

**Curriculum on Health and Wellness of  
School Going Adolescents**

Under the Aegis of School Health Programme of

**Ayushman Bharat**

**Theme 1: Growing up Healthy  
(SECONDARY & SENIOR SECONDARY)**

## Theme: Growing up Healthy

### SECONDARY AND SENIOR SECONDARY GRADES

Health refers to a state of physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. However, growing up healthy is a conscious effort towards making health a priority among individuals especially belonging to the age group of adolescence which is a phase of tremendous possibilities and potential. The activities for upper primary prepare learners to get comfortable with the physical, physiological, psychological and emotional changes that take place during adolescence. This module is a step forward. It focuses on building a positive self-concept and critical thinking to challenge common stigmas and stereotypes that learners may counter at this age. It goes beyond this and attempts to promote an attitude of sensitivity towards peers about concerns associated with change in bodies. Finally, it furthers knowledge and skills to access youth friendly services while continuously strengthening their life skills that facilitate their well-being!

Learning Outcomes	No	Title of the Activity	Learning Outcomes- Activity	Time	Transaction Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Displays comfort with changes during adolescence</li> <li>Demonstrates acceptance of self</li> <li>Challenges myths and misconceptions related to adolescence</li> <li>Practices positive behaviours that counter stigmas &amp; stereotypes related to adolescence</li> <li>Displays sensitivity</li> </ul>	1.	The Beauty that Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizes that the qualities which matter most in life are beyond physical appearance</li> <li>Expresses qualities and attributes, beyond physical appearance that are admirable.</li> </ul>	25 mins	Story-telling, self-reflection
	2.	Beautiful- As I See Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes effects of negative body image on a person</li> <li>Recognizes and expresses positive qualities in self</li> </ul>	40 mins	Case studies, discussion, self-reflection and sharing
	3.	Myths & Taboos associated with physical changes during adolescence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debates myths &amp; social taboos associated with physical changes during adolescence</li> </ul>	45 mins	Debate
	4.	Campaign on Changes during Adolescence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applies understanding of changes during adolescence and celebrating</li> </ul>	60 mins	Campaign in School

<b>towards variations in developmental milestones among peers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accesses youth friendly</b></li> <li>• <b>services and supports others</b></li> </ul>			adolescence using creative mediums		
	5.	Skills to counter stigmas and stereotypes around adolescence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays sensitivity towards variations in developmental milestones among peers</li> <li>• Demonstrates how to counter stigmas &amp; stereotypes related to adolescence</li> <li>• Describes youth friendly services that can support adolescents through the growing up process</li> </ul>	60 mins	Situational Role Plays

## ACTIVITY 1

### Title: **The Beauty that Matters**

#### Learning Outcomes

The learner

- Recognizes that the qualities which matter most in life are beyond physical appearance
- Recognizes and expresses qualities and attributes, beyond physical appearance that are admirable.

#### Time Required

25 mins

#### Life skills enhanced

Self-Awareness, Creative Thinking, Decision Making , Critical Thinking

#### Resources Required

- Paper and pen

#### Guidance for the facilitators

- Adolescents often tend to focus a lot on physical appearance and ignore unique aspects of their personality often resulting in a poor sense of self-worth.
- While it is OK to appreciate aspects of physical appearance the focus of this activity is to get learners to look beyond and recognize and take pride in the range of personal attributes or qualities that they possess.

#### Transacting the activity

- Read the following story:

There was a man who made a living selling balloons at a fair. He had all colours of balloons, including red, yellow, blue, and green. Whenever business was slow, he would release a helium-filled balloon into the air and when the children saw it go up, they all wanted to buy one. They would come up to him, buy a balloon, and his sales would go up again. He continued this process all day. One day, he felt someone tugging at his jacket. He turned around and saw a little boy who asked, "If you release a black balloon, would that also fly?" Moved by the boy's concern, the man replied with empathy, "Son, it is not the colour of the balloon; it is what is inside, that makes it go up."

