



Changes of Puberty

Changes of Puberty

Changes of Puberty

PURPOSE

This lesson introduces a range of physical, social and emotional puberty changes. These concepts may be new to some students and familiar to others. Some students may already be experiencing these changes while others have not. In all cases, it is likely that many students will have questions or concerns about the changes that accompany puberty. Since your students may have varying levels of knowledge and comfort in discussing puberty, it's important to first set a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. Puberty education can be an awkward topic for students as well as their teachers, parents or guardians. Learning about the common physical, emotional, and social changes during puberty helps young people improve their self-confidence and enhances their ability to make healthy decisions. Students will also learn that each person's body changes in different ways and at its own pace.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing the Changes of Puberty lesson, students will:

1. Feel more comfortable learning and discussing puberty topics.
2. Identify the physical, social, and emotional changes that occur during puberty and how these changes can vary by individual.
3. Identify trusted adults and other sources of support and information.

LESSON SUMMARY

Activities	Minutes	Materials and Preparation Checklist
A Getting Started	20	<input type="checkbox"/> Chart paper or whiteboard and marker. <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a list of classroom agreements. <input type="checkbox"/> Write the developmental stages for the milestone activity on chart paper or the whiteboard.
B Building My Trust Team	15	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy the Building My Trust Team handout for each student. <input type="checkbox"/> If using, copy The Interview handout for each student.
C Puberty Changes Match-Up	20	<input type="checkbox"/> Review the Puberty Changes Match-Up Educator Guide. <input type="checkbox"/> Copy, cut, and tape the Physical, Emotional, and Social Cards on the board. <input type="checkbox"/> Copy and cut out the Puberty Changes Match-Up Cards.
D Introducing the Anonymous Question Box & Exit Ticket	5	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare an Anonymous Question Box. <input type="checkbox"/> Write Exit Ticket statements on the whiteboard or chart paper. <input type="checkbox"/> Index cards or slips of paper to hand out to students for anonymous questions and exit ticket.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS FOR THIS LESSON

You may wish to introduce or supplement this lesson by using one of the following videos.

[Finding an Adult You Can Trust](#) (2:10 minutes) This Amaze video helps young people consider the adults in their lives that they can go to for support. It provides suggestions for how to choose the people they can talk with and lets them know that there may be several trusted adults that are in their corner.

[Can I Trust This Website?](#) (1:25 minutes) This Amaze video discusses how to determine if the information you read online is accurate and who you can talk to if you are unsure.

[Am I Normal? Puberty, Explained](#) (1:19 minutes) This Planned Parenthood video briefly defines puberty and some of the common changes that young people experience.



ACTIVITY A: GETTING STARTED



As you start the Puberty Happens lessons, you will set the stage for introducing puberty topics and ensure that students understand classroom expectations and agreements.

Say,

Today, we are beginning a unit on puberty. Puberty is a time when bodies start to develop and change from a child to an adult. These changes also make it possible to reproduce (make a baby). During puberty, most people's bodies change and grow faster than at any other time in life; except when they are a baby. You may be thinking, why do we have to learn about puberty?

Ask,

Does anyone want to guess why it is important for us to learn about puberty?

Acknowledge student responses. Add the following reasons why it's important to learn about puberty.

We learn about puberty to better understand the changes happening to our bodies, why our feelings and emotions may change, how these changes may be different for each person, and to get answers to questions we have. Learning about puberty may feel exciting for some and uncomfortable for others, or you may feel both!

You may already know a lot about puberty or be learning about puberty for the first time. Sometimes talking about puberty in the classroom can be awkward. We are here so everyone can learn together, so let's start out by making a list of classroom agreements together. These agreements will help us as we learn new information, ask questions, and share ideas.

SETTING CLASSROOM AGREEMENTS

Directions

1. Begin with a prepared list of items you think are important for your classroom.
2. Before presenting the list, ask students to brainstorm what they think should be included.
3. Add or adapt your list with their ideas.
4. For each classroom agreement, ask students to explain what it means to them to ensure the class has a common understanding of how to interact with one another.
5. Make sure to place the agreements where they are visible and refer to them when appropriate. For example, if a student asks you a personal question, you can point to the 'no personal questions' agreement.

Examples of Classroom Agreements

Below is a common set of agreements you may want to include as you guide students in creating your classroom agreements together.

