

# Puberty part 1

Year 7 or 8 Learning Activity

## Time to complete

55 min

## Description




Students explore the physical, emotional and social changes associated with puberty.

## Learning focus

**Year 7:** Management of emotional and social changes associated with puberty through the use of: coping skills; communication skills; problem solving skills and strategies ([ACCPS071](#)).

**Year 8:** The impact of physical changes on gender, cultural and sexual identities ([ACPPS070](#)).

## Key understandings

-  Puberty is the period of time when your body changes from a child to an adult.
-  There is a wide range of 'normal' when it comes to the physical changes of puberty.
-  Puberty positivity - it's not something to be scared of!

## Materials

- Access to internet
- *Laugh and Learn* video - puberty part 1 (2min 44sec)
- Preferred media for large and small group work and individual work (e.g. paper and textas, or ipads/tablets)
- Sticky notes/post-it notes
- A4 coloured card or paper
- Small squares of scrap paper for question box

## Before you get started

- [Protective interrupting](#) - Teachers need to know and understand how to use this technique to prevent students from potentially disclosing sensitive information or abuse in front of other students.
- [Dealing with disclosures](#) - Teachers must be aware of the school and legal procedures if a student discloses personal issues, particularly disclosures of sexual abuse.
- [Question box](#) - Have a question box available in every lesson to allow students the opportunity to ask questions that may be too embarrassing or unsafe for them to ask openly in class. See [Setting](#)

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[up the question box](#) and [Types of questions](#) for further information. For ways to answer some of the curly questions, see [Student FAQs](#).

- Preview the [Laugh and learn - puberty 1](#) video (2min 44sec) to determine suitability for your students.

## Learning activities

### Group agreement

**Time to complete:** 5 min


 **Teaching tip:** A group agreement must be established before any RSE program begins to ensure a safe learning environment. Read: [Essential information: Establishing a group agreement](#) for tips on how to create one and what to include.

1. Revise the class [group agreement](#).

### Introduction: Brainstorm

**Time to complete:** 10 min

2. Remind students that many of them have probably covered puberty in Years 5 and 6, but there may also be some students who have missed out on formal lessons about puberty. This lesson aims to revise and extend their knowledge.

3.  Say:

“During this session I want you to think about what you wish you had known about puberty even a year or two ago. What do you think would make it easier for you to deal with the changes of puberty? You may also have young people around you who are asking you questions about puberty. This session can help you to be sure that information that you may want to share will be accurate.”

4. [Brainstorm](#) - Write at least 5 single words (adjectives) that describes how someone might feel about puberty. (Recording options: sticky notes; [wordcloud makers](#); [Mentimeter - wordcloud](#))
5. Ask for words and record the number of students who have written the same word. Rank and discuss the most common words.

E.g wordcloud creates an image where the most common word is largest.



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6. 😊 Ask:

Are they generally positive, negative or neutral words?

*(They are likely to be negative words)*

Why do you think these words might be the most common?

*(Puberty is often not talked about openly and the unknown can be scary. Movies often portray the awkwardness of puberty. There is a lot of stigma around menstruation in the media and adverts often talk about period products in metaphors. We often focus on the negative and don't talk about the positives of puberty)*

## Laugh and learn - puberty part 1 video

**Time to complete:** 5 min

7. Watch [Laugh and learn video - puberty part 1 video](#) (2 min 44 sec)



8. 😊 Ask the following questions:

What do you think of the use of humour in this video?

Does it help get the information across?

What is the message/information you took from this video?

## Puberty myths and facts

**Time to complete:** 20 min

9. In pairs, on sticky notes, write two myths that students have heard about puberty or that they heard in the video.

10. With the whole class, facilitate grouping these into same/similar myths into a [T-chart](#) (labelled 'myths' and 'facts'). See which myths are most common.

11. Work through each myth and ask students if they can provide a fact to dispel each myth. See the table below for possible answers. Discuss the corresponding facts addressing any misconceptions, and record on the T-chart.

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Myth	Fact
You 'catch' puberty	Puberty happens to most people. It's not contagious like an infection or disease. You can't 'catch it'.
Puberty happens overnight.	Puberty takes time.
Puberty happens at the same time for everyone.	Generally puberty starts somewhere between 9 and 15 years.
Puberty is scary!	Puberty doesn't have to be scary or something to worry about. In some cultures and families it is a time of celebration.
etc	

Background teacher notes: [Puberty](#) and [Menstrual cycle](#) provide teachers with additional professional reading.