- Generate a discussion around the story by asking the following questions:
  - What is this story trying to tell us?
  - How does this story relate to our real life?
  - If we compare the balloons to human beings, what qualities are there within us that make us distinct from each other?
- Ask the learners to think of a person in their life or someone they have interacted with who they admire. Ask them to think of the quality/qualities they admire about this person and write them down on a piece of paper.

- Ask a few learners to share one-by-one who they admire and the qualities or attributes they admire about them. Write the qualities they mention on the board.
- Summarise the discussion by highlighting the different attributes or qualities that make a person beautiful; thus, when we think of people we look up to, their appearance is not the primary factor that influences us.

### **Reflection Questions**

- What qualities makes us admirable and beautiful?

### **Take Home Messages**

- Sometimes people tend to admire only physical appearance – it is important to recognize qualities that make people special that go beyond physical appearance.
- A person's beauty is based on qualities that includes their attitudes, their behaviour, how they treat others, talents and character.

### **Suggested Activity**

- Write about the attributes and qualities that you value the most in a person and which you would like to imbibe in yourself.

## ACTIVITY 2

### Title: Beautiful- As I See Myself

#### Learning Outcomes

The learner

- Describes effects of negative body image on a person
- Recognizes and expresses positive qualities in self

#### Life skills enhanced

Self-Awareness, Managing Emotions, Critical Thinking, Interpersonal Skills & Effective Communication

#### Time Required

40 mins

#### Resources required

Pen and paper, copies of case studies and comics

#### Guidance for the facilitators

- Just like the previous activity, the purpose of this activity is to get learners to think about themselves not solely based on their appearance but to recognize and learn to appreciate their personal attributes or qualities.
- Do not undermine physical attributes but try to get the students to focus on non-physical aspects of personality.
- When you ask the learners to complete the sentence: 'I am beautiful because.....', some learners will mention their non-physical attributes like sincerity, honesty, confidence etc. Some learners will mention their physical attributes like their height, their eyes etc. This is fine. The purpose is for learners to appreciate themselves.

#### Transacting the activity

- Recap - Ask the learners if they remember the story of the balloons from the last activity. Ask them to share the key learning from the story? Ask them to name the qualities that make a person beautiful.
- Ask learners if they were able to identify the qualities they value most and would like to have? Ask a few learners to share their reflections.
- Divide learners into groups of 5-6 and give each group a copy of one case study or one comic along with the questions.
- Ask the learners to nominate one reporter from their group.
- Give instructions for group work:
  - One learner in their group can read the case study aloud for all to listen.
  - The learner will then ask the questions below it one by one and everyone will share their thoughts on the questions.
  - If they feel differently they should debate and try to build consensus on their final answer as a group. If there are clearly different viewpoints, these should be shared.

- One learner will play the role of the reporter and will be responsible for noting down responses of the group for each question. This will be presented before the larger group.
- Give each group 10 minutes for the group discussion. Meanwhile, go around the groups and help people discuss the case study.
- Ask one of the groups to read out their case study and share their responses for the questions.
- Ask other groups with the same case or comic to add their responses.
- After the presentations, acknowledge salient points that the groups brought up.
- Re-emphasize the fact that it is normal to worry about one's appearance, but we also have to be conscious of stereotypes about looks that we have created in our minds.
- Highlight the stereotypes that are depicted in each case study

### **Case Study 1. I am Happy with my complexion**

Shalini and her friends in class 8 were preparing for the school's annual function. All of them were very excited. Shalini was taking part in the classical dance, while her classmates Anita and Farah were in the play. One day Anita said mockingly to Shalini, "You are so dark. We will need additional light to be able to see you on stage." Shalini made no reply to her. Farah felt bad for Shalini and said, "You dance so well. Why don't you use a fairness cream, to get a fair complexion? Can you imagine how nice you will look on the stage if you had a lighter complexion?"

Shalini smiled and said, "Thank you, Farah. I appreciate your concern, but I am happy with my complexion as it is. My teacher and I are working hard on my dance practice and are confident that our efforts and your good wishes will lead to a good performance."

