

Taking care of your body during puberty

Year 5-7 Learning Activity



Time to complete

60 min

Description

Students identify appropriate self care practices which become increasingly important as they go through puberty.

Learning focus

Changes associated with puberty which vary with individuals: physical, mental, emotional ([ACCPS052](#))

Strategies that promote a safe, healthy lifestyle ([ACCPS054](#))

Preventative health measures that promote and maintain an individuals' health, safety and wellbeing ([ACCPS058](#))

Key understandings

- 💡 There are a number of things that help us to have a healthy body: healthy eating, regular exercise, enough rest/sleep/relaxation, avoiding alcohol and other drugs, personal hygiene.
- 💡 Personal hygiene is keeping the external parts of your body clean and healthy (e.g. hair, nails, skin).
- 💡 Looking after our bodies and health helps to prevent body odour, infections, illness and the spread of disease.
- 💡 Having a healthy body and self care practices also helps us have good mental health and wellbeing, self esteem and confidence.

Materials

- Non-transparent bags such as library bags, pillow cases, canvas shopping bags tied with string or elastic bands for mystery feely bags - enough for 1 item per bag or they can have a few items in each bag
- Items for mystery feely bags:
 - body wash/soap
 - towel/face cloth
 - facial cleanser/acne cream
 - shampoo and conditioner
 - deodorant/antiperspirant
 - toothpaste and toothbrush
 - mouthwash/dental floss

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- hair brush//comb
- clean underpants and socks
- nail clippers
- hand sanitiser
- tissues
- a fruit or vegetable (to represent healthy eating)
- re-usable water bottle; pillow/blanket (to represent sleep)
- tennis ball/basketball/other sports equipment (to represent exercise)
- book (to represent relaxation)
- pads, tampons, period knickers (optional as may wish to introduce this separately in menstruation lesson)
- (Please note: all mystery bag items should be cleaned in between uses for infection control)
- Post it notes/labels for class display
- Butcher's paper with a life-sized body outline
- 6 sided dice (or a ball with the numbers 1-6 written on it)
- Video by Amaze Org - [Taking care of your body during puberty \(2min 45 sec\)](#) (external link)

Before you get started

- Read Background teacher notes:
 - [Puberty - taking care of your body during puberty](#)
- Read Essential information:
 - [Protective interrupting](#) - All staff in the room 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](#) - All staff in the room must be aware of the school and legal procedures if a student discloses personal issues, particularly disclosures of sexual abuse.
- Preview the video [Taking care of your body during puberty](#) (2min 45sec) to determine suitability for your students.
- Speak to the community health nurse if there are any students in the class that you may be concerned about in terms of personal hygiene or home circumstances.
- Consider any cultural needs. Read: [Co-ed vs gender segregated lessons](#) and [Cultural considerations when teaching Aboriginal students](#),

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Learning activities

Group agreement

Time to complete: 5 min



Teaching tip: A [group agreement](#) must be established before any Relationships and Sexuality Education (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](#).

Mystery feely bag

Time to complete: 15 min

2. Using a [grouping strategy](#) to place students in groups of 2 or 3 (depending on how many mystery bags you have created).

3. Hand out the 'mystery feely bags' to pairs/groups of students.

4. 😊 Explain:

"By only feeling the items within the bag, I would like you to guess what you think each item is."

4. Invite each group to offer their guesses as to what the items might be and have them open the bags and display their items.

5. Once all of the items are revealed, invite students to guess what all of the items have in common.

Possible answers: *self care, hygiene, looking after yourself physically, how to keep yourself clean.*

6. 😊 Explain:

"These are all items we can use to help keep the external parts of our body clean and keep us healthy and help us to feel good. This helps to prevent odour (smells), illnesses, infections and spread of disease."

Video - Taking care of your body during puberty

Time to complete: 10 min

7. 😊 Explain:

"We are going to watch a video that is about 3 minutes long about taking care of your body during puberty. I would give you a chance to ask questions after the video."

8. Watch the video: [Taking care of your body during puberty \(2min 45sec\)](#) (external link)

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9. Ask the students what messages they got from the video.

10. Answer any questions the students have about the video.

Class display - how to look after your body during puberty

Time to complete: 15 min

11. In their existing pairs/groups, ask the students to use the information from the video to write how each item from the Mystery Bag activity can be used to help maintain appropriate hygiene/self care.

For example: Shampoo - Wash your hair with shampoo regularly to get rid of oil, dirt and bad odours.

12. Have the class sit or stand in a circle with the life-sized body outline on the floor in the centre of the circle.

13. Each pair/group presents their information to the class and places their item and label where it belongs on the body outline. Ask students to think about how they can represent items that cover more than one body place.



Teaching tip: Ideas for display area - table with items and labels displayed; items in feely bags with labels giving clues as to what the item inside is; photographs of items on a display board.