Students can use the following free resources as references if required:



[How to order free hardcopies.](#)

- [Get the Facts: Puberty](#)
- [Get the Facts: Puberty animation](#)
- [SECCA App](#) - includes a bank of 2000 images designed to support access to RSE for people of all ages and abilities

12. Students nominate two myths they wish to work with (make sure all myths are covered). In pairs, write one myth on one side of their A4 coloured card and illustrate with a cartoon. On the other side, write the corresponding fact. Repeat with the other myth. (This activity could also be completed on electronic media.)

13. Share with whole class.

## 3-2-1 Reflection

**Time to complete:** 10 min

14. [3-2-1 Reflection](#) - Students write on a prepared worksheet or in a journal:

- 3 x *recalls*: state three facts about puberty
- 2 x *so what's*: write two things about why this information is relevant and important
- 1 x *questions*: write one question. For example:
  - Why is it that...?
  - In the future, what will....?
  - How does this affect...?

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## Take home message

**Time to complete:** 5 min

15. Remind students of the take home message/s:



**Puberty positivity - it's not something you 'catch' and not something to be scared of!**



**Puberty happens to most people and is a normal part of growing up and developing from a child to an adult.**

16. **Question box:** Give out some small scrap pieces of paper and allow students time to write any questions they have for the question box. To ensure confidentiality, ask all students to write something on the scrap paper at the same time (even if they just draw a smiley face or scribble) and place it in the question box.

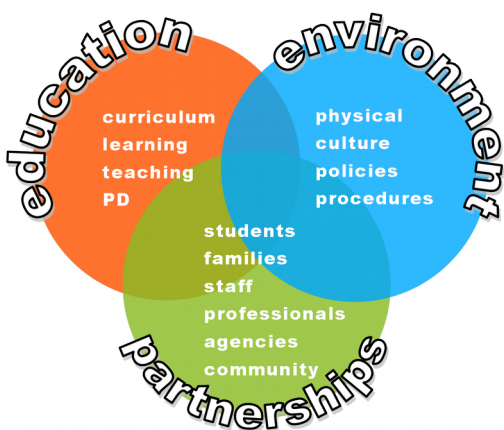
17. Remind students that [Get the Facts](#) has a completely confidential '[Ask a question](#)' service that they may wish to use. All questions are answered by a qualified health professional within a week.

## Optional activity: Sharing

- Compile into a book titled *Myths and facts about puberty*.
- Depending on class/school demographics (and with suitable teacher support and supervision), there may be opportunities for some students to share the book with other classes. Alternatively, the books can be given to teachers to share with younger students.

## Health promoting schools strategies

Background teacher note: [Health promoting schools framework](#)



## Partnerships with parents

- [Talk soon. Talk often: a guide for parents talking to their kids about sex](#) is a free resource that can be bulk ordered by schools and interactive website. Send a copy home to parents prior to starting

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your RSE program. The booklet offers age and stage related information on puberty so that parents can reinforce the topics covered in class. ([How to order hardcopies.](#))

- Send copies of [Puberty](#) and [Relationships, sex and other stuff](#) home for parents. ([How to order free copies.](#))
- Run a parent workshop prior to delivering RSE lessons so that parents can see the resources used, ask questions and find out how to support the school program by continuing conversations at home.
- Add the [Get the Facts](#) and [SECCA app](#) links to your website/e-news for parents.

## Partnerships with school staff

- Invite the school health professionals and pastoral care staff (school nurse, school psychologist, chaplain, boarding house master, etc) to a class or an assembly to introduce them to the students and let them know what their roles are and how they can help the students. For example:
  - If you get your period at school, you can go to...
  - If you are worried about something and need to talk, you can go to...

## Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

### Background Note

[Menstrual cycle](#)

[Puberty](#)

[Health Promoting Schools Framework](#)

### Resource Collection

[Male reproductive system](#)

[Female reproductive system](#)

[Puberty booklet](#)

### Teaching resources

[Overview - 'Laugh and learn' videos lesson plans](#)

[Myth and Fact T-chart](#)

## Date printed

26 February 2024