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. What do you think of Anita's remark about Shalini?
2. What do you think of Farah's remark? Explain your answer.
3. What do you think of Shalini's response? How does she see herself? Give reasons for your answer.
4. If you were in Shalini's place, what would you have done and why?

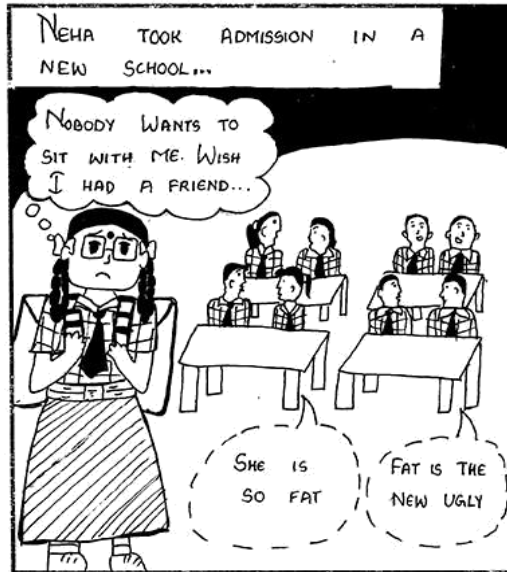
### **Case Study 2. Krishnan and the Magic Drug**

Krishnan is in Class 7. He is short and slim, the shortest boy in his class. Although he likes to play football, he is never selected for his school team. He is quite swift and skilful, but the coach always rejects him saying that he will get pushed around by the other players, who are much bigger than him. One day, on the roadside, Krishnan sees an advertisement outside the tent of a travelling medicine-man. It shows a thin, weak looking boy in one picture and a muscular glowing man in another. The advertisement claims that a magic drug can bring about this transformation. Krishnan wants to try this drug but is scared.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think Krishnan looks different from the other boys in his class?
2. Can Krishnan become a good football player?
3. What do you think of the coaches' behaviour?
4. What do you think about the drug that is being advertised? Should he take it?
5. If you were in Krishnan's place, what would you do?

# Each one is Unique



M.SRINIDHI  
VIII B  
K.V.A.F.S.  
BEGUMPET

## Discussion Questions

1. What is bothering Neha in the new school?
2. What message is the comic trying to give?
3. If you were in the characters place what would you do?
4. Do you agree with the advice her friend gives her? Give reasons for your answer.



- After all 4 presentations state key aspects that came up in the presentations

Summarise by highlighting the following:

- It is normal for a person to think about their appearance at this age. There is nothing wrong in making efforts to improve our appearance, such as trying a new hairstyle, eating healthy food, doing exercises.
- Feeling negatively about own body or making someone feel negatively about their body can have adverse effects on individuals.
- A negative image of oneself can make one do things that can harm his/her body and mind, such as excessive dieting, exercising, trying beauty products that may be harmful.
- Acceptance of our body and recognition of our unique qualities will build our confidence and help us move ahead in life.
- Each of us is unique. We all have strengths and areas that may need to be improved but improvement can only be made when we accept who we are.
- Write on the board “I am beautiful because....” Ask each one of them to complete the sentence in their notepad. If required, clarify that they should complete the sentence by mentioning their attributes which they are proud of. Give them 5 minutes to write.
- Ask all learners to share their responses one at a time. Ask everyone how they are feeling after saying these sentences?

### **Reflection questions**

- How can a negative image on one’s body harm a person?
- Why is it important to identify our positive qualities?
- How can we boost our own self- confidence?
- How can we build self-confidence of our peers?

### **Take home messages**

- Not accepting aspects of one’s body that cannot change and letting it affect one’s self-confidence can lead to distress, unhappiness and harmful behaviour
- Positive thoughts about oneself and a greater focus on positive qualities will help in boosting self-confidence and enable us in living a fulfilling life.

### **Suggested activities**

- Identify and write your top three positive qualities in your note book. At the end of every day think of how you used these qualities during the day and note it down. Reflect on any new qualities that you discovered in yourself and add them to the list in your note book. Share these with a friend at the end of the week.