- **Show respect for others.** This means no put downs and listening when others are speaking.
- **Questions are welcome.** Asking questions is an important way we learn. If one person has a question, it's likely more people have the same question.
- **No personal questions.** In these lessons, we want to focus on learning common facts and skills. If you have personal questions, you can ask them one-on-one with a trusted adult.
- **It's okay to have fun and laugh.** It's not okay when goofing around or laughing becomes disruptive and gets in the way of our learning.
- **Use scientific/correct terms for body parts.** If you forget the terms, that's okay, I will help you.
- **Think about where you share the information you learn in class.** You are growing up and this information is appropriate for you to learn at your age. It may not be the right time for everyone, particularly younger students, on the playground or on the bus.

The next activities provide students with an opportunity to think about ways they have already grown and changed over the years - physically, socially, and emotionally. They will also identify trusted people in their life they might turn to when they have questions, concerns, or need support.

MILESTONE ACTIVITY

This activity is meant to be a quick overview of a few developmental stages and milestones many young people have experienced and helps them understand that puberty is another stage people go through as they grow closer to becoming an adult.

Say,

You have already gone through many life stages and milestones that have helped get you to where you are now. A milestone is an event, action, or change that someone might experience as they grow.

Directions

1. Write the developmental stages from the table below on chart paper or the whiteboard. Leave room to write milestones under each.
2. Read the common milestones below (mixing them up as you go) and ask students to guess the developmental stage in which this milestone often occurs. The purpose of the activity is to point out the milestones they may have accomplished and to help them think about what they've achieved until now and what milestones they will experience in the future.
3. If you want to change it up, you could have students brainstorm milestones under each stage.
4. As students provide their response, write the milestone under the stages listed on the whiteboard.
5. After students have placed milestones under the different developmental stages, ask them what milestones they are experiencing now.
6. Ask students the debrief questions to complete the activity.

Common Milestones

Use the developmental stages and milestones below as examples. Add additional milestones to the lists or ask students to brainstorm other milestones as you go.

BABY	KINDERGARTEN	LAST YEAR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smile for the first time• Wave bye-bye• Learn to crawl or walk• Begin to feed themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn to read• Start school• Do simple math problems• Start forming friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ride a two-wheeled bike• Read chapter books• Participate in team sports• Do multiplication and division

DEBRIEF

Debrief the activity by asking the students the following questions.

- **What did you notice from doing this activity?**

Possible answers:

- *Everyone goes through milestones in their own time.*
- *You have gone through many milestones and going through puberty is another one.*

- **What do you think it would feel like if you were the first one in your class to go through a milestone? What if you were the last one?**

Possible answers:

- *Being the first one might be scary, as no one else is going through the same thing. You could also feel a lot of pride that you were the first one to do or experience something.*
- *Being the last one might make you feel afraid that you won't catch up. You might have feelings of embarrassment and don't want others to know.*

SUMMARIZE

In wrapping up this activity, include the following messages.

- **In between the stages and milestones in this activity, there are many more. These milestones didn't happen overnight, and they may have happened earlier or later for some of you.**
- **As you go through puberty, you will experience more milestones. Going through puberty is different for everyone and everyone goes through milestones when it is right for them. Regardless of where you are in the many milestones of puberty, everyone deserves respect and understanding as they grow and change.**

In the next activity, we will identify the people you can go to when you have questions or feel confused. These are people you can talk to for support.



ACTIVITY B: BUILDING MY TRUST TEAM



Trusted adults play a crucial role in the lives of young people. They provide support, encouragement, and a safe place for young people to ask questions or get advice. As your students learn about the changes of puberty, it's important for them to identify people they trust and can go to for support.

Say:

In this activity, we are going to think about people in your life that you trust and can turn to if you have questions, have a problem or just want a high five or hug. Trust is a strong feeling that tells you when you can rely on someone. If you trust someone, you will feel comfortable, safe, and able to talk with them.

Ask your students the following,

- **Why is it important to have people in your life you trust and can go to for support?**

Possible answers:

- *It is important to have people who can help, listen, share ideas with, and support us.*
- *To get help when we don't know what to do or have questions and need correct answers.*

- **Why is it helpful to have more than just one person to turn to when we have a problem?**

Possible answers:

- *Someone might not be available when you need them.*
- *It might be more comfortable to talk with certain people about different things in our lives. For example: it might be easier to go to a parent or guardian to talk about puberty changes. An older cousin may have advice about a problem you are having with a friend. Teachers, a counselor, or a school nurse might be a good support if you're having problems at school.*

- **What are some qualities that the people you trust have?**

Possible answers:

- *They might be a good listener, helpful, provide good advice, are knowledgeable, available when you need them, respectful.*

Say,

Having a team of trusted people in your life means you will have someone you can talk to whenever a problem or situation comes up. Now, you are going to build your own trust team.

