

# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part I

<b>TOPIC:</b> The Changes of Puberty Part I	<b>TARGET-AGE RANGE:</b> 9–15	<b>TIME:</b> 45 minutes
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Life Skills		
<b>IDEAL NUMBER OF LEARNERS:</b> 25–40		
<b>WHAT ADVANCE PREPARATION, IF ANY, IS REQUIRED OF THE TEACHER FOR THIS LESSON?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the Myth vs. Fact Game – Teacher’s Guide before the lesson</li></ul>		
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</b> <p>By the end of this lesson learners will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Define puberty correctly.</li><li>2) Identify at least five physical changes that occur during puberty.</li><li>3) Explain terms used in puberty (i.e—erection, menstruation, nocturnal emission, ovum, puberty, and sperm.)</li></ol>		
<b>LIFE SKILLS DEMONSTRATED IN THIS LESSON:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Critical thinking about the impact of physical changes of puberty for boys and girls.</li></ol>		
<b>RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR TEACHER:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copy of Teacher Background – Puberty</li><li>• If you are able to play a video, here are two good, short videos to consider:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Boys and Puberty – <a href="http://bcove.me/a4rcmyjc">http://bcove.me/a4rcmyjc</a></li><li>2) Girls and Puberty – <a href="http://bcove.me/1t3td6x2">http://bcove.me/1t3td6x2</a></li></ol></li><li>• Puberty Tanner Stages Visual – Teacher Resource</li></ul>		
<b>MATERIALS FOR LEARNER:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None</li></ul>		



# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part I

This lesson is enhanced when learners have the following background knowledge: Content from the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education—Key Concept 4 – Human Development; 4.3 – Puberty; Level I

## PROCEDURE:

### Step 1) 10 minutes

Ask for a volunteer or two to define puberty. Build on what the learners shared by saying, “Puberty is a time when a person’s body, feelings, and relationships change from a child’s into an adult’s. These changes are physical, emotional, and social. Puberty happens to everyone although everyone goes through the changes of puberty at different times in their life. For example, most girls start noticing the changes of puberty as young as age 8–9 or maybe not until ages 12–13. While most boys start noticing the changes of puberty at ages 10–11 or maybe not until ages 13–14. It is also important to know that the body is changing but so are the feelings and relationships a person has and sometimes the body can start to change and the other changes might happen later, or the other way around. No matter when the changes of puberty happen to you, it’s all normal.”

### Step 2) 25 minutes

Ask the learners to brainstorm any physical changes of puberty they have heard of or have questions about. As learners share their responses, write them in one of three columns on the chalkboard that you have not labeled yet, so it looks like this:

Grow hair on face/chest	Start to grow taller	Breasts develop and may start wearing a bra
Erections happen more often and for no reason	Develop pubic hair around genitals and under arms	Ovulation and menstrual periods begin
Voice gets deeper	Might get acne or pimples	Hips get wider

Once the learners have brainstormed a good number of the physical changes, make sure the list includes the following physical changes listed below. Use the Teacher Background – Puberty resource to help inform the discussion. Next, ask them to look at the three categories you have created with their responses and suggest what each category is. Once they have figured out the answer, write Boys, Both, and Girls on the top of each column so it looks like this:

BOYS	BOTH	GIRLS
Grow hair on face/chest	Start to grow taller	Breasts develop and may start wearing a bra
Erections happen more often and for no reason	Develop pubic hair around genitals and under arms	Ovulation and menstrual periods begin
Voice gets deeper	Might get acne or pimples	Hips get wider
Shoulders get broader	Sweat or perspire more	Daily vaginal discharge
Sperm production begins and ejaculation is possible	Hormone changes cause more sexual feelings	
Nocturnal emissions happen to some, not all		

# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part I

## PROCEDURE (CONTINUED):

### Step 3) 10 minutes

Process the activity by asking the following questions as time permits:

- What did you learn from this activity?
- How would these changes from puberty impact the behaviour of young people?
- How would these changes from puberty impact things like moods, sense of identity, and relationship with peers?
- If someone had questions about puberty or concerns about their body, who could they talk to about it?

## KEY MESSAGES OF LESSON:

- 1) Puberty is when a child's body turns into an adult's body.
- 2) Everyone goes through puberty at a time that's right for their body.
- 3) There are a lot of physical changes during puberty that happen to everyone and some happen just to boys or girls.

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

- Teachers can ask learners to write down one physical change that affects girls, one that affects boys, and one that affects both boys and girls, and submit for assessment of the learning objectives.

