

Sexual Growth and Body Image

Elementary 5: Personal Maintenance and Hygiene

Aim/Rationale

Students will learn about effective methods for maintaining healthy personal hygiene during puberty.

Competencies

Learning Content in Sexuality Education

- 1) *Become aware of the psychological and physical changes associated with puberty*
 - a) *The needs of a changing body E.g. hygiene, food*
 - b) *Feelings about puberty related changes and strategies for coping*

Broad Areas of Learning

- 1) *Health and well-being*
- 2) *Citizenship and community life*

Purpose

Learning about one's body and appreciating that body is an essential developmental task for children and adolescents. Puberty is a natural stage of development characterized by physical, emotional and social changes - changes that can start young people on a path that can include romantic and sexual attractions, romantic relationships, sex, and having children. Children at this age level are likely to begin experiencing the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty and require accurate information that will help them understand the transformations their bodies are experiencing.

Relevant to:

- Promoting egalitarian relationships
- Promoting a healthy body image

Lesson

Materials

- Poster board
- Magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers
- Personal Hygiene Matching Handout

Essential Questions

- How does my personal hygiene change when I begin experiencing puberty?
- What are some methods I can use to maintain healthy personal hygiene during puberty?

Using Gender Inclusive Language

When teaching about puberty, it is important to acknowledge intersex, transgender or gender variant individuals so that students who may identify this way will feel included. If you are comfortable, it may be helpful to explain to students that being a boy, a girl, or in-between is mostly about how someone feels, not their body parts. There are also some people that are intersex and have a mix of both male and female body parts. People who are intersex, transgender, or gender variant may not be as common, but there are lots of them and they're healthy like any other person. It can help to compare these changes to less stigmatized natural variations, like less common hair or eye colour.

Terms

- Puberty

Development/Teaching Methods [35 min]

1. Begin the lesson with a brainstorm activity.
 - a. Divide the class into groups of 4-5 students.
 - b. Ask the students the following question: "What kinds of things do we do to keep ourselves healthy, and what happens when we don't do these things?"
 - c. Ask the groups to discuss and come up with ideas for about 5 minutes. Afterwards, ask each group to share their list with the class.
 - d. Some possible answers can include:
 - Not getting enough sleep can leave us feeling tired and cranky
 - Not brushing our teeth can lead to cavities and/or bad breath
 - Not bathing/showering can cause unpleasant body odour
 - Not washing our hands can make us sick, etc...

- e. Tell students that there are extra steps required for keeping ourselves clean and healthy during puberty.
2. Complete a short review by asking the students to identify some of the changes their bodies experience during puberty. From this activity, students should identify:
 - a. More active sweat glands
 - b. More active oil glands
 - c. Menstruation
3. Once these changes have been identified, transition towards a discussion of methods to maintain healthy personal hygiene.
4. Begin the discussion with the topic of sweat glands. Ask the students what happens when our sweat glands become more active during puberty (we sweat more, which can lead to body odor).
 - a. Tell the students that to deal with our overactive sweat glands and prevent body odour, we can bathe regularly and for some wearing deodorant or antiperspirant is helpful.
 - b. Also tell the students that they can keep deodorant in their lockers or backpack so they can apply more after gym class if needed.
5. Next, discuss oil glands. Ask the students what happens when our oil glands become more active during puberty (oily hair, facial and body acne).
 - a. To prevent oily hair, students can wash their hair on a regular basis when they take a shower.
 - b. To care for acne, students can wash their face regularly and drink lots of water.
 - c. While it's currently being debated, you can also say eating nutritious foods may lower the amount of acne they get.
 - d. Remind the students that they can also avoid touching their faces as bacteria from their hands can cause acne.
 - e. Changing pillow cases regularly can also be helpful.
 - f. Tell the students to refrain from popping or picking at pimples since this can cause further irritation and leave scars.
6. Discuss proper cleaning of genital areas.
 - a. Remind students to pay attention to these areas while they bathe or shower by simply cleaning with gentle soap and water.
 - b. Those students with uncircumcised penises can pull back their foreskin and clean what it usually covers with a gentle soap to prevent odour, irritation, and infection.
 - c. Students with vaginas can also be reminded not to clean inside their vaginas with products like douches, as it is self-cleansing. You can say they only need only to wash the outside, between the folds, with gentle soap, and pull back the clitoral hood to clean what it covers.
 - d. When using the restroom, those with vaginas can also wipe from front to back to prevent spreading bacteria from the anus, which can cause UTIs.
 - e. Also tell students that wearing a clean pair of underwear each day will help keep their genitals clean and healthy.
7. Finally, for those who experience menstruation, tell the students that they must change their products, such as a pad, tampon, or menstrual cup, frequently throughout their period.
 - a. The same tampon should never be worn for more than the recommended eight hours

- as this can lead to irritation, infection, or toxic shock syndrome.
- b. Remind students that it is a good idea to keep extra pads or tampons in their backpack or locker at school, and talk about when a school nurse is available to give them products if they need them.
 - c. Suggested activities:
 - Bring in examples of pads, tampons and menstrual cups for the students to look at and interact with so that they know what exists for menstruation options.
 - Ask the school nurse to come in and give a demonstration of how to use the various options and what they have available for distribution at the school.
 - Research videos on how to use each option and show them to the students.

Culmination [10 min]

At the end of the lesson, ask the students if they have any questions about personal hygiene methods during puberty. Then have the students complete the Personal Hygiene Matching Handout where they will match personal hygiene strategies with the corresponding bodily changes during puberty.

Performance Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Describe the physical changes experienced during puberty.
- Identify methods to maintain healthy personal hygiene during puberty.

Assessment Ideas

- 1) Have the students work in groups of 3 or 4. Provide each group with a piece of poster board, scissors, glue, and markers. Have the students pretend they are creating an advertisement targeted towards students like themselves who are going through puberty. Ask the students to choose one of the personal hygiene methods discussed in class and cut out pictures in the magazines to create their visual ad. Have each group present their work to the class.
- 2) Have students complete the Personal Hygiene Matching Handout individually or in groups. After they do these, ask about any further questions that came up. Grade the handouts, or look at how students did to see if they might need to learn more about personal hygiene.



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