## ACTIVITY 3

**Title:** Myths & Taboos associated with physical changes during adolescence

### Learning Outcomes

The Learner

- Debates myths and social taboos associated with physical changes during adolescence

### Time

45Mins

### Life skills enhanced

Self-Awareness, Critical Thinking, Interpersonal Relationships & Effective Communication, Problem Solving, Managing Emotions

**Resources Required:** paper, pencil/pen, board, chalk/marker

### Guidance for the facilitators

- The purpose of this activity is to clarify myths pertaining to physical changes during adolescence.
- This activity should only be done after conducting activity 2, 3 and 4 in upper primary module under the topic “Growing Up Healthy”.
- Facilitate active discussions among the learners - enable learners to express their opinions openly yet do not allow unnecessary arguments.
- In case the size of class is very large or there is limited space for movement, you could ask 6-8 learners to participate in first few sentences and then change the group.
- Try to cover all 8 statements but if time does not permit you can choose to omit some.
- Be prepared by reading up information provided in the modules for upper primary.

### Transacting the activity

- Recap: Ask learners if they managed to identify their top three positive attributes and how they have used the. Ask a few learners to share their experience.
- Next, ask learners, why do we need to focus on our positive traits? There are certain physical attributes that cannot change - What happens when we do not accept it?
- Explain that how we view our bodies is influenced by notions / misconceptions that we harbour about our bodies.
- Tell learners that in this activity we will assess our own knowledge on puberty related changes.
- Put up a chart with ‘True’ and ‘False’ written on two sides of the room or simply write them on both corners of blackboard.
- Explain that you are going to read out statements one by one. Those who agree with the statement walk towards the wall with ‘True’ paper and those who disagree, walk towards ‘False’.
- Explain that:
  - For each round, they first need to come at the centre of the circle and then choose their side and move
  - Do not follow your friends while choosing sides but think independently
  - After taking sides each learner has to provide reasons for their choice
  - This is a debate, so you can confront people on the opposite side and challenge their logic

- Each person must be given a chance to share his/ her opinion. Avoid trying to dominate the discussion and be mindful of not repeating the same point expressed by another.
- After the learners choose their place after each sentence is read, allow them not more than 5 minutes to discuss and argue their point of views. At the end of 5 minutes reveal the answer and move to the next statement.
- In case the size of class is very large or there is limited space for movement, you could ask only 6-8 learners to play and then invite another set of 6-8 learners after finishing a few sentences such that everyone gets a chance to participate.
- Cover as many sentences as possible depending on how much time you have.

No.	Belief Statement	True/False	Explanation
1	All boys must have beard to become a man.	False	Growth of body or facial hair depend on our genes and hormones and there is no set pattern in which they may appear. This differs from person to person and some men may not develop a lot of body hair while others may have a dense growth. This has no connection with being a 'man'.
2	It is not right to seek information about sexual and reproductive organs at this age.	False	During adolescence rapid changes take place in bodies which includes changes in our reproductive organs. It is absolutely right to seek information from the right source (name a few authentic sources).
3	Nightfall or wet dreams in adolescent boys is a normal process and not a medical problem.	True	During adolescence boys may experience discharge of white fluid from penis in their sleep. This is normal. Although many boys experience it, not necessary that all boys should experience it. Nocturnal emission is not a problem that requires treatment. It is a regular bodily process while growing up, it doesn't harm the body.
4	One drop of semen is made of 100 drops of blood	False	Semen is not made of blood. This is a common myth and has no scientific basis.
5	Girls can start menstruating anywhere from 9 to 16 years of age.	True	Menstruation usually begins in girls between the ages of 9-16 and stops (menopause) around 45-55 years. The onset differs from one girl to another. If a girl does not begin her periods until the age of 16, it may be advisable to consult a qualified doctor.
6	Women are responsible for determining sex of the baby.	False	The determination of sex of baby is dependent on male's sperm. However, men cannot control or decide sex of the baby through their sperm. Nature determines sex of the baby and women should not be held responsible for it.
7	An adolescent girl's body may not be fully prepared to bear and nurture a child even though she may have started menstruating	True	While Menstruation is a sign that a "girl can reproduce, it does not mean that her body is fully prepared to bear a child.  It is after 20 years of age that a girl may be better prepared to become a mother mentally and physically.

