

Puberty, day 2

Grades 4-6, Lesson #10

A Note About Language

Language is really important and we are intentionally being very careful about our language. You may notice language throughout the lesson that seems less familiar - using the pronoun “they” instead of “her” or “him”, and referring to “someone with a vulva” vs. girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities.

However, in this lesson, the terms “male” and “female” are used intentionally to make the content accessible for elementary age students, who are more concrete learners than students in middle or high school. While we use the terms “male” and “female” when referring to particular anatomy (the “male” or “female” reproductive systems, for example), it is important to remember that someone can have a penis even if they don’t identify as a boy or a vulva even if they don’t identify as a girl.

Adapted from “Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum” published by Advocates for Youth

Time Needed

40-50 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to ...

1. Distinguish puberty facts from myths.
2. Anticipate puberty with positive feelings, recognizing that the timing of change is individual.

Agenda

1. Review purpose of lesson.
2. Respond to “Anonymous Question Box” questions re: puberty.

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3. Use *Puberty Worksheet #2* to reinforce facts and debunk fears/myths re: puberty.
 4. Summarize by discussing peer pressure in the puberty years.

This lesson was most recently edited May 20, 2013.

Materials Needed

Student Materials: (for each student)

- *Puberty Worksheet #2*
- OPTIONAL for family homework, pamphlets: The *Talk to Me!* interview guides are pairs of booklet sets (father/son, mother/daughter, father/daughter, mother/son) for students and parents/guardians or other trusted adults. They include age-appropriate questions to prompt open communication about sex, love and life. They cost \$4 per set (for one family) and bulk discounts are available. See details here: www.ppgnw.org/TalkToMe. For more information: education@ppgnw.org or call 206-328-7715.

Activity

1. **Explain again the reasons you are doing these lessons on puberty.**
 - Sometimes people are afraid of things they don't understand.
 - Sometimes people feel as if they are the ONLY one to ever experience certain changes; they may "dump on" themselves because they think they aren't normal.
 - Those feelings are UNNECESSARY; people can look forward to puberty with excitement and pleasure, IF they know what to expect!
2. **Respond to "Anonymous Question Box" questions re: puberty (see lesson 1 for setting up an anonymous question box or boxes).**
3. **Use *Puberty Worksheet #2* to reinforce facts and debunk fears/myths re: puberty.**
 - a. Divide the class into 3 teams.
 - b. Hand out *Puberty Worksheet #2* and give the teams 20 minutes to reach consensus (within each team) on each item. Encourage people to discuss the items they disagree on, to explain to one another why they believe as they do about an item.
 - c. Have one spokesperson for each team write their team's responses on the blackboard and explain, one at a time, why they chose a particular answer. You can award 1 point for each correct answer and an extra ½ point to the team with the best explanation. The team with the most points "wins" although we would encourage you to award prizes, if you do that, to anyone who participated actively.
4. **Summarize by discussing peer pressure in the puberty years.**

Discuss how it felt to disagree with teammates, whether there was overt peer pressure to agree (for consensus) or whether each person was considerably listened to. Summarize the lesson by explaining that, at puberty, it is probably more difficult than at any age before or after to disagree with the crowd BECAUSE one is beginning to separate from one's family and to gradually identify more with friends. That is normal...and one has to find ways to trust one's own judgment AT THE SAME TIME as one enjoys one's friends.

Related Activities For Integrated Learning

A. Language Arts

Add to glossary, the terms "endocrine system," "erection," "hormone," "menstrual period," "nocturnal emission," "ovum," "penis," "pituitary gland," "sperm," "uterus," and "vagina".

B. Social Studies

Students may do reports on puberty rites of various cultures.

Homework

Students' options:

- Discuss with an adult in the family *Puberty Worksheets 1 and 2*³
- With an adult in the family, use *The "Talk-To-Me" books*, sets of 2 pamphlets with which parents and students interview one another. They allow children and the adults who love them an opportunity to practice communicating. They help people articulate their own and their family's, generation's and culture's beliefs and feelings about growing up, family life and sexual health.
- Write a letter to a 6 or 7-year-old, real or imaginary, about growing up.

¹ Family Practice Notebook. (before May 10, 2008). *Female Tanner Stage*. Retrieved August 14, 2009 from <http://www.fpnotebook.com/Endo/Exam/FmlTnrStg.htm>

² Family Practice Notebook. (before May 10, 2008). *Male Tanner Stage*. Retrieved August 14, 2009 from <http://www.fpnotebook.com/Endo/Exam/MlTnrStg.htm>

³ see "Preparing Parents" pages 6-7

Puberty Worksheet 2

NAME _____ DATE _____

DIRECTIONS: Write "T" for "true" next to each statement you believe is correct.
Write "F" for "false" next to the wrong statements.

- _____ 1. Female bodies may start puberty any time between the ages of 8 and 13.
- _____ 2. Usually, male bodies start puberty a little younger than female bodies.
- _____ 3. The pituitary gland, in the brain, tells the body when to begin puberty.
- _____ 4. Erections only happen when a person thinks about something sexual.
- _____ 5. A person's feelings may change from moment to moment, especially during puberty.
- _____ 6. If your parents started puberty early, you might too.
- _____ 7. You can tell whether a person is menstruating by looking at them.
- _____ 8. Anyone can often have some breast growth during puberty.
- _____ 9. It is common for nocturnal emissions to happen at puberty, but it is also healthy if they don't happen.
- _____ 10. The main reason teenagers get acne is they eat the wrong foods.
- _____ 11. Children should not use tampons during menstruation until they are grown.
- _____ 12. The vagina is always wet, just like the mouth and eyes.
- _____ 13. There is something wrong with a person if they ejaculate in their sleep.
- _____ 14. It is OK for a person to shower or play sports during their menstrual period.
- _____ 15. During puberty, people may like to start wearing a bra or jock strap for support and protection, especially while playing sports.
- _____ 16. It is necessary to wash more often once you begin puberty.

Puberty Worksheet 2 - Answer Key

NAME _____ DATE _____

DIRECTIONS: Write "T" for "true" next to each statement you believe is correct.
Write "F" for "false" next to the wrong statements.

- T 1. Female bodies may start puberty any time between the ages of 8 and 13.
- F 2. Usually, male bodies start puberty a little younger than female bodies
- T 3. The pituitary gland, in the brain, tells the body when to begin puberty.
- F 4. Erections only happen when a person thinks about something sexual.
- T 5. A person's feelings may change from moment to moment, especially during puberty.
- T 6. If your parents started puberty early, you might too.
- F 7. You can tell whether a person is menstruating by looking at them.
- T 8. Anyone can have some breast growth during puberty.
- T 9. It is common for nocturnal emissions to happen at puberty, but it is also healthy if they don't happen.
- F 10. The main reason teenagers get acne is they eat the wrong foods.
- F 11. Children should not use tampons during menstruation until they are grown.
- T 12. The vagina is always wet, just like the mouth and eyes.
- F 13. There is something wrong with a person if they ejaculate in their sleep.
- T 14. It is OK for a person to shower or play sports during their menstrual period.
- T 15. During puberty, people may like to start wearing a bra or jock strap for support and protection, especially while playing sports.
- T 16. It is necessary to wash more often once you begin puberty.