## HOMEWORK WITH FOCUS ON FAMILY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- None

## POSSIBLE ADAPTATIONS:

- Large class size—None
- Limited materials/technology—None

Adapted from *Family Life and Sexual Health – Grades 4-6, Lesson 9: Puberty, Day 1, Public Health – Seattle & King County, Revised 2009*  
[www.kingcounty.gov/health/flash](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health/flash)



# Teacher Background – Puberty

Use this background material to help guide discussion on the physical changes of puberty with your learners.

## CHANGES TO BOTH BOYS & GIRLS

### 1) Start to grow taller

All children going through puberty experience a growth spurt where they start to grow taller as all of their body grows bigger.

### 2) Develop pubic hair around genitals and under arms

Pubic hair starts to grow around the genitals, meaning the penis and scrotum on a boy and the vulva on a girl. Hair also starts to grow under the arms. This hair is sometimes a different color than the hair on the top of the head and some people choose to shave their underarm hair, but that is a personal decision.

### 3) Might get acne or pimples

The hormones that cause someone to go through puberty also trigger more oil to develop on the skin of their face. In some people this extra oil on their face can cause them to develop pimples or acne. Generally washing daily with soap and water can help reduce the amount of pimples a person gets, if they get any at all.

### 4) Sweat or perspire more

Even though everyone sweats when they are hot, during puberty the sweat glands start to produce sweat when a person is nervous or upset. This sweat also has a strong odor now when it did not before. People going through puberty may want to bathe more often and possibly use deodorant under their arms to help manage the new body odor.

### 5) Hormone changes cause more sexual feelings

The hormones that cause a person to go through puberty also cause new or more sexual feelings and desires. This might result in someone having new romantic feelings for other people and it might result in some people choosing to touch their genitals for pleasure, called masturbation. Masturbation can not harm someone physically and is a personal decision.

## CHANGES TO GIRLS

### 1) Breasts develop and may start wearing a bra

Girls breasts and nipples will grow larger over many months and even years so that if she chooses to have a baby later in life, she can feed the baby from her breasts if she wants to. There is a wide variety of breast shapes and sizes and no matter what they end of looking like, they will be sensitive to sexual touch and able to nourish a baby. Girls may choose to wear a bra to provide support for their breasts in order to feel more comfortable.



# Teacher Background – Puberty

## 2) Ovulation and menstrual periods begin

As a girl goes through puberty, inside her body the ovaries will start to release an egg or ovum, generally about once every four weeks. It is during this time when the egg is traveling from the ovary, down the fallopian tube, through the cervix and into the uterus that she is MOST ABLE to become pregnant if sperm are present. If the egg does not join with a sperm and implant, the lining of the uterus is shed and the blood and tissue leaves through her vagina once a month called “having a period.” The bleeding can last from between 2–10 days and girls can use maxi pads or tampons to catch the blood and then throw them away after they have been used. A girl can also experience cramps during her menstrual period when the uterus is contracting to shed the lining.

## 3) Hips get wider

The hips of a girl start to get wider so that her pelvis can support a pregnancy should she decide to have a biological child during her lifetime.

## 4) Daily vaginal discharge

The inside of the vagina cleans itself out every day and during puberty, girls might notice more clear to white discharge in their underwear or on the toilet paper when using the bathroom. This daily discharge, as long as there is no strong odor and it does not change color, is very normal. Girls might notice that the discharge becomes more clear and slippery around the time when she is releasing an egg from an ovary. That is also quite normal. Girls might also notice wetness in their underwear when they wake up, as it is possible for girls to have sexually arousing dreams and/or orgasms while they sleep.

## CHANGES TO BOYS

### 1) Grow hair on face/chest

The amount of hair a boy grows on his face and chest is based on his genes, meaning it's determined by his father and likely to be very similar to his other male relatives. Boys generally develop hair around their mouth, cheeks and neck around the face, and on the chest to some degree. Some boys might choose to remove this hair through shaving, but that is a personal decision.

### 2) Erections happen more often and for no reason

Erections are when the penis fills with blood and gets harder and bigger, standing away from the body. Although boys get erections from when they were very young, during puberty they get more frequent erections and sometimes for no reason. There is no harm to a boy if he has an erection and does not have vaginal sex as his erection will go away on it's own without any physical harm to him at all.



# Teacher Background – Puberty

## 3) Voice gets deeper

As a boy gets taller, the vocal chords get thicker causing his voice to slowly get deeper and maybe crack sometimes. The adam's apple in the neck will start to stick out a bit and become more noticeable.

## 4) Shoulders get broader

A boy's shoulders will start to grow broader as one of the changes in his skeleton occurring during puberty.