No.	Belief Statement	True/False	Explanation
			If a girl gets pregnant when she is not prepared for child birth it can have adverse effect on both the mother and the baby.
8	A menstruating girl should not enter kitchen	False	This is a common myth and many people believe that menstrual blood is dirty and so a menstruating woman can pollute food. But there is no scientific basis of this belief. A girl can go wherever she likes during her periods.

### Reflection questions

- Is it correct to hold the mother responsible for sex of the baby? Explain with reason.
- Why is menstrual blood not dirty?
- Is it important to visit a doctor if a boy experiences semen discharge in adolescence? Explain with reason.
- Should a girl visit doctor if she does not start menstruating when she is 14 years old? Explain the reason.

### Take home messages

- Social taboos often make it difficult to get correct information about reproductive health matters and lead to a lot of misconceptions.
- It is a healthy practice to seek correct information about our bodies.
- It is important to challenge myths and misconceptions about puberty and educate our peers too.

### Suggested activities

- List all the misconceptions and myths associated with puberty that you have ever heard. Bring them back and share your list with your peers.

## Activity 4

### Title: Campaign on Changes during Adolescence

#### Learning Outcomes

##### The Learner

- Applies their understanding of changes during adolescence and celebrating adolescence using creative mediums

#### Time

60 mins

#### Life skills enhanced

Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Self -Awareness, Decision-Making, Interpersonal Skills and Effective Communication

#### Resources Required

Paper, pencil, coloured pens, scale, chart papers, etc.

#### Guidance for the facilitators

- In this activity, learners have to organize a campaign on “Celebrating the age of adolescence” It builds on information, perspectives and skills that they gained in upper primary module on “Growing up healthy” where the focus had been on providing knowledge and creating comfort around changes experienced during this period.
- This activity can be transacted only if learners have attended activities of the upper primary module on growing up healthy.
- Your role is very critical, and it is necessary to be prepared by getting familiar with the content that was covered under the module “Growing Up Healthy” for Upper Primary. A fact sheet has also been provided below the activity for your reference.
- Decide the duration of the campaign with the concerned authorities in school and get permission to use assembly time, school space etc. This can be a day, 2-3 days or week-long campaign with multiple activities during assembly, lunch break, exhibition in gallery etc.
- Consider involving the Adolescent Health Counsellor or Medical Officer in the campaign?

#### Transacting the activity

- Tell learners that before we begin to gain new information and skills in this module, we must learn to apply what we have learned already.
- Explain that we will begin by organizing an exciting campaign in the school on adolescence: what it means to us, what are the issues young people face in this age, what helps in dealing with issues.
- Many of these themes have been discussed in upper primary classes so let us recall them first.
- Recap - Ask learners following questions for recall:
  - What are some of the unique traits of adolescence? (Refer to the fact sheet)
  - What can be the benefits and/ or risks of the following traits of adolescence:
    - Being conscious of how we look and behave
    - Enthusiasm to experiment and prove oneself
    - Need for independence and autonomy
    - Peer Pressure

