

KIDS GUIDE TO The Facts of Life

A basic introduction to the facts of life.

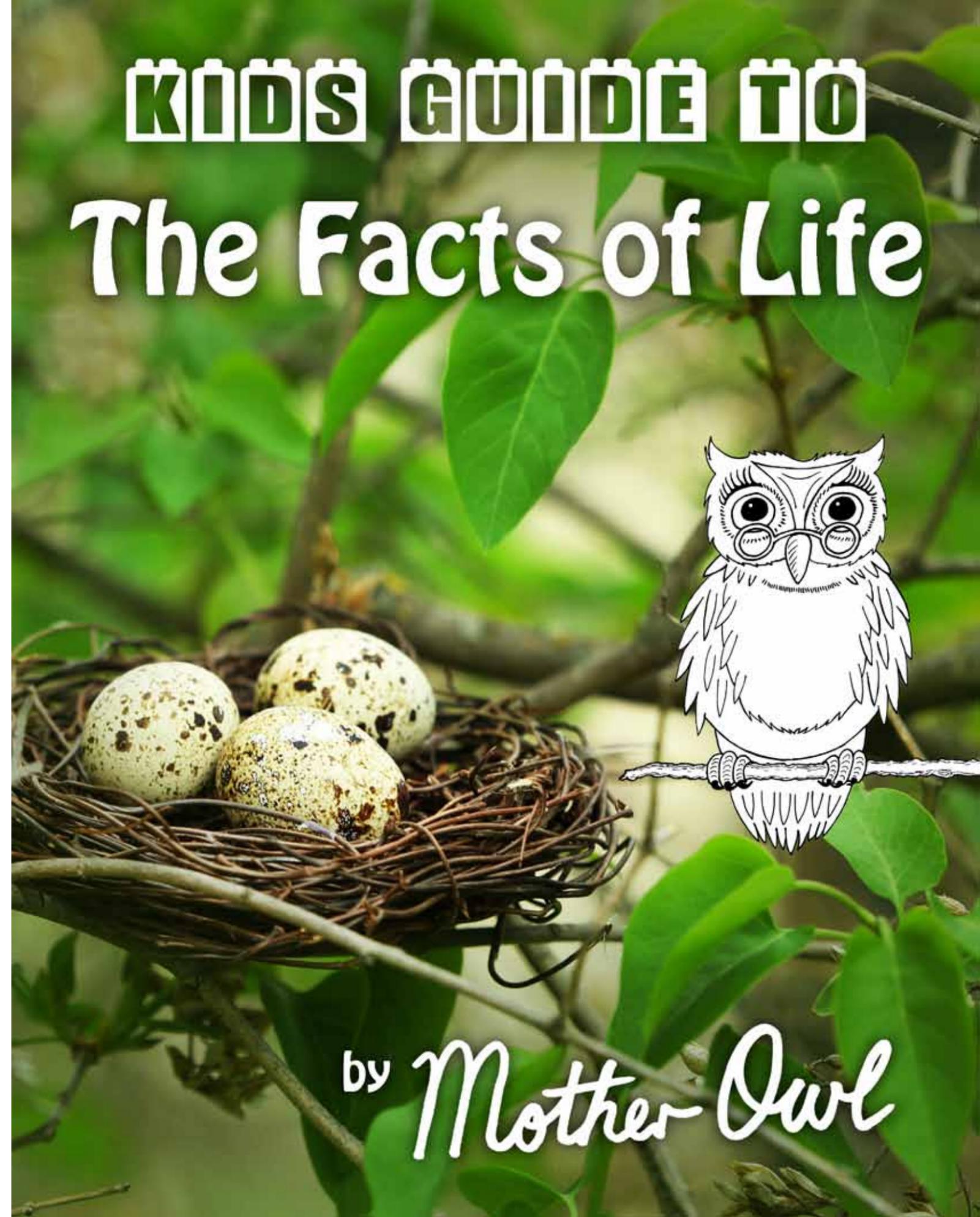
From babies, through childhood and adolescence, to facts about reproduction, mental health, and later life.

Mother Owl explains words that you could hear or read, and may be wondering what they mean.

Offering no opinion or judgement, these are just the simple facts.

Age range: 12 +

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by *Mother Owl*

Life is a big long journey
with many a twist and turn
A little bit of knowledge
helps us all to live and learn



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**We all start life as a baby
needing love, and food and sleep
You may learn steadily and slowly
or take new stages with a leap**



Babies

New born babies are helpless and depend on adults for everything they need. They don't see very well, but their hearing and sense of smell is well developed, so they have no problem recognising their mother.

In the **first few weeks**, a baby spends about 16 hours a day sleeping, but every three or four hours it gets hungry and breast milk or milk powder formula provides all that it needs to eat. Babies also need affection, and are comforted by skin-to-skin contact. If a baby is not getting what it wants, it will cry. Once a baby starts to cry, it finds it very difficult to stop. Taking care of a crying baby can be very stressful, but a baby must never be shaken in anger because its tiny, fragile brain can be permanently damaged.

Every baby develops at its own pace, but generally by **six weeks** it learns to smile for the first time and is strong enough to lift its own head.

By about **six months old** it has learned to roll over and sit by itself. It explores everything around it by touch, or by putting things in its mouth, and gets its first taste of solid food. It also starts to grow teeth, and for each six months of babyhood, four new teeth will arrive.

Babies learn to communicate first with sign language, like waving goodbye, but by **nine months** old, they start to talk with their first words. They start crawling, and pulling themselves up to a standing position.

By about their **first birthday**, babies start to take their first walking steps and can then really begin to explore the big wide world around them.



Childhood is a time of growth for body, teeth and brain with lots of learning to cope with and many emotions to train

Ages and Stages of Childhood

Huge changes take place in the human body and brain as a child grows from a baby to a young adult. The length and weight of the body gradually get bigger, but the brain grows the most during the first five years of life.

A **two year old** is learning to walk, talk, and starting to deal with emotions, so tantrums and meltdowns are very common.

By **three years old**, a child can feel pride, guilt and embarrassment. It begins to understand ownership and gets better at sharing. While learning new skills like climbing and throwing, he or she starts to ask a lot of questions.

Five year olds have a lot of energy and start to form real friendships. Their jaw begins to grow to create space for adult teeth, so baby teeth get wiggly and start to fall out.

Six year olds tend to be bossy and demanding. They show more independence and their eyesight is now the same as an adults.

At **seven years old**, a child may begin to worry and take life more seriously. They want to be liked and accepted by friends and start to enjoy being part of a team. In their mouth, the first permanent, adult teeth are starting to grow.

By **nine years old**, children are beginning to see another person's point of view but they may also start to experience peer pressure. As puberty approaches, **12 year olds** become much more aware of body image.