

5th Grade HGD-Puberty Alternative Opt Out Lessons

Please have your child make a copy of any google docs, complete and share with their teacher or email the completed assignments to your child's health teacher:

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the human growth and development and sexual health lessons, students will be able to:

Physical Health and Hygiene

- Describe the physical, social, and emotional changes that occur during puberty and adolescence, how the timing of puberty and adolescent development varies considerably, and the role of puberty in overall development
- Recognize and respect that all bodies are different
- Explain a variety of health-promoting practices to manage the social, physical, and emotional changes associated with puberty and into adolescence
- Describe health-promoting behaviors during menstruation, including ways to maintain personal hygiene, cope with emotional changes, manage pain and identify when help or support is needed
- Locate resources from home, school, and community that provide medically accurate sources of information about human sexual and reproductive anatomy, puberty, and personal hygiene.
- Explain how gender identity and sexual orientation can vary in each individual.
- Explain the relationship between sexual intercourse and human reproduction, the range of ways pregnancy can occur, and valid and reliable resources for information or support related to these topics.
- Identify parents, guardians, or other trusted adults (e.g., counselors and other health care professionals) whom students can ask questions about puberty and adolescent health issues (including abuse and neglect).

Link to Slides for Lesson I & II: [Parent Copy 5th Grade HGD-Puberty Alternative Lessons Slides](#)

Below are the full alternative lesson plans with instructions and assignments. The slides can be used as a guide in completing the lessons below.

Lesson I:

I. Review with the student feelings people sometimes have when discussing growing up and puberty. In this lesson students have the opportunity to learn about the basic physical, emotional, social and cognitive(thinking/thoughts) changes that happen during puberty.

Discuss some of the feelings young people and adults feel when discussing the changes of puberty together)

- **Embarrassment**
 - Explore why students might find this topic difficult to discuss
 - Discuss why parents or other trusted adults might also feel embarrassment. Adults can feel embarrassed too (think children are too young, no one ever talked to them, it is a private topic, not used to discussing it or think they should have all the answers).
- **Knowing/Not Knowing**
 - Tell students that you're going to discuss the changes that happen during the stage of puberty and whether they know or don't know this information is okay.

- **Asking questions**

- Explore why asking friends isn't the best option

- **To know about each other**

- Discuss respect for each other and of the topic.
- We spend a lot of our lives relating to people of different genders (fathers, brothers, sons, mothers, sisters, daughters). If we learn about everyone and their concerns, perhaps we can understand them better and can improve our relationships with them.
- This is a good opportunity to understand and communicate in a respectful way with people whose gender is different from yours.
- Puberty is a time of change that can be both exciting and frightening.

II. Review the many body systems on slide 3. Emphasize that the students might feel shy, awkward or embarrassed when discussing any of these body systems however it is important for them to understand how their bodies work, particularly when their bodies are getting ready to go through some big changes.

III. Gender Inclusive language Slide 4- When a baby is born one of the first things people ask is, "Is it a boy or is it a girl?"

Review Slide 9 to

- Discuss gender assigned at birth based on the reproductive biology a person is born with
- People are assigned a gender at birth based on their reproductive anatomy. Gender assigned at birth is independent of gender identity. Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as female, male, both or neither, regardless of their biological sex assigned at birth.
- Not everyone in their heads and their hearts identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth
- Explain language people use
- Most important that regardless how a person identifies we need to be kind and respectful

IV. Show Slide 5 of the reproductive systems- Discuss and normalize that like the other body systems discussed the reproductive system is another body system.

V. Review the ages & stages of development and what happens during each stage of Development (Slides 6-8)

VI. Review the Social, Emotional & Physical Changes of Puberty- review the changes of puberty and emphasize the importance of all of these changes. (Slide 9)

- **Social Changes of Puberty**

- **Emotional Changes of Puberty**

- **Physical Changes of Puberty**

An important point to discuss: The developing brain. The brain doesn't become a fully developed adult brain until 24-27 yrs of age. Even though the body grows into an adult body during puberty a person doesn't have to worry about making adult decisions until they are much older.

VII. Puberty - The emotional rollercoaster (slide 10)

- It is common for students going through puberty to feel like they're on an "emotional rollercoaster", happy, positive and confident one minute, sad/angry, withdrawn or nervous the next minute. Students might also identify feelings of confusion, loneliness or excitement.
- Encourage students to seek out credible information and to talk to a trusted adult if they continue to feel sad or angry, as their friends may not have the most helpful information.
- Some types of support include: social support (family, friends); school supports (counselors, teachers); and community support (school nurses, health care providers, doctors, faith leaders, kids help phone, etc.)