DIRECTIONS

1. Pass out a copy of the Building My Trust Team handout to each student.
2. Ask them to think about the qualities they want in a trusted adult.
3. Provide an example: At school, you might want to ask the school nurse a question about body changes. At home you may want to talk with an older sibling about friendship problems.
4. For the Website and Online Resources category, students can add the names of people they trust to help them find safe and trusted websites and resources.
5. This is a good time to show the optional Amaze video [Finding an Adult You Can Trust](#) (2:10 minutes). This video is helpful for young people as they consider who are the adults in their lives they can go to for support. It provides suggestions for how to choose the people they can talk with and lets them know that there may be several trusted adults that are in their corner.
6. After they have time to work on their list, tell students that they can take the handout home and continue to work on building their trust team.

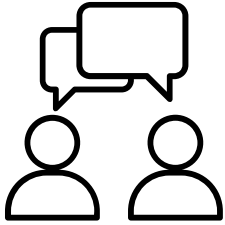
SUMMARIZE

Say,

By building your trust team, you have identified people you can go to when you need them. You don't have to face your worries, your questions, or problems alone. If you feel comfortable, you can let them know you built a trust team, and they are on it!

BUILDING MY TRUST TEAM

Directions: You are in the center. Under Family, School, and Community Places, list people you could turn to for support, for answers to questions, or advice. For Websites & Online Resources, find someone on your trust team that can help to make sure the online sites are safe and reliable places for you to visit.

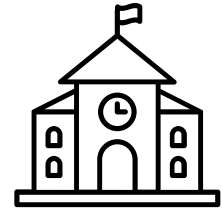


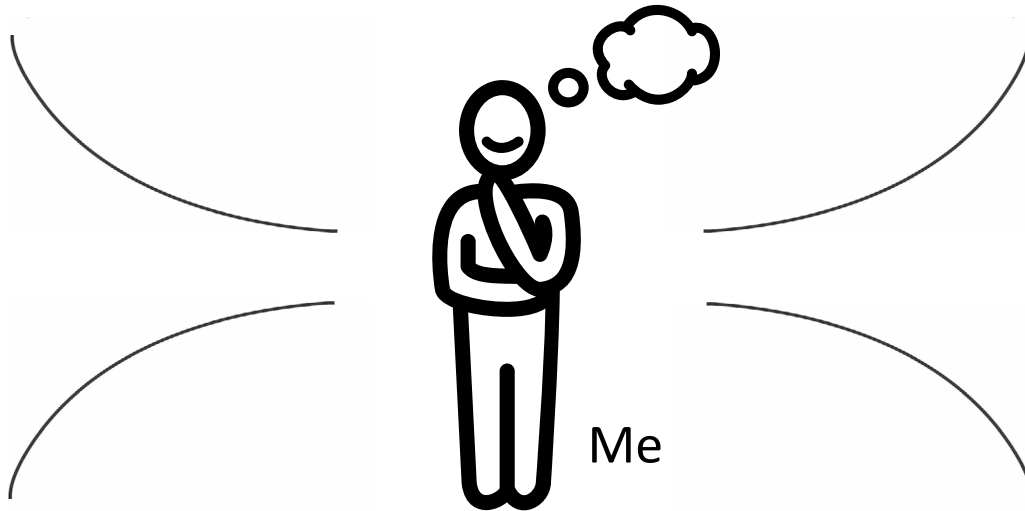
Family

Who are family members you can go to for advice and support?

School

What adults at your school could you go to for support?





Me

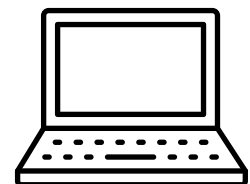


Community Places

What groups do you belong to or what places do you go to when you're not in school?

Websites & Online Resources

Who would you go to for help finding trusted resources online?



THE INTERVIEW: AN OPTIONAL TAKE HOME ACTIVITY

The Interview handout can be an optional take home activity following the Building My Trust Team activity. It is meant to encourage communication between students and their parents, guardians, or other trusted adults.

