



**[It's Not the Stork! A Book about Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families, and Friends](#) by Robie H. Harris, illustrated by Michael Emberley**

ISBN: 9780763600471 (Hardcover); 9780763633318 (Paperback);

9780763658632 (E-Book)

Candlewick Press, 2006

\*Age Range: 4 and up (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: K–Grade 3 (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

---

Young children are curious about almost everything, especially their bodies. And young children are not afraid to ask questions. *What makes me a girl? What makes me a boy? Why are some parts of girls' and boys' bodies the same and why are some parts different? How was I made? Where do babies come from? Is it true that a stork brings babies to mommies and daddies?*

*It's Not the Stork!* helps answer these endless and perfectly normal questions that preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary school children ask about how they began. Through lively, comfortable language and sensitive, engaging artwork, Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley address readers in a reassuring way, mindful of a child's healthy desire for straightforward information. Two irresistible cartoon characters, a curious bird and a squeamish bee, provide comic relief and give voice to the full range of emotions and reactions children may experience while learning about their amazing bodies. Vetted and approved by science, health, and child development experts, the information is up-to-date, age-appropriate, and scientifically accurate, and always aimed at helping kids feel proud, knowledgeable, and comfortable about their own bodies, about how they were born, and about the family they are part of. Back matter includes an index.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

---

★ "Harris' respectful writing targets children's natural curiosity without cloaking matters in obfuscating language." —*Booklist*, **starred review**

★ "Straightforward, informative, and personable. . . . This book will be accessible to its intended audience, comforting in its clarity and directness, and useful to a wide range of readers." —*School Library Journal*, **starred review**

★ "In their previous landmark volumes . . . Harris and Emberley established themselves as the purveyors of reader-friendly, straightforward information on human sexuality for children as young as seven. Here they successfully tackle the big questions . . . for even younger kids." —*The Horn Book*, **starred review**

"For matter-of-fact coverage of everything from a child's first questions about where babies come from to a teenager looking to read about transgender issues, you can't go wrong with *It's Perfectly Normal*, from the author Robie H. Harris and the illustrator Michael Emberley (celebrating its 20th anniversary this year) or with *It's So Amazing!* and their book for even younger children, *It's Not the Stork!* Leave them lying around the house (after

Updated 1/24/2024

Candlewick Press

publicity@candlewick.com

reading them yourself) and you're bound to start some good conversations with children under 10, and give yourself the opportunity to approach older children." —[Motherlode](#)

"Robie Harris and Michael Emberley have done it again! They understand the complexity, the humor, and the urgency of young children's curiosity about bodies and babies and the whole great mystery of life, and they offer clear words and delightful illustrations to help parents enjoy the process of helping their children learn and understand. This is a book for adults and young children to enjoy together, offering age appropriate, sensible, friendly information in a way that will inform, reassure, and even amuse." —Perri Klass, MD, professor of journalism and pediatrics, New York University, New York

"*It's Not the Stork!* is both captivating and encyclopedic, covering in great detail not only sexual reproduction but also the joys of love (in its many forms), the mysteries of pregnancy, and the miracle of birth. This book explains the gender differences that children are already wondering about, affirming their need to be curious. It will leave them, and their parents, better informed, and still more in awe of nature's wondrous ways." —T. Berry Brazelton, MD, and Joshua D. Sparrow, MD, authors of *Touchpoints, Three to Six: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development* and The Brazelton Way series

"Children have great curiosity about the differences between the sexes and how babies are made—they will appreciate *It's Not the Stork!* immensely. I strongly recommend it." —Alvin F. Poussaint, MD, professor of psychiatry, associate dean of student affairs, Harvard Medical School, Boston; coauthor of *Raising Black Children*

"We recommend Harris and Emberley's sensitive, level-headed, and delightful books wherever we go. Now, with the arrival of *It's Not the Stork!*, even children as young as four can benefit from this team's honest answers to the questions that make parents blush." —Justin Richardson, MD, and Mark A. Schuster, MD, PhD, authors of *Everything You Never Wanted Your Kids to Know about Sex (but Were Afraid They'd Ask)*

"Finally, a reassuring book for our young children (age four and up) who are wondering about or asking about how they were made and what it is that makes them a girl or a boy. The simple, clear, and straightforward language, along with the accurate and appealing cartoon-like illustrations, answer these questions in an honest and comforting way, while celebrating the diversity of our times." —Angela Diaz, MD, MPH, professor of pediatrics and community medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and director, Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center, New York City