VIII. What is Puberty and Where puberty begins (Slides 11-13)

- Discuss slide 11- People have many different feelings when discussing Puberty. Many young people often have many questions, feel scared and excited at the same time about growing up and in understanding how bodies work. Prepare students to review and discuss the terminology for the reproductive body systems and their functions. We are talking about it so that no one feels embarrassed or scared. These are normal changes and a part of our body systems.
- Review the slides and discuss
 - What exactly is puberty? What is meant by the term puberty?
 - How does it all happen?
 - Puberty begins in the brain- explain where and what happens
 - Hormones travel in the bloodstream, to different parts of the body
 - People who have a vulva: hormones target glands called ovaries
 - People who have a penis: hormones target glands called testicles
 - Both of these glands are then signaled by these hormones to start making their own hormones
 - The ovaries start making hormones, one of which is called estrogen
 - The testicles start making a hormone called testosterone
 - These hormones then travel in the bloodstream and tell other parts of the body to start changing. They cause changes allowing children's bodies to grow into adult bodies
 - Define what hormones are and how they work to start puberty
 - When does puberty happen? Discuss that it's different for each individual and age range.

IX. Review the reproductive systems of a person with a vulva and a person with a penis (Slides 16-18)

Print out the [2025-2026 5th Grade HGD Health Workbook Opt Out](#) and have the student complete by filling in the names of the body systems. Point out each organ and give a brief explanation of its function. Explain that since most of the structures are inside the body, it can be hard to remember what they are. This includes the internal and external part of the systems including correct terms and their function. Students often don't know how many openings there are in this system. (ie: Note for a person with a vulva there are three openings into the body: the urethral opening, the vaginal opening and the anus.)

X. Review and Answer any questions your child has.

Lesson II

- I. Review the path of the sperm.
- II. Review the path of the egg. Explain what ovulation is

- III. Explain that there are different ways the egg and the sperm can meet and fertilization can happen.
 - A. Vaginal intercourse is one way-If the erect penis is placed in the vagina and sperm are ejaculated, the sperm can travel into the uterus and up into the fallopian tubes. If there is an egg in the fallopian tube, one of the sperm can fertilize it.
 - B. In vitro fertilization (IVF)- an egg and sperm are taken from a person's body and combined outside of the body. The fertilized egg(s) are then placed back into the person's uterus where the egg attaches to the uterine wall and grows into a baby.
 - C. Artificial insemination- the sperm is taken from a person's body and a doctor inserts it into a person's uterus
 - D. Explain implantation

- IV. Getting a period- It's important to discuss what a period is and what products are used for all students. Please see the corresponding slides to use when discussing this. (Slides 30-39)
 - A. Every month, the uterus builds up its lining with blood to prepare to nurture a fertilized egg. If the egg is not fertilized, the egg and the uterine lining are shed through the vagina and vaginal opening. This material is referred to as "menstruation".
 - B. Menstruation is when the lining of the uterus sheds and comes out of the body through the vagina. Some people call this "a period." Someone will usually get their period once a month at roughly the same time every month, but it may take 12-18 months after the first period before it becomes regular. It is common and normal for teens to have irregular periods.
 - C. People can use different types of products to catch their menstrual blood. These include pads, tampons, and menstrual cups. It is recommended to avoid scented products because they can cause irritation. The student should talk with a parent/guardian or trusted adult to figure out what products to use.
 - D. About half of all people who menstruate get period cramps. Using a heating pad or hot water bottle on the abdomen can help to relieve discomfort. Staying hydrated, doing mild exercise, eating healthy foods, and stretching can also help with cramps. If menstrual cramps are severe someone should talk with a parent/adult caregiver to discuss if over the counter pain medication would help or talk to a healthcare provider.
 - E. The menstrual cycle begins on the first day of menstruation/period. During someone's period, the lining of the uterus (endometrium), which consists of blood and tissue, "sheds." A period can last 4-7 days.

- V. Mystery Box (in class we show different hygiene products and period products. We suggest that you go to a store together and review the products you prefer your child use, including period products. If your child will be menstruating it can be helpful to select the products and let them practice using them,)
 - A. Review the importance of hygiene, different hygiene products and what they do.
 - B. Hygiene products for growing students: soap, shampoo, deodorant, sanitary napkins and tampons.
 - C. Explain how each product helps with overall hygiene and describe how period products are used. Included: tampons, Period pads-disposable and reusable, period pants, menstrual cups.
 - D. This can be an exciting time for young people. Our goal is to minimize their fears and worries about menstruating. Finding ways to celebrate these changes can be important.
 - E. Point out that the students will need to work with a parent/guardian or family member

to decide which products are best for them.

- VI. Emphasize that there is no need to rush to grow up. That time will come soon enough. Enjoy being a child while you can.
- VII. Have your child print or make a copy of the Advice Corner worksheet, complete it and **submit** it to their health teacher. Have them discuss their answers with you. [ADVICE Corner Activity Worksheet- 5th Grade HGD](#)
- VIII. Have your child print or make a copy of the review worksheet, complete it and **submit** it to their health teacher click on the link: [5th grade HGD-Puberty Review Worksheet](#)