

Activity: 5-6.11.1

Key Messages

- Puberty can present challenging or embarrassing situations for young people so it is important to be sensitive to how others may feel.
- It is very important to have a network of trusted friends and adults you can go to for support.

Activity Details

Victorian Curriculum

Health & PE Examine the influence of emotional responses on behaviour, relationships and health and wellbeing
VCHPEP110

Capabilities VCCCTM031, VCECD012

Time 30 minutes

Levels 5 & 6

Equipment

- a set of *Dear teen doctor* cards
- paper and pens

Dear teen doctor

Purpose

To revise and review facts relating to puberty.

To explore problem solving strategies.

To establish a more comfortable environment in which to talk about puberty.

To provide a forum in which students can showcase their learning.

Teaching notes

This activity gives students the opportunity to share their knowledge. It acknowledges the important interplay between the physical changes of puberty, changing social relationships and emotions.

Procedure

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students.
2. Distribute a *Dear teen doctor* card to each group.
3. Allow sufficient time for the students to read and discuss the scenario on their card. Each group then writes a response to the scenario providing practical suggestions to reply to the person. This response could be written in the form of a letter.
4. Once this has been done, each group should choose two representatives; one to read the scenario and one to read the written response back to the class. Share and discuss each as a whole class.
5. This lesson could be extended by discussing where people can go to have other questions or concerns addressed, such as websites, the school nurse, parents etc. Display the written letter responses in the classroom.

Discussion

A class discussion could include the following questions:

- How would the person in your scenario be feeling?
- What issues are they faced with?
- Do you think these are common issues?
- Where else could the young person go for help or support?



Dear teen doctor

I have a big problem. I'm ten years old and, as far as I know, I'm the only one in my class who's started having periods.

I'm going to school camp soon and I'm scared I'll get my period when we're away. Can you go swimming when you have your period? Also, I don't know how a tampon works and how often I have to change it.

HELP!!!

Thanks
Early starter



Dear teen doctor

Over the Christmas holidays, I developed a big problem, actually two big problems. My boobs. I don't know where they came from, but it's like I woke up one morning and there they were. Don't get me wrong, I know it's part of growing up and being a woman, blah, blah, blah, but do I have to be the only girl in grade five who's wearing a bra?

I tried on my summer uniform and they really stand out. It gets worse. When school goes back in a few weeks, we'll be having our swimming sports day. Over the holidays I've been wearing a big t-shirt over my bathers, but they won't let you do that at school.

Everyone will stare and tease me. What can I do?

Signed
Big Boobs



Dear teen doctor

I just found out my mum's pregnant with twins. How did this happen? Will they look the same? What are Siamese twins? Is there a chance she could have Siamese twins? I need some answers because I'm a bit worried about her.

And what are the odds of me having to change nappies?!!!

Thanks
Future babysitter



Dear teen doctor

I'm a ten year old girl. I think I'm seriously sick. I've just found a lump on the left side of my chest, under the nipple. It's a bit sore as well

How can I tell my mother that I've got breast cancer? I can't sleep at night.

Signed
Worried sick



Dear teen doctor

I'm a twelve year old girl. My family comes from a country where girls aren't allowed to do anything much at all. I've made some good friends at my new school and they've started inviting me out to the movies and to their houses. I'm never allowed to go and my dad makes a big fuss.

He says, 'We don't know these people' or, 'Does that family have any sons?' If they do, he won't let me go.

It's ruining my life.

What can I do or say to my dad before my friends give up on me?

Please help!

Signed
Fed up!



Dear teen doctor

I'm a twelve year old boy. My problem is that I'm too embarrassed to use the changing rooms with all the other kids when we have swimming lessons. My family is Jewish and I've been circumcised. My penis looks a bit different from the other boys and I'm worried they'll laugh at me.

Can you think of anything I can do or say that might help me?

Yours gratefully
Embarrassed



Dear teen doctor

I'm in grade five at school. My friends all seem to know about sex and how babies are made. I think I know, but I'm not sure. I don't want to look stupid when we do sex ed next term.

I can't ask my parents, so can you tell me where I can find this stuff out? I just don't want to look like a complete idiot in front of my friends.

Please help
Clueless



Dear teen doctor

I need your help! Some of my friends have been mucking around on the computer and sending pictures to each other. The pictures are all about sex and show naked women and men. This stuff makes me feel really weird and I don't feel right looking at it. I'm worried that if I tell them to stop, they'll think I'm really lame.

How can I talk about it with my friends?
Do all young people want to look at this stuff?

Please help me!
Signed
Shocked



Dear teen doctor

I was at a friend's house the other day. He said he had some stuff on his computer he wanted me to see, that his older cousin had shown him. It was a full-on website with naked people doing gross stuff and it made me feel sick. He thought it was really cool, so I was too scared to say I didn't want to look at it.

I'm going to his house for a sleepover next week and I'm worried he'll want to look at that stuff again.

What do I do?

Signed
Grossed out



Dear teen doctor

I've been having some really weird dreams lately, kind of like sex dreams. When I wake up, there's this sticky stuff in my pyjamas. I've heard some of the kids talking at school and they say boys have a thing called a wet dream. Is this what's happening to me?

How can I stop them?
What if my mum finds out when she does my washing?

Signed
Weird dreamer



Dear teen doctor

My dad's gay. I grew up knowing this and I'm okay with it. The problem is that some of the boys in my class always make jokes about gay people. They say everything's 'gay' if they don't like it or think it's stupid and say a person's gay if they want to pick on them. I feel bad for the kids being teased, but I pretend to laugh when they make jokes because I don't want them to have a go at me.

I'm worried they could find out about my dad.
I feel like I'm being mean to my dad for not stepping in to stop these bullies.

Please help
Good guy



Dear teen doctor

My cousin started getting her period over the holidays. She said it was awful and told me how it hurts and that there's lots of blood. Now I'm scared about getting mine.

How do I stop it from happening?
What am I going to do if I get it at school?
Can people tell when you're having your period?

I was fine about getting it until my cousin freaked me out.

Help!
Puberty girl



Dear teen doctor

I used to think I was a normal grade six girl, but now I'm not so sure. At night, in bed, I've been touching myself 'down there'. I woke up after a dream one night. I think it was a sex dream and there was a hot, tingly feeling between my legs. I just wanted to touch myself there, so I did. It felt so nice that the next night, I did it without having the dream first.

Is this normal? Do other girls do the same thing?

Signed
Naughty or Nice?



Dear teen doctor

I'm a twelve year old guy and I get that I'm going to go through puberty, but I always thought it would happen when I was in high school. I have a full-on mass of pubic hair and I'm even starting to get dark hair on my top lip.

None of my mates have any hair. It's really embarrassing when we have to get changed for footy training.

I don't want to be old in grade six.

HELP ME!!!
Signed
Freaked out