"*It's Not the Stork!* gives the younger crowd the gentle truth before being exposed to scary playground fantasy. Please don't scoff or squirm! Even our youngest children notice, wonder, and need to know who they are, where they came from, how they got here, and what makes them the same or not the same as their friends. But not all parents know just what to tell and when and how. This book does!" —Penelope Leach, PhD, author of *Your Baby & Child* and contributing editor, *Child Magazine*

"Young children are excited to learn about bodies, gender, pregnancy, and birth. *It's Not the Stork!* addresses these topics and more, and I highly recommend it for children's homes, schools, faith communities, libraries, and health-care settings." —Melanie Davis, Med, PhD, CSC, CSE, Our Whole Lives program manager, Unitarian Universalist Association

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

---

- An American Library Association Notable Children’s Book
- A Cooperative Children’s Book Center Choices List Selection

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

---

- [Tips for Parents, Educators, and Other Caregivers Using This Book](#)
- [Chinaberry Inc. Interview](#)
- Challengers may present quotes from the book out of context to try to convince others that this book is not appropriate for young readers. Here are some quotes from *It’s Not the Stork!* to help make the opposing case:

“Asking questions is a great way to find out about lots of things. Asking a grownup—your mommy, your daddy, or aunt, uncle, or grandparent, or your nurse or doctor—is a great way to find answers to your questions.

“Looking through a book on your own, or asking your teacher or librarian or someone you know well to read a book to you, are other great ways to find answers.” (page 11)

“A fetus does not grow in a pregnant woman’s stomach. It grows inside her uterus—just below her stomach. The uterus is where a fetus grows until it finally grows into a baby—and is born.” (page 33)

“The day you were born was your ‘birth day’ and that never changes. The word ‘birth’ means ‘the beginning of something new’ or ‘a new baby.’ Each year on your birthday, everyone loves to sing ‘Happy Birthday!’ to you because they are so excited and happy that you were born.” (page 45)

“Parents, sisters, brothers, cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents are all part of a person’s family. And for many people, good friends, babysitters, and nannies are part of their families too.” (page 49)

“If any person touches ‘your privates’ or any other part of your body that you do not want them to—these are all ‘not okay touches.’ If this happens to you, tell that person ‘STOP!’ or ‘NO!’ or ‘DON’T!’—even if the person is someone in your family, or a friend, or someone you know or you love—or is bigger, older, or stronger than you are.

“If any kind of ‘not okay touch’ happens to you, tell a grownup right away—even if the person who touched you tells you to keep it a secret. This is a secret you have to tell someone.

“Tell someone in your family, or your teacher, or doctor, or nurse, or school nurse, or someone you know very well. If the first person you tell does not help you or believe you, keep on telling people until someone believes you. That person will do everything she or he can to help keep you safe and protect you and to make the ‘not okay touches’ stop. Luckily, there are many grownups who can and will help.” (page 51)

“Anytime you do not want to hold hands, or be touched, or hugged, or kissed by a friend—it’s okay to tell a friend that. Or if a friend does not want to hold hands, or be touched or hugged, or kissed by you, that’s okay too. Good friends listen to each other.” (page 53)

## AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR STATEMENT

---

### A note from Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley

Our young children are curious about almost everything. They are especially curious about their bodies, about where they came from, and how they were made. Many, but not all, ask us endless questions about these topics.

They ask us why their bodies are the same and different from other people's bodies, what makes a girl a girl and a boy a boy, what the names are of all the different parts of their bodies, where babies come from, how babies are made, what a family is—and so many other questions about themselves and their bodies. Many of their questions are easy to answer. Others are more difficult to answer.

We created this book to answer young children's many questions and concerns about these issues. We talked with parents, teachers, librarians, nurses, doctors, social workers, psychologists, scientists, health professionals, and clergy to make sure that all the material in this book is age-appropriate, scientifically accurate, and, at this time, as up-to-date as possible. Many have asked us how best to use this book with children. There is no one answer. This book can be used as a shared experience between a child and an adult. Some children may want the book read to them from cover to cover. Other children may pick only the part or parts that interest them or answer a specific question they may have. And others may wish to look through or read the book on their own.

No matter which way our book is used, it is our hope that it will help answer young children's perfectly normal and amazing questions about their bodies, about where they came from, and about what makes them either a boy or a girl.

### **\*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

---

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.