It is important to remember that students come from a range of family structures and backgrounds that may not consist of a two-parent household or they may not be living with their biological parents. In addition, due to cultural and religious differences, family beliefs and backgrounds, and family structures, students may not all have equal opportunities for open discussions with their family members or guardians. In some homes, these discussions may not be comfortable or safe. In other families, talking about subjects related to puberty may be taboo or difficult to talk about.

Determine which delivery option is the best fit for your group of students.

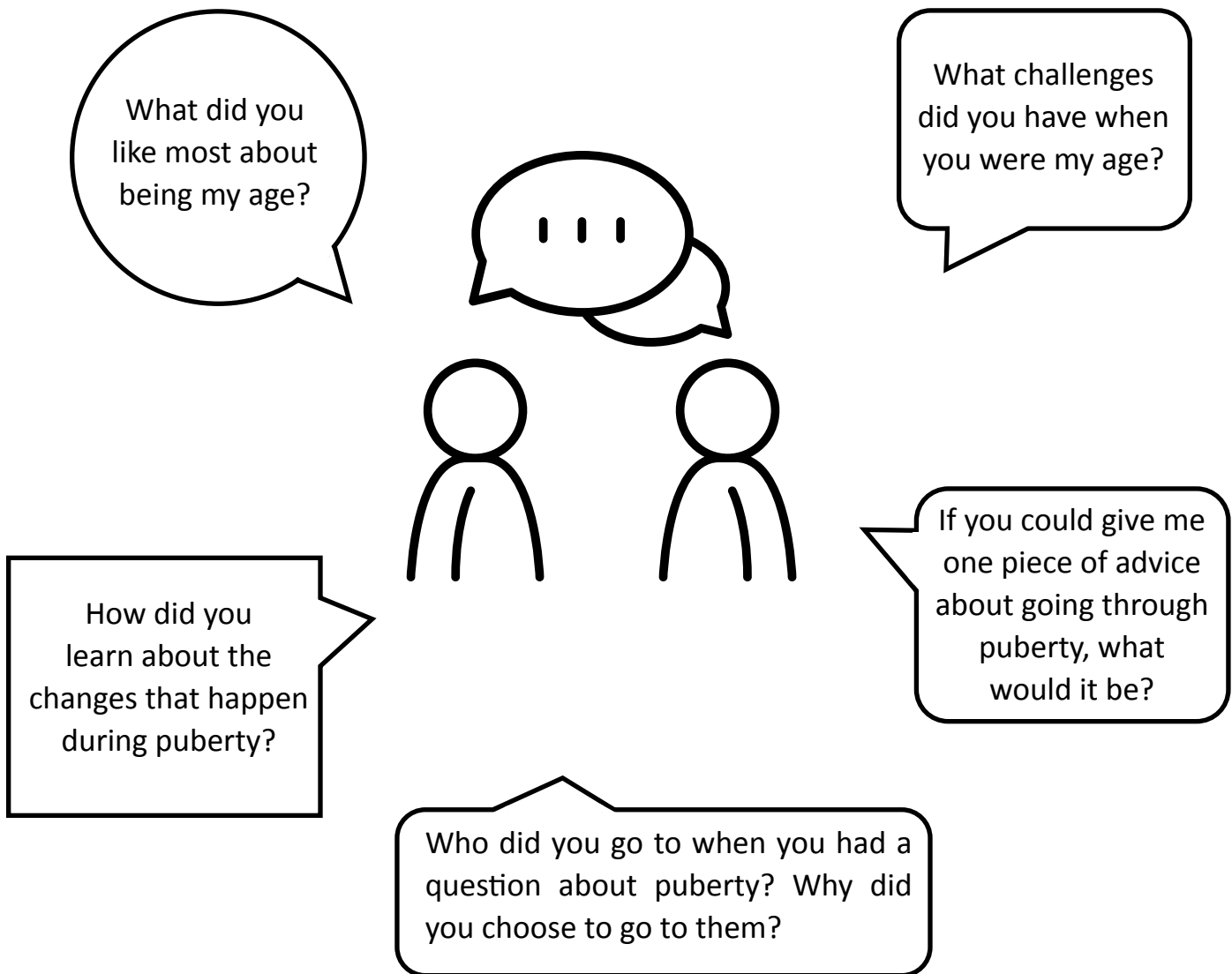
Suggested Options for Using the Handout

- Send it home with your students to work on with a family member(s).
- Make it available for parents or guardians at an open house night.
- Post it on your parent or guardian portal page.
- If you send out a letter to parents or guardians at the beginning of the Puberty Happens unit, include The Interview handout.

