! Talk with her! Understand her!

7. Paint a picture for her of a godly, chaste, hopeful and wonderful future. Bless her with your words! (e.g. “God is making you into a beautiful young woman who will someday be an awesome wife and mother!”)

What a wonderful opportunity to handle your daughter is a personal, loving, hopeful, new and appreciative way! Milk this change for all it can be; don’t treat it as a “curse” or something dirty. Menstruation is one of the few “rite of passage” experiences left in our culture. Make it powerful and godly.

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