- What physical changes do girls go through? (Refer to the fact sheet)
- What physical changes do boys go through?
- Why is it important for adolescents to have correct knowledge about these physical changes?
- Do adolescents tend to compare their physical changes (like increase in height, facial hair amongst boys, beginning of menstruation amongst girls) with their peers? Is it rational to make comparison? Give reasons.
- How can we support each other in getting comfortable with all the changes during adolescence and enjoying this unique phase of life?
- Ask learners if they would like to share their own understanding and experiences of this age with other students in their school? (Generate excitement about the campaign!)
- Introduce the campaign to learners:
- - The Campaign on Celebrating Adolescence will happen next week. This can be a day filled with different activities or two-three days with a few activities each day.
  - The purpose of the campaign is to spread awareness about adolescence: The changes people experience, the traits people develop, the issues they face and how they learn to cope with these changes.
  - Learners will work in groups, use different mediums like Street Play; Posters, Songs or Poems, Rally, Puppet Show, Distributing Pamphlets, collage, newsletter, short stories etc. They can be as creative as they like.
  - Each creation should try to spread positivity and assurance rather than inducing anxiety, stress or fear
  - The content in material should have a scientific basis rather than being based on unscientific social or religious beliefs
  - Each group can use one or more mediums to give out important messages in attractive ways so as to catch people's attention.
- Show them some comics from previous activities to give them a sense of what they can make.
- Write five themes below on board and explain that they can choose one of the themes and the content around these needs to be built on personal experiences and observations of people in the group.
- Name one theme at a time ask people who wish to work on it to get up and stand together. Repeat this till all learners have chosen their themes. By end of this, there should be five groups for five themes.
  - Positive and negative impact of traits of adolescence like consciousness of appearance, need to prove oneself, seeking thrill, feeling attraction towards someone else etc.
  - Physical changes amongst girls (height, pimples, menstruation, breast development etc.) and concerns related to these changes
  - Physical changes amongst boys (like change in voice, beard, height etc) and concerns related to these changes
  - Peer pressure and Peer support
  - Relationships between adolescents and their parents: What have we learned about what helps and what doesn't help
- Groups can also be made based on mediums (poster, dance, story, theatre etc.) instead of themes and then ask the groups to select any of the five themes.
- While making groups in the class, do not worry if number of learners in each group is not equal or if only two mediums or themes are selected by learners. The important thing for them is to be

able to express their ideas and experiences on themes associated with growing up healthy and work on it through a medium of their choice.

- Next, tell learners to sit with their groups and ask them to discuss the following aspects to build their campaign and write them on chart/ papers. Give 30 minutes to work on their campaigns.
- After 30 minutes, give each group 3-4 minutes to present their campaign ideas.
  - Who is the target audience? Who needs to get the message?
  - What information will the learners convey through their creations?
  - How will they convey the message or information?
  - Which mediums would they like to use?
- Once all presentations are made, create an overall plan for the campaign which is a combination of all the proposed activities. Decide date, time and venue for each activity to plan a one day, 2-3 days or week long campaign.
- In the end, some groups can be given some chart papers, colour pens for developing material for the campaign.

**Example of a campaign:**  
**Adolescent Health and Wellbeing**

**About the issue:**

Myths about Menstruation. There are a number of myths about menstruation such as girls are not allowed to eat with rest of the family, they have to sleep separately because they are considered unclean during this period.

**Target audience:**

Students from VIII class onwards & teachers

**Information to be conveyed:**

- Menstruation does not make a girl unclean
- Menstrual blood is not dirty
- Every girl should be able to lead a normal life during her menstrual periods.
- 

**Medium for the Campaign:**

- A street play on adolescent issues like Menstruation and Menstrual Hygiene during assembly
- Posters with myths vs facts about Menstruation

**Reflection Questions**

- How was your experience of organizing a campaign?
- Did you learn any new thing from the campaign? Share your thoughts.
- How will you use the skills acquired from the campaign in your daily life?

## Take home messages

- Adolescence is a period of physical and emotional changes which are triggered by a set of hormones. These changes are part of growing up.
- Two adolescents of the same age may have different levels of maturity, experiencing physical changes at varying pace. There is no need to feel ashamed or ridicule someone else for maturing faster or slower than the others.
- It is important to be aware of the changes during adolescence and to discuss them with peers, teacher and parents for a comfortable and joyful growing up process.

## Suggested activities

- Write about any new learning or insight on adolescence and growing up process that you gained from the campaign.

