

Discussion Questions

How much have you changed physically in the last year?

Do you ever experience mood swings?

STAGES OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Activities

1. Compile a list of questions about puberty. Invite the school nurse and counselor to come and speak to the class and have them answer questions from the class, anonymously.



2. In groups, discuss what you think are the biggest concerns for kids going through puberty and then share them with the other groups. As the concerns are read, students should offer suggestions and advice for dealing with the concerns.

3. Divide students into small groups by gender (boys and girls). Using the information in the article, make a pamphlet that is designed specifically for your gender that talks about the changes that accompany puberty and helpful ways to deal with these changes.



4. Mood swings are common during puberty. What are your most common moods? How

do you get out of a bad mood? Write your thoughts in your journal.

Home Connection With your parents or a trusted adult, discuss the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Talk about your concerns and problems and discuss possible solutions. Also, talk with your parents about any new products you might need (deodorant, facial cleanser, etc.) to help with these changes.

There are many stages in life including birth, childhood, puberty and adolescence, adulthood, and eventually death. These stages all have different physical and emotional changes that occur. One stage that causes the most dramatic emotional and physical changes is puberty. Simply put, puberty is when a child's body begins to change into an adult body.

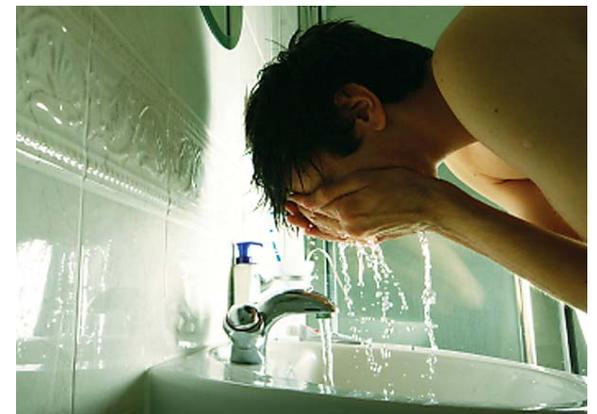


The start of puberty is different for everyone. Girls will usually begin to enter puberty between the ages of 8 and 13, while boys begin later between the ages of 10 and 15. It is important not to compare your body to others; everyone is different and puberty can start at many different times.



Both boys and girls go through some of the same changes, such as growing taller, growing hair under their arms and genital areas, and getting pimples or breakouts on their face, chest, and/or back. Girls will start their menstrual cycle, and they will begin to develop breasts. Girls typically put on a little weight and become curvier. Boys will begin to grow hair on their faces, their voices will crack and become deeper, and they will develop more muscle mass.

During puberty, adolescents should try to eat a healthy, balanced diet and get plenty of exercise and sleep. Adolescents should also shower and change undergarments daily. Using deodorant and washing your face with mild soap are also important hygiene practices.



Emotional changes are very common during this stage of life. Because of hormonal changes and rapid drops and increases of certain hormones, it is very common for adolescents going through puberty to have mood swings. Testosterone in boys and estrogen in girls are the hormones that are responsible for many of the changes during puberty. Mood swings are usually short in duration. However, if an adolescent develops signs of depression, it is important to seek support and help from trusted adults.