THE INTERVIEW

Puberty is an exciting and sometimes confusing time. It helps to have a parent or guardian, an older sibling, or another adult you trust to talk to about your questions or concerns. They have gone through puberty and can share their experiences. Sometimes when you know how others experienced something, it helps prepare you for what's ahead and how to handle it.

Directions: Interview a parent or guardian or a trusted adult. You don't have to ask all the questions - choose a few questions you're most interested in knowing more about. You can always go back and ask more. You don't need to write down the answers or turn this in.





ACTIVITY C: PUBERTY CHANGES MATCH-UP



The purpose of this activity is to introduce the physical, emotional, and social changes that happen for most people during puberty. As you introduce these changes, students may not have experienced them, and might not be familiar with some of the terms used. As you come across terms you think might be unfamiliar, it may be helpful to write them on the board. Many puberty changes are interconnected and could fit in more than one category of physical, emotional, or social. The goal of this activity is not to enforce putting a puberty card in one category over another. Rather the goal is to raise awareness about the many varied changes young people experience and how those changes impact our physical, social, and emotional lives.

Say,

So far, we have discussed why it is important to talk about puberty. We set our classroom agreements and identified people and places we can go to for support and to get answers to questions.

Now we're going learn about some of the changes that can happen during puberty. Let's start by sharing some things you already know or have heard about puberty.

While students share, write their responses on chart paper or whiteboard.

- **What are some of the changes that commonly happen during puberty?**
- **What changes have you seen in friends or family members who have gone through puberty?**

Acknowledge the responses that the students gave. Then say:

Puberty is a time in most people's lives when they experience a lot of changes. During puberty, a person's body starts changing and growing from a child into an adult. These changes happen over several years and everyone experiences these changes on their own unique timeline.

Let's talk about some of the changes that most people will experience. This includes changes that are physical, emotional, and social. Let's define those terms together.

- **Physical Changes. Can someone tell me what physical means?**
Answer: Changes that happen to a person's body.
- **Emotional Changes. What do you think emotional means?**
Answer: Changes in the way someone thinks and feels.
- **Social Changes. What do we mean by social?**
Answer: Changes in a person's relationships with family, friends, and other people in their lives.

DIRECTIONS

1. Copy and cut out the Puberty Match-Up cards at the end of this lesson. You may add or remove cards as needed. Prepare pieces of tape for students to use when posting their cards.
2. Tape the Physical, Emotional, Social cards on the board so there is room to tape the match-up cards underneath each category. [You can also just write the terms on the board.]
3. Have students form small groups and pass out several cards making sure that each group receives a mix of physical, emotional, and social changes.
4. Tell students they have 5 minutes to discuss the changes on their cards and decide what changes fit under physical, emotional, or social. Let them know that everyone is learning together and it's okay if they don't know – it's okay to guess.
5. Walk around to see how the conversations are going. If students are having difficulty, you can give them clues. Students may be unsure of where the changes fit, particularly with the social and emotional categories. That's okay – some could fit in more than one category.
6. After the small groups have decided where the cards should go, ask them to choose one or two people from their group to tape their cards under the appropriate headings.
7. Once the groups are finished placing the cards under each category, go through the list of changes together. Ask students if they think any of the cards should be changed to another heading.
8. Use the Educator Guide to provide additional information for each of the changes, as needed and time allows.

Use this table as a guide for where to place the cards. Some may fit in more than one category.

PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	SOCIAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acne (pimples) may start to appear.• Breasts develop.• Genitals start to grow and change.• Getting your period.• Grow taller.• Muscles develop.• Spontaneous erections.• Start growing hair in new places.• Sweat more and have body odor.• Voice changes.• Wet dreams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feel more stress or anxiety.• Have crushes or attractions.• More aware of what others might think.• Start to wonder “who am I?” or “what do I like to do?”• Sudden mood changes.• Take more interest in how you look.• Want to try new activities.• Want more freedom to make decisions.• Compare yourself to others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Argue more with siblings.• Disagree more with your parents or guardians.• Hang out with different people.• Teachers assign more schoolwork.• Help parents or guardians more with chores.• Question the rules at school or home.• Want to fit in with friends.• Spend time with others online.