## INFORMATION FOR ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN

### Psycho-social Changes during Adolescence:

- Eagerness to experiment and learn new things
- Increased attention towards own appearance and looks
- Desire to become independent and be treated with respect by parents and other adults
- Desire to make new friends and to socialize
- Increasingly influenced by peers
- sexual awareness and attraction
- Mood swings & Emotional instability – frequent change in emotions like anger, love and feelings towards friends; Impulsive behaviour
- Build own identity
- Development of aspirations for future, including career
- Begins taking decisions about self
- Need for appreciation and recognition
- Increased spirit of fun

### Physical Changes during Adolescence:

	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>
<b>Skin</b>	More active oil glands in this age group. Blockage of a pore because of oil can cause pimples and acne. This is not related to fantasizing/bad behaviour.	More active oil glands in this age group. Blockage of a pore because of oil can cause pimples and acne. This is not related to fantasizing/bad behaviour.
<b>Voice</b>	Not much change	Enlarged Adam's apple, Voice starts to crack and deepen
<b>Hair</b>	Pubic hair and underarm hair starts to grow.	Hair on face starts to grow, Hair growth on chest, under arms, arms and legs. Pubic hair starts to grow
<b>Breasts</b>	Breasts size starts to grow. Sometimes there may be tenderness or discomfort in the breasts as they grow.	Sometimes breasts can become prominent, but this tends to subside with time



	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>
<b>Muscle Growth</b>	Gaining height and weight. Widening of pelvic outlet (to facilitate child birth) which involves broadening of hips.	Weight and height increases, Shoulders and chest broaden Increase in muscle mass. Leg muscles get bigger and stronger
<b>Reproductive organs</b>	Menstruation begins: A monthly cyclical internal process in reproductive system of females.	Genitals increase in size, a fluid semen that carries the sperm starts getting formed

## Activity 5

**Title:** Skills to counter stigmas and stereotypes around adolescence

### Learning Outcomes

The Learner

- Displays sensitivity towards variations in developmental milestones among peers
- Demonstrates how to counter stigmas and stereotypes related to adolescence
- Describes youth friendly services that can support adolescents through the growing up process

### Time

60 mins

### Life skills enhanced

Problem-Solving, Interpersonal Skills And Effective Communication, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Decision Making

**Resources Required:** Copies of Situations for different groups, pen/pencil, paper, board, chalk/marker

### Guidance for the facilitators

- The purpose of this activity is for the learners to apply their knowledge about changes during adolescence and misconceptions related to puberty to support their peers in enjoying a comfortable and stress-free growing up process.
- The role play should get learners to practice countering myths and stigmas scientifically.
- Prepare for the activity by writing down each situation on a separate piece of paper/card for each group. Behind the paper/card note the discussion questions.
- You may also ask learners for situations that they observe or experience and replace the existing situations with ones they relate more closely with.

### Transacting the activity

- Ask learners to recall the last activity-the campaign and share their experiences.
- Ask learners if they remember misconceptions related to puberty discussed in the last activities. Ask learners to share what they remember.
- Share that this activity would enable them to practice how they can apply this knowledge in countering stigmas and misconceptions in real life situations.
- Next, divide the class into 4 or 5 groups and give the following instructions:
  - Each group will get a paper/card with a situation and some discussion questions behind it.
  - Each group will have to read the situation and discuss the answers to the questions listed behind the paper/card within their groups. They would then need to come up with a role play to demonstrate a helpful way of dealing with that situation.
  - Each group will have 10 minutes to prepare the role play and 3 minutes to present it in front of the class.
  - Each group will choose a reader who will read the situation and the discussion questions aloud for the larger group, followed by the roleplay where the group will display a healthy strategy to deal with the situation.

- After each role play generate discussion by asking the learners if there could be other healthy ways of dealing with that situation.
- Cover each case study / role play one at a time.

### **Situation 1**

Rongden, and Sara are childhood friends and now study in 10<sup>th</sup> standard. Since last month Sara has become very irritable as she is always conscious and worried about pimples that have recently appeared on her face and do not seem to go even when she washes her face three to four times in a day. Yesterday a girl in their class asked Sara jokingly if she has been having 'dirty thoughts' which are causing these pimples. Next day Sara did not come to school.