## 5) Sperm production begins and ejaculation is possible

Sperm are the tiny cells a boy makes in his testicles during puberty. They combine with other fluids to create something called semen. Only after a boy has started going through puberty can his body create sperm and semen and release it from the tip of his penis when he ejaculates. Generally semen is about a teaspoon of whitish fluid containing hundreds of millions of sperm.

## 6) Nocturnal emissions happen to some, not all

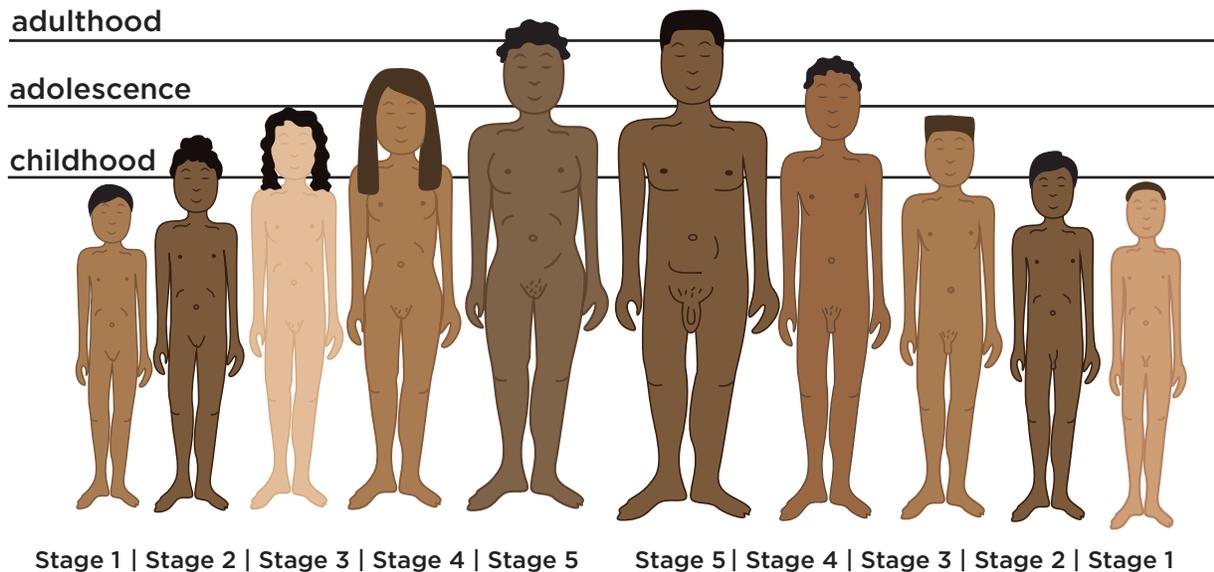
Sometimes called a “wet dream,” it is normal for some boys to experience ejaculation of semen while they are asleep. It often happens as a result of the hormones in his body and is normal if it does happen and totally normal if it never happens.



# Puberty Tanner Stages Visual – Teacher Resource

The Tanner Scale was created by doctors to show the progressive stages of body development for boys and girls. Everyone progresses from childhood to adulthood at his or her own pace.

## THE TANNER SCALE



### CHANGES FOR GIRLS

#### STAGE 1 (USUALLY AGES 8-11)

Hormone production begins; ovaries enlarge.

#### STAGE 2 (AVERAGE AGES 11-12)

Breast buds grow.  
Height and weight increases.  
Fine pubic hair appears.

#### STAGE 3 (AVERAGE AGES 12-13)

Breasts grow.  
Pubic hair darkens.  
Vagina enlarges and begins to produce discharge.  
First menstrual period may occur.

#### STAGE 4 (AVERAGE AGES 13-14)

Underarm hair appears.  
First menstrual period is likely; ovulation begins in some girls, but is irregular.

#### STAGE 5 (AVERAGE AGE 15)

Growth is complete.  
Menstruation and ovulation are well established.

### CHANGES FOR BOYS

#### STAGE 1 (USUALLY AGES 9-12)

Male hormone production becomes active.

#### STAGE 2 (AVERAGE AGES 12-13)

Testicles and scrotum begin to enlarge.  
Height increases.

#### STAGE 3 (AVERAGE AGES 13-14)

Penis begins to grow.  
Pubic hair darkens.  
Voice begins to deepen.  
Facial hair and pimples may develop.

#### STAGE 4 (AVERAGE AGES 14-15)

Penis and testicles continue to grow.  
Underarm hair appears and facial hair grows.  
Most boys have first ejaculations.