DEBRIEF

Debrief the activity by asking the students the following questions:

- **What changes during puberty do you think would be the most challenging?**
- **What changes would you look forward to?**
- **What are some ways to make sure you are getting accurate information about these changes?**

Possible answers:

- *It is always good to turn to someone you trust if you hear or see information online you aren't sure of or makes you feel uncomfortable.*
- *Your trust team can help you find reliable websites and other resources for you to get correct information.*

SUMMARIZE

Include these messages when summarizing the lesson:

- **While almost everyone experiences these puberty changes at some point, they aren't happening at the same time and pace for everyone. That can make puberty awkward at times.**
- **It is important to be respectful and supportive as others around you go through puberty.**
- **If you have questions about changes you're going through, talk to a trusted adult.**



ACTIVITY D: INTRODUCING THE ANONYMOUS QUESTION BOX & EXIT TICKET



This activity encourages students to ask questions throughout the lessons. It provides options for ways they can feel comfortable in both asking questions during class, in exit tickets, or by using an anonymous question box.

Say,

Now we've covered some of the changes most people will experience during puberty. As we continue to talk about these changes, you will have an opportunity to ask questions by raising your hand and asking questions out loud. Sometimes it may feel more comfortable to ask questions anonymously (without others knowing who you are). In each of the lessons, I will pass out cards for you to write your question. Don't add your name unless you would like to talk with me. Even if you don't have a question, I will be collecting all the cards at the end of class.

ANONYMOUS QUESTION BOX

Directions

1. Find a box or container to collect anonymous questions and place it in an area that is not in front of everyone. Make sure to point out where the box is located.
2. Hand out notecards to students at the beginning of each class.
3. As you move through the activities, remind students about the notecards for asking a question anonymously. Tell them you will be collecting them at the end of class.
4. Tell students they can also place a question in the anonymous question box at any time.
5. After each class, be sure to check the box for questions. Take time to think about how you will answer the questions and make a plan for when you will answer the questions in the next class.

For more tips and tools, visit the [Educator Tip Sheet for Responding to Student Questions](#) on the Maine Family Planning website. Though some of the examples and websites are geared towards teens, the strategies can be used with students of all ages. Don't forget, we are here to help and answer questions. You can email us at: education@mainefamilyplanning.org

Exit Ticket

The exit ticket is an opportunity to gauge what students have learned so far, what they are interested in learning more about, and to identify trusted adults they can go to with their questions and for support.

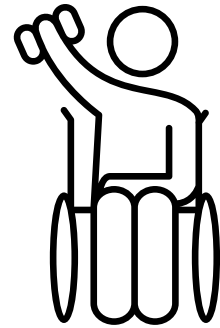
Say,

We are at the end of Lesson 1, and you have participated in activities that introduced you to puberty. For the next lessons, remember our classroom agreements and respecting and providing support to others. In our closing activity, you will have three questions to respond to and then I will collect everyone's cards. If you can't answer all the questions that's okay. Just do your best.

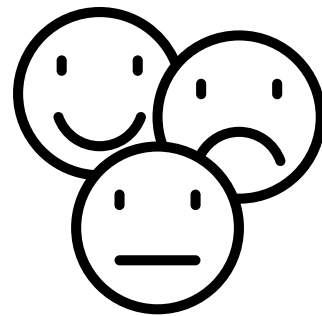
Directions

1. Write these questions on newsprint or on the board:
 - What is one thing you learned about puberty?
 - What is one thing you still want to know?
 - Who is someone you can go to if you have questions or concerns?
2. When everyone appears to be done with their responses, collect everyone's cards. Remind the students that they can put a question in the box at any time.

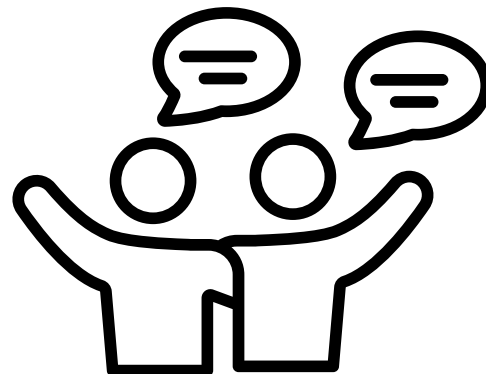
Physical



Emotional



Social



Use this resource to provide information or answer student questions during this activity.