- Do you think Sara understands the changes she is going through?
- What misconceptions are evident in this situation?
- If you were Rongden, what would you do?

### **Situation 2**

Kalai and his friends (class IX) were discussing an actor's hairstyle and beard in a film when one of his friends made a joke about a boy in your class who does not have any facial hair. Other people in the group also started guessing what his problem could be.

- Do you think Kalai's friends understand the changes boys go through in adolescence?
- What misconception is evident in this situation?
- If you were Kalai, what would you do?

### **Situation 3**

Rahmaan, Sonia and Robin (Class 9) have been friends since first standard. Rahmaan has always been good in basketball but lately he has started withdrawing from his practice. One day Rahmaan told Sonia that two years back he used to be a tall guy in the class but suddenly he finds that all his friends including Robin have gained height but he hasn't. He feels he will always be short now and is losing interest in basketball. He has been taking many tablets to increase height but nothing seems to work.

- Do you think Rahmaan understands the changes that happen in adolescence?
- What misconception is evident in this situation?
- If you were Sonia, what would you do?

**Situation 4:**

Salma and Ruchika were chatting during lunch break when Salma mentioned that she is having her periods, Ruchika told her that she has been having irregular periods for the last 4 months and thinks that something is wrong with her. She feels she cannot talk about this with her mother and doesn't know what to do.

- Do you think Ruchika understands the changes she is going through?
- What misconception is evident in this situation?
- If you were Salma, what would you do?

After each role play highlight the misconceptions that need to be countered. Use the following points:

- Situation 1: Rongden needs to explain to Sara that having pimples is common at this age. Pimples have no connection with 'thoughts', these are caused by hormonal changes at this age and go away with time. She may take some treatment from doctor if needed.
- Situation 2: Kalai should tell his friends that physical changes like growth of facial hair happen at different pace for different individuals and that there is no problem with the boy.
- Situation 3: Sonia should tell Rahmaan that growth spurt during adolescence happen at different pace for different persons, he need not compare himself with others.
- Situation 4: Salma needs to tell Ruchika that she should not feel hesitant discussing menstrual problems with her mother. If her mother is not approachable she can talk to her teacher. She can also add that periods are often irregular in the initial stages of menstruation.

Next ask learners if they know about any services or institutions which can offer help in such situations?

- Give information about the youth friendly services that can offer good source of information and help. Use the information below to talk about these services.
  - Counsellor in Schools
  - Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics
  - Phone Helplines

**Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics:** A whole gamut of clinical and counselling services on diverse adolescent health issues ranging from Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) to Nutrition, Substance abuse, Injuries and Violence (including Gender based violence), NCDs and Mental Health issues are available to adolescents through more than 7500 Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics (AFHC) at various levels of health care facilities. Commodities available at AFHC include Weekly Iron & Folic Acid Supplementation & Albendazole tablets, Sanitary napkins, Contraceptives, basic Medicines. Services include BP measurement, weighing machine, to name a few.

**Phone Helpline:**

1098: Child Helpline number

104/108: This Government helpline also extends services to adolescents in many states.

Different State Governments have also launched helplines for adolescents and it is important that this information is shared with the teachers and students.

### **Reflection questions**

- Is there a right age for onset of menstruation, growth spurt, growth of facial hair amongst adolescent boys and girls?
- 'It is not right to talk about menstrual issues with parents'- Do you agree or disagree? Explain with reasons.
- Name some of the adolescent friendly health services that can be availed by adolescents for more information or counselling.

### **Take home messages**

- The pace of physical change varies across individuals. It is important to be sensitive towards peers who may be experiencing these changes faster or slower than others.
- Accurate knowledge can equip us to counter some of the myths and stigmas related to puberty.
- Youth friendly services can be accessed by adolescents to deal with growing up issues.

### **Suggested activity:**

- Ask some learners to volunteer to find out about Youth and Adolescent Friendly Health Services. They can look up online, call the services or visit them to gather information. These can include visiting public health centre, Adolescent friendly Health Clinic (AFHC), trying helpline numbers. They will make a brief presentation in the class to present their learning and experience.