

Grade 6 Sexual Health Education Follow-up

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The following are the topics for Sexual Health Education in grade 6. Please use the questions below to help further with your child's sexual health education. Please note that the following letter outlines the main information covered, but other topics relating to the lesson may be discussed in response to questions asked by students in class.

Grade 6 Topics:

- Communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections and prevention.
- Physical, social and emotional changes during puberty.
- Male and female reproductive systems and their functions.
- Learning about and having respect for differences between individuals.
- Boundaries and personal safety, how to say no.

Overview of lesson:

Ask...What is a communicable disease? What does it mean when it is sexually transmitted?

One that can be spread or contracted from person to person or from contact with infected items. If it is sexually transmitted, then it is spread through sexual contact such as sexual intercourse.

Ask: What are some examples of communicable diseases you discussed in class?

Diseases we talk about include HIV, Hepatitis B/C, Chlamydia, Herpes, Gonorrhea, Syphilis and how they are transmitted.



Ask: What can a person do to prevent themselves from contracting these and other diseases?

A person could get vaccines, avoid contact with blood, cover nose/mouth when sneezing/coughing, avoid dirty needles, abstain from sexual contact, avoid contaminated items, and not share drinks.

Ask...How are you the same as others around you? How are you different?

You will notice that other people your age will go through puberty at different rates. Other people will also have different thoughts and feelings about puberty as they grow up and that's ok.



Ask... When does a person begin to go through puberty?

Male bodies start between 9-17 years while female bodies start between 8-16 years.

- Genetics- How old were parents when they began puberty can sometimes indicate when their children will go through puberty.
- Individual Differences – Activity level/diet/stress relates to body fat so female bodies that are more active and have low % body fat, may tend to go through puberty later than others who have a higher % body fat.

Ask....What changes do only male bodies go through?



They will get wider shoulders and chest, a deeper voice, facial hair, a larger penis and testicles, have spontaneous erections that may happen for no reason, produce sperm and will be able to ejaculate. A wet dream or a nocturnal emission is an ejaculation while asleep.

Ask.... Explain the male reproductive system and how it works.

We describe the male reproductive system parts and explain the difference between a circumcised and uncircumcised penis. We discuss how and why erections happen. Sperm are produced in the testes and once sperm are produced an ejaculation can happen. An ejaculation is the involuntary release of semen containing sperm cells. Urination and ejaculation cannot happen at the same time. Wet dreams begin to occur when there is a buildup of sperm inside the body. The buildup needs to be released in order to make room for the other sperm that are constantly being produced at a rate of millions per day.



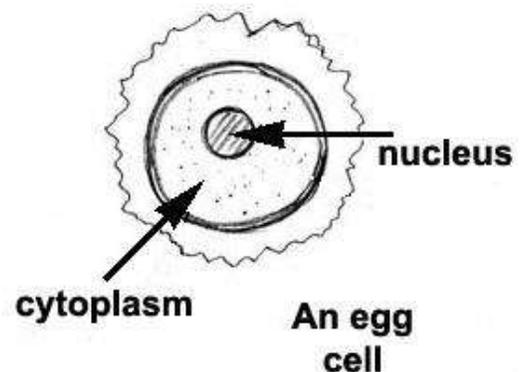
Ask....What changes do only female bodies go through?



They will develop larger breasts, wider hips, vaginal discharge, menstruation (periods), and begin to ovulate (release of an egg). We discuss that if someone has breast development, hair growth in their underarms and pubic area and have a whitish vaginal discharge that is noticeable in their underwear, then it could be that their period is coming soon. Discuss with them how they can be prepared.

Ask..... Why periods happen?

We describe the parts of the female reproductive system and their function. Part way through puberty an egg matures, is released/ovulated into fallopian tube. The lining of uterus becomes thick with blood in order to nourish the fertilized egg. If the egg doesn't get fertilized by the sperm while in the fallopian tube, the blood and tissue lining the uterus is not needed because there is no pregnancy and it exits the body through the vagina.



Ask....How many days does a period last? Why should a person mark it on their calendar? What should they do if they get their period at school? What products are used during menstruation? How often should they be changed?

Female bodies have their period for 3-7 days once every 28 days or so and it's not unusual to get their first period and then not get it again for a few months. Marking it on a calendar can help someone to predict when future periods may begin each month. If at school, the office has pads, or a person could carry some in a school bag. If you have not yet, this would be a good time to talk to your child about pads and purchase some size appropriate ones.

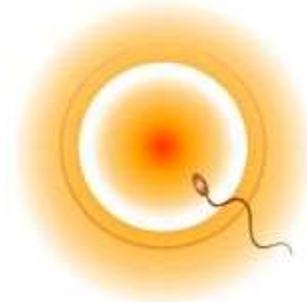


The use of panty-liners, pads, and tampons are discussed.

We suggest to students that they should discuss with parents what to use for protection as some families would rather they not begin using tampons at this age. Ask them what might happen if a tampon is left in the vagina for too long. We talk about frequency of changing pads/tampons as well as how they are used.

Ask....What is a personal boundary? Why is it important to have them?

Boundaries are our own rules about what is ok and not ok for ourselves. Boundaries help us to stay safe. Learning what your personal boundaries are and saying "no" to stay within them is a way to stay healthy as kids go through puberty. Think of some ways you can say "no."



Additional Resources:

Webpages:

- sd23.bc.ca/ProgramsServices/SexualHealthEducation
- kidshealth.org

Books:

- *Am I Weird or Is This Normal?* Marlin S, Potash and Laura Potash Fruitman: Fireside, 2001.
- *The Boy's Body Book* Kelli Dunham: Applesauce Press, 2007.
- *The Care and Keeping of You: The Body Book for Girls*, Valerie Schaefer: American Girl Publishing, 2012. *The American Girl Series for girls' aged 8 and up, offer valuable support and guidance on a range of emotional and academic issues associated with growing up.
- *The Guy Book: An Owner's Manual* Mavis Jukes: Crown Books for Young Readers, 2002.
- *It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up and Sexual Health* Robie H. Harris: Candlewick Press, 2009.
- *The Looks Book: A Whole New Approach to Beauty, Body Image and Style* Esther Drill: Penguin Paperbacks, 2002.

- Let's Talk About Sex Robie H. Harris: Walker Books, 2010.
- My Body, My Self for Boys Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras: Newmarket Press, 2007.
- My Body, My Self for Girls Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras: Newmarket Press, 2007.
- Puberty Boy Geoff Price: Allen & Unwin, 2006.
- Puberty Girl Shushann Movsessian: Allen & Unwin

Questions for kids to ask their parents.....

1. What was the first sign you noticed that you had started puberty? How old were you?
2. What was the best thing about puberty?
3. What was difficult about puberty?
4. How did you handle the difficult parts of puberty?
5. Do you have any advice for me as I enter into puberty?
6. How did you get yourself out of a tricky situation where someone was not respecting your boundaries?



Thanks for following up the discussion

The Family Life Team