PHYSICAL CHANGES

Acne (pimples) may start to appear. Acne happens when the body starts producing more oils and bacteria. Pores, openings where the oils flow, can sometimes get clogged and cause a pimple. You can gently wash your face, but washing will not always prevent acne. Some people may use medications or may need to see a doctor to control acne on the face and other parts of the body.

Breasts develop. At the beginning of puberty, most girls will notice their breasts developing. Boys can experience breast development too, but it will usually disappear over time. It's common to have breasts that are not the same size, just like people may have one foot bigger than the other.

Genitals start to grow and change. Many people, when they first start going through puberty, will notice changes in their genitals, or private parts. The penis and scrotum will begin to grow larger, and the vulva (external genitals including the labia and clitoris) gets bigger during puberty, too. We will learn more about these body parts when we go over the reproductive systems.

Getting your period. A period (also called menstruation) is when blood from the uterus comes out of the vagina. For most people with a vagina, periods happen once a month starting in puberty. We'll learn more about periods when we go over the reproductive systems.

Grow taller. During puberty, most people experience growth spurts at different rates. Some people may start these changes earlier than others. Growing taller doesn't happen all at once. How tall a person will become is often part of their genetics - what is passed on to you by your biological parents. During puberty, the body grows most during sleep, so it's important to get lots of rest!

Muscles develop. Muscles will develop during puberty due to the body producing more of the hormone called testosterone. Both girls and boys produce testosterone during puberty, but boys produce more, so they might notice more changes in their muscles and strength. People grow in different ways, but it's important for everyone to stay physically active to continue to grow, be strong, and be healthy.

Spontaneous erections. The inside of the penis is like a sponge. An erection happens when the inside, spongy part of the penis fills with blood and becomes firm and longer. During puberty, erections can be unexpected or happen on their own without a reason. This is normal and common. Many people with a penis experience spontaneous erections during puberty.

Start growing hair in new places. During puberty, hair starts growing around a person's genitals (it's called pubic hair) and armpits. It is often different than the hair on a person's head. It is also common for most boys and even some girls to notice some hair on their face or other parts of the body.

Sweat more and have body odor. During puberty, glands start to produce more sweat, causing the body to give off odors. A person may need to take a bath or shower and wash their clothes more often. Many people use deodorant or antiperspirant to help with body odor.

Voice changes. During puberty, vocal cords start to thicken and cause the voice to sound deeper and may sometimes sound like it's cracking. This is because the vocal cords don't always thicken evenly. On average, boys' vocal cords will get thicker than girls' as they mature.

Wet dreams. The scientific term for a wet dream is nocturnal emissions. A wet dream is when a penis gets erect (hard), and ejaculates (releases semen) while a person is asleep. We will learn more about how these body parts function when we go over the reproductive body parts. Wet dreams usually begin during puberty as the body begins to produce more of the hormone testosterone. Some people experience wet dreams, and some may find them embarrassing, but they are completely normal. Someone with a vulva can also experience wet dreams.

Use this resource to provide information or answer student questions during this activity.

EMOTIONAL CHANGES

Feel more stress or anxiety. Stress can happen for many reasons. Some people feel stressed trying to figure out who they are and what they are feeling. Stress can come from having more responsibility at school or home. Friendships can also cause stress or anxiety. These feelings are common, but feeling too much stress or anxiety can be unhealthy. It is a good idea to talk with a trusted adult when stress or anxiety seems overwhelming.

Have crushes or attractions. Crushes are feelings of really liking or being attracted to someone and wanting them to like you too. You may have a crush on someone, while others may not notice those kinds of feelings until they are older, or at all. People develop crushes on people of the same gender or other genders. These feelings are normal. When the time seems right to act on a crush or attraction, it's best to talk with the other person about how you are feeling.

More aware of what others might think. Most people go through a time when they worry about what other people think of them based on how they look or how they act. Sometimes when we want to fit in, we try to act, talk, or dress in ways that we think others will approve of. What matters is who you are inside and figuring out what feels right for you.

Start to wonder “who am I?” and “what do I like to do?” Along with trying new things, as a person grows older, they learn more in school and from other people in their life. This process opens someone's mind to new ideas and the way they see the world and their place in it. As we grow older, we keep learning and growing, so it's okay to ask these questions, even if you don't have the answers yet.