#### STAGE 5 (AVERAGE AGE 16)

Near-full adult height and physique attained.  
Shaving may begin.

# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part II

<b>TOPIC:</b> The Changes of Puberty Part II	<b>TARGET-AGE RANGE:</b> 9–15	<b>TIME:</b> 45 minutes
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Life Skills		
<b>IDEAL NUMBER OF LEARNERS:</b> 25–40		
<b>WHAT ADVANCE PREPARATION, IF ANY, IS REQUIRED OF THE TEACHER FOR THIS LESSON?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the Myth vs. Fact Game – Teacher’s Guide</li></ul>		
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</b> <p>By the end of this lesson learners will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Describe at least two myths and two facts related to puberty and sexuality.</li><li>2) Identify at least one thing they are excited about and one thing they are anxious about when it comes to puberty and growing up.</li></ol>		
<b>LIFE SKILLS DEMONSTRATED IN THIS LESSON:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Critical thinking about how puberty can impact decisions and behaviours.</li></ol>		
<b>RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR TEACHER:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Myth vs. Fact Game – Teacher’s Guide</li></ul>		
<b>MATERIALS FOR LEARNER:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Optional Homework Interview Worksheet—One copy per learner</li></ul>		



# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part II

This lesson is enhanced when learners have the following background knowledge: Content from the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education—Key Concept 4 – Human Development; 4.3 – Puberty; Level I

## PROCEDURE:

### Step 1) 5 minutes

Start by asking learners if someone can remember what puberty is and its purpose, as discussed in the previous lesson. Take some responses from volunteers and make sure the following is explained, “Puberty is the process of growing up from a child into an adult and includes physical, social, and emotional changes that a young person experiences over a number of years. Everyone goes through puberty so that their body can reproduce later in life, if they choose to.”

Next, explain that often there are a lot of things related to puberty that young people have questions about but are often embarrassed to ask. Explain that there are also a lot of myths about puberty that young people may hear so the next activity will help to make sure they know the correct information.

### Step 2) 25 minutes

Next introduce the myth vs. fact game by stating the following, “Often when young people start to go through puberty, they find a lot of the information about sexuality embarrassing to talk about. Your parents might also be embarrassed to talk about these topics and as a result, young people might hear or read things that aren’t actually true. Without an adult to ask, it can be difficult to know what information is just a myth versus a fact.”

Explain that during the next activity, you will be reading statements and the learners are to decide whether they are a myth, meaning they are not accurate, or whether they are true. Explain that if the learner thinks the statement is a myth, they should wave their hands in the air and if they think the statement is a fact, they should keep their hands by their sides. [**Teacher’s Note:** *If it would better suit your class, you can designate one side of your room as the Myth Side and the other as the Fact Side and have students move to represent their belief about the statement. Alternatively, you can give students cards with "myth" printed on one side and "fact" printed on the other and then students can raise the side of the card that represents their belief about each statement.*] Ask if there are any questions about the directions and if not, proceed by reading the first statement.

Once the students have responded, make sure to share the answer and take time using the points listed under each statement to explain why the statement is a myth or fact. Use as many statements as time allows.

### Step 3) 10 minutes

Next, ask learners the following questions:

- What was it like to play this game?
- What statement(s) that you thought was a fact was actually a myth or a myth actually a fact?
- How might knowing these facts affect your decisions?
- What could someone do who was not sure if something was a myth or a fact regarding puberty and sexuality?



# Lesson Plan – Puberty Part II

## PROCEDURE (CONTINUED):

### Step 4) 5 minutes

Conclude the lesson by telling learners that puberty and growing up is an exciting time that can also be confusing. Explain that every single adult they know has survived puberty and they will too. Close the lesson by asking for three learners to share one thing they are excited about and three learners to share one thing they are anxious about when it comes to puberty. Thank learners for sharing and say that while there is much to be excited about, sometimes puberty can be difficult and there are ways to help yourself get through those tough times. List any common supports or ways to manage that anxiety as appropriate. Use any from this list below:

- Eating a healthy diet
- Exercising regularly
- Getting plenty of sleep
- Keeping a journal to share feelings
- Talking with someone you love about how you're feeling
- Realizing you are not alone, everyone goes through puberty

## KEY MESSAGES OF LESSON:

- 1) Everyone goes through puberty and it can be stressful at times.
- 2) There is lots of misinformation about puberty and it's important to figure out what is a myth or fact.
- 3) There are many adults who can help young people with questions they may have about puberty.

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

- Teachers can ask learners to write down one fact that they learned during the lesson and submit for assessment of learning objectives.