14. Ensure students have covered all of the following key messages:

- body wash/soap/towel - wash body with soap/body wash daily, feet can get especially sweaty/smelly and need to be washed and dried carefully each day
- facial cleanser/acne cream - facial cleanser and creams can be used to help reduce acne (speak to a trusted adult or doctor if you are concerned about acne)
- shampoo and conditioner - wash hair regularly to keep it clean from oil, dirt and bad odours
- deodorant/antiperspirant - use deodorant to prevent body odour (note the difference between a fragrance and an antiperspirant)
- toothpaste and toothbrush - brush your teeth with toothpaste/toothbrush twice a day and visit a dentist regularly
- mouthwash/dental floss - floss teeth daily
- hair brush//comb - brush hair to help keep it clean and tidy

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- clean underpants and socks - wear clean clothes and use clean underwear and socks daily
- nail clippers - to trim nails and help keep clean, avoid biting nails as there is lots of bacteria under nails that can cause illnesses and infections, artificial nails have a greater risk of bacteria sitting under them
- hand sanitiser - use throughout the day to help prevent spread of infection
- tissues - sneeze or cough into a tissue, put tissue in bin straight away and wash hands. If no tissues are available, sneeze into elbow (not hands)
- fruit and vegetables (to represent healthy eating) - eat 2 serves of fruit and 5 services of vegetables every day to keep healthy and well
- re-usable water bottle - drink plenty of water every day to keep hydrated and healthy. Avoid sugary drinks, and energy drinks
- pillow/blanket - get at least 8 hours of sleep a night keep energised, healthy and well. Avoid screens 90 minutes before bedtime for good sleep hygiene
- tennis ball/basketball/other sports equipment (to represent exercise) - get at least one our of exercise a day
- book (to represent relaxation) - have time and ways to relax (without screens)
- pads, tampons, period knickers (optional as may wish to introduce this separately in menstruation lesson) - variety of products to choose from for periods

13. 🗨️ Discuss additional important messages that do not have mystery feely bag items to represent them:

- phones and social media - it is important to have time away from phones and social media and to know how to seek help if we are having any problems related to social media (e.g. bullying, sexting, self-esteem, eating disorders, etc)
- alcohol or other drugs - caffeine, alcohol, smoking, vaping, and other drugs affect growing bodies especially. They can affect body growth, brain development, sleep and mental health
- trusted adults - think about who the trusted adults are in your life. It might be a parent, an auntie/uncle, grandparent, teacher, coach, youth worker, doctor, etc. It is important to have a trusted adult that you can turn to if you need help
- reliable information - the Internet and social media is full of misinformation, it is vital to know reliable websites and organisations to get accurate information from particularly when it relates to our health



Teaching tip: This lesson is intended to introduce each of these topics at a very basic level. Each of these messages will be covered in more depth in further lessons. Students can also add questions to the question box to raise any information they would like to cover further.

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Reflection - dice questions

Time to complete: 10 min

14. Display the following sentence stems on the board:

- 1: A health snack I can bring to school is....
- 2: A way to get active is...
- 3: A way to practice self care is...
- 4: A way to keep my body healthy is...
- 5: Growing up means to me...
- 6: A way I like to relax is....

15. Ask for volunteers to roll a dice (or use a ball with 6 numbers written on it) and complete the sentence stem relating to the number thrown.

Question box

Time to complete: 5 min



Teaching tip: Establishing a question box when starting any RSE program is useful to allow students to ask questions anonymously and have them answered in a safe environment.

Read [Essential information: Question box guide](#) for how to set up the system and how to answer tricky questions.

16. Provide students with time to write questions for the question box.

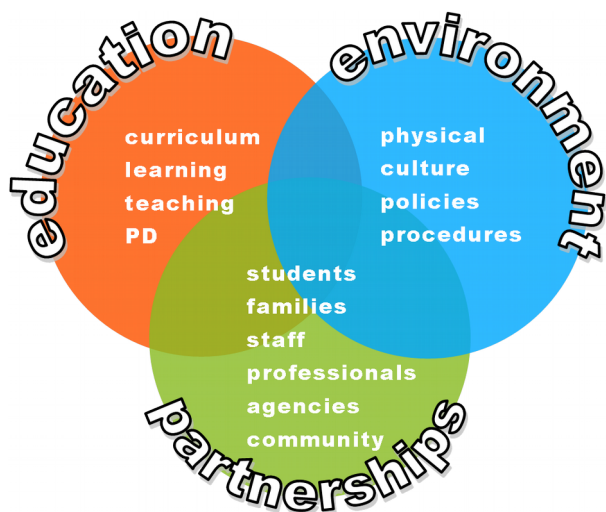
17. If the question box is already set up, you may like to choose some questions related to the lesson to answer.

Health promoting schools framework

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

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Partnerships with parents

- [Talk Soon. Talk Often: a guide for parents talking to their kids about sex](#) is a free hardcopy resource that can be bulk ordered by schools and interactive website. Send a copy home to parents prior to starting your RSE program. The booklet offers ages and stage related information on puberty (and other topics) so that parents can reinforce the topics covered in class. ([How to order hard copies.](#))
- Order copies of [Puberty](#) and [Relationships, sex and other stuff](#) to be sent home for parents.
- Run a parent workshop and run this activity with parents to model the content that will be covered in your RSE program.

Partnerships with school staff

- Invite the school nurse to your class to answer some of the question box questions. This serves two purposes - they may be able to answer some of the questions you are unsure of and helps to build a relationships between the students and the nurse.
- The school nurse may like to take small groups of students requiring additional or specialised care to run separate activities with on this topic.

Related assets (links to sections within GDHR site)

Background Note

[Puberty: Taking care of your body during puberty](#)

Resource Collection

[Puberty booklet](#)

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