Sudden mood changes. Because of changing hormones as you grow, it's common to feel happy one minute and in tears the next. These mood changes will happen to many people, so have patience with yourself and others. Find ways, like exercising or finding a quiet place to relax, to help strong emotions pass before doing or saying things that might make someone else feel bad.

Take more interest in how you look. During puberty, it's common to want to spend more time in front of the mirror getting ready for school or picking out what clothes to wear. Remember that in the media people are often made to look beautiful and they don't represent most of the people we see in our lives every day. While we often compare ourselves with others, it's important to remember that everyone is different, and that people will go through changes at different rates.

Want to try new activities. As the brain develops, people expand their abilities and may discover new interests. It is very common for people to try new things—and there's no better time to discover new interests and try new activities! It's part of growing up, discovering your individual interests, and becoming more independent.

Want more freedom to make decisions. As you get older, parents and guardians often trust their kids to make more of their own choices. Adults may have greater expectations for you as well—both in contributing around the house and being more responsible for your schoolwork and your actions.

Compare yourself to others. It is common to start comparing yourself to others. Whether it is images online or with people at school, we might compare ourselves and feel bad about our own bodies or abilities. It is important to know that many of the images we see online or in magazines have filters on them. We are not seeing the way someone truly looks. Remember everyone is unique and good friends will care for you just as you are.

Use this resource to provide information or answer student questions during this activity.

SOCIAL CHANGES

Argue more with siblings. If you have older or younger siblings, you may find yourself arguing with them over things you didn't used to. Try to be patient and find ways to work through problems or ask for help from a family member if you are having trouble getting along with siblings or other family members.

Disagree more with your parents or guardians. With more responsibilities and independence, you and your parents or guardians may not always agree. Sometimes you may feel like a little kid and want someone to take care of you and other times you want to do things on your own. Try to talk it out by explaining your position while trying to understand theirs.

Hang out with different people. As you develop new interests, it's common to make new friends. You and your friends may end up with different schedules so you can't see each other as much. Sometimes it may also feel like you don't really fit in with any group and you may feel left out. It's important to communicate with your friends when changes happen, or talk with a trusted adult.

Teachers assign more schoolwork. Getting older often means having to do more at school, and this may mean less time to do the things you like. Even with more demands, it's important to get plenty of rest and find a way to balance schoolwork with activities and time with friends. If you're struggling to find a balance, you may be able to get help from an older sibling, a parent, or a teacher.

Help parents or guardians more with chores. Getting older usually means having more responsibilities. These can sometimes be responsibilities you don't want. Other responsibilities may make you feel more grown up and proud. It's all a part of growing up.

Question the rules at school or home. As you get older, the rules you've had to follow in school or at home may not seem to fit anymore. Talk with your parents about how some of the rules at home could change and show them how you are becoming more responsible. Remember that rules are usually there for a reason and sometimes respecting those rules is a way of showing you are becoming more mature.

Want to fit in with friends. It's easy to compare yourself to other people your age, especially when each person is changing at their own pace. Sometimes you may feel like you don't fit in or feel left out of the group. Following friends and peers on social media can also make it feel that you aren't included or don't measure up or can lead to gossip or misunderstandings. When things get difficult, try to talk things through with friends and share your feelings. Trusted adults can also help you sort out the ins and outs of friendships.

Spend time with others online. For some of you, it may be the first time you are able to text, talk, or play games online. Being online can give you a way to connect with other people and it's important to always know who is on the other side of the conversation or game. Being online also comes with responsibility for what you share and what you say and do. It is important not to bully or shame someone online. If you see this is happening or are concerned about who is contacting you online, turn to a trusted adult for their help and guidance. Balance time online with spending time in person with friends or family members.



acne (pimples) may
start to appear

breasts develop

genitals start to
grow and change



getting your period

grow taller

muscles develop



spontaneous
erections

start to grow hair
in new places

sweat more and
have body odor



voice changes

wet dreams

feel more stress
or anxiety



have crushes or
attractions

more aware of what
others might think

start to wonder
“Who am I?” or
“What do I like to do?”



**sudden mood
changes**

**take more interest in
how you look**

**want to try new
activities**



want more freedom
to make decisions

compare yourself
to others

argue more
with siblings



**disagree more
with your parents
or guardians**

**hang out with
different people**

**teachers assign
more schoolwork**



help parents or
guardians more
with chores

question the rules
at school or home

want to fit in
with friends



spend time with
others online