## HOMEWORK WITH FOCUS ON FAMILY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- Distribute copies of the Optional Homework Interview Worksheet to learners and review directions.

## POSSIBLE ADAPTATIONS:

- Large class size—None
- Limited materials/technology—None

Adapted from: *When I'm Grown Grades 5-6, Advocates for Youth, Myth Information Game, Pages 115-117 and You, Your Life, Your Dreams, Family Care International, Adolescence: The Big Change, The Big Challenge, pages 1-44*



# Myth vs. Fact Game – Teacher’s Guide

**1. If you do not exercise the penis through sex, it will stop functioning and decrease in size.**

**MYTH!** Sex is not “exercise” for the penis. Your penis doesn’t need exercise. It will work just fine without any sex at all. Sexual abstinence or “waiting” can never hurt your penis.

**2. A penis increases in size the more you have sex.**

**MYTH!** Your penis size is determined by the traits you inherit from your parents—not anything you do with it.

**3. A small penis cannot satisfy a woman.**

**MYTH!** The size of the penis has little effect on women’s enjoyment of sexual intercourse. This is because the main center of sexual sensation for a woman is the clitoris and the area around the opening of the vagina. The vagina itself does not have many nerves so it doesn’t feel very much.

**4. You need to have sex whenever you get an erection.**

**MYTH!** This is definitely not true, which is a good thing for you. Otherwise, what would you do if you got an erection in class? If you don’t have sex, the erection will just go down on its own. You can’t possibly injure yourself by not having sex when you get an erection.

**5. Accumulated sperm causes backache, madness, headache, impotence and acne.**

**MYTH!** Even though your testicles produce millions of sperm, it is impossible for too much sperm to build up and cause problems. In addition, sperm cannot move around to different parts of your body.

**6. Wet dreams are a sign that you need to have sex.**

**MYTH!** Wet dreams are just one way that your body gets rid of sperm and semen. It is not a sign that you need to have sex.

**7. Putting butter on the nipples or letting insects bite the nipples makes the breasts grow faster.**

**MYTH!** It is hormones that make the breasts grow—nothing else will make any difference.

**8. Girls with dark skin around their nipples have already had sex.**

**MYTH!** Like the color of your skin, the color of the ring around the nipples (the areola) is determined by the genetic traits you inherit from your parents.

**9. Breasts grow big when girls let boys touch them.**

**MYTH!** The size of the breasts is genetically determined. Nothing you do will make them bigger or smaller.



## Myth vs. Fact Game – Teacher’s Guide

**10. Girls with breasts that have drooped have already had sex, or they had an abortion or a baby.**

**MYTH!** Breasts droop because of gravity. If you have big breasts they are more likely to droop because of the weight.

**11. Wearing a bra makes breasts droop.**

**MYTH!** Bras actually help prevent drooping because they support the breasts and prevent the skin and breast tissue from stretching and losing their elasticity.

**12. If a girl misses her period, she is definitely pregnant.**

**MYTH!** When girls first start menstruating, they often have irregular periods and may even skip a month or two at times. However, if a young girl has had sexual intercourse, missing a period can be a sign of pregnancy.

**13. Generally girls begin puberty before boys.**

**FACT!** Most girls begin puberty about one or two years earlier than boys.

**14. Masturbating a lot can cause a boy to run out of sperm.**

**MYTH!** Once a boy starts making sperm during puberty, his testicles never stop. So, even if he masturbates frequently, it is not possible for his body to run out of sperm.

**15. Masturbation causes a person to go crazy.**

**MYTH!** Masturbation is a normal part of sexual expression for most people. It will not cause a person to go crazy or blind. Many people of all ages masturbate, although some don’t because it goes against their values. You’re normal if you do it and you’re normal if you don’t.

**16. Boys need sex more than girls do.**

**MYTH!** Neither boys nor girls need to have sex to be healthy. It’s normal and healthy for boys and girls to have sexual feelings, however it’s important for everyone to think seriously about what they want to do and not do when it comes to acting on those feelings. Sexual intercourse at an early age often leads to confusion, guilt, regret, and sometimes even unplanned pregnancy and STIs, including HIV. For these reasons, it’s best to wait until you’re older to start having sexual intercourse.



# Optional Interview Homework Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Directions:

Conduct a family interview with an adult in your family that you are comfortable talking to. Together, find a quiet spot to talk together and use the following questions to guide your interview.

1) What did it feel like to go through puberty when you were my age?

2) What did you like about growing up into an adult?

3) What was difficult about going through puberty for you?

4) What do you wish you had known about puberty when you were my age?

#5) What advice do you have for kids going through puberty today?



