

Domain: Hygiene
Subjects: Sexual hygiene

Age group: 10-14 years

1.6 My changing body

Learning goals:

Knowledge:

- The students know the signs of puberty in both girls and boys.
- They understand the symptoms and effects associated with maturing during puberty.
- Girls and boys can list good personal hygiene habits related to sexual maturing.
- They know the risks involved if personal hygiene is not maintained.
- They understand the menstruation cycle.

Attitude:

- Both sexes appreciate and respect the processes and changes that occur during puberty.
- They see positively the importance of washing their private parts, and know how to do this.

Practical skills:

- Girls are able to safely dispose of sanitary towels.

Psychosocial life skills:

- Girls and boys build their self esteem.
- They show solidarity with classmates in case of accidents.

Participatory methods:

- Case analysis
- Drawing
- Discussion
- Sharing experiences
- Observations

Materials:

Story, drawing paper, chart on menstruation cycle, slips of paper or cards, (felt-tipped) pens/pencils, fixing tape (only if drawings or cards are fixed on walls), blackboard, chalk.

Activities:

Case analysis

- Prepare and present an imaginative case history, e.g. "Michelo has soaked her menstrual pad. The boys in class start laughing and making remarks at her. She goes to the toilet to change, but there is no water, nowhere to throw the pad, there is no emergency towel to use in the school. In order to avoid further embarrassment, she disappears from school without telling anybody."
- Ask the class to discuss three questions:
 - What does Michelo feel?
 - What does this story tell you about the school?
 - What could have helped Michelo cope with the situation?
- Facilitate the discussion and help the girls to share experiences.

- Tell or invite other stories related to body development, e.g. about the embarrassment and teasing of Hamid (or any other imaginary name), or teasing a boy whose voice is the first (or last) in the class to change, or the embarrassment and teasing of Salina, the first (or last) in her class to develop breasts. The questions about Hamid and Salina are the same as for Michelo.
- Make up or invite stories that relate to conditions and problems at home, as in the following (imaginary, but common) situation in a low-income, high density area in a city in Peru:

Rosita is twelve years old. She has grown a lot and her body has changed. She now feels curious about boys and no longer likes to play her old games with her girl friends. At home, she lives in a small house together with her mother, father, brothers, uncles and cousins. One night when she thinks she is alone she goes to the kitchen to have a bath. When she has undressed, her cousin Juan (John in Spanish) enters and sees her naked. He looks at her with desire. Rosita tries to cover herself and flees.

- What happened to Rosita and how did it make her feel?
- What would you have done in her situation?
- What can her family do to avoid such situations?
- Ask the class to use the case study to build a problem tree. Write the central theme on a slip of paper or card and stick this on the wall or places it on the floor:
“Inappropriate housing conditions for the hygiene needs of adolescents in the family.”
- Invite the children to write the related problems and consequences on other slips or cards, giving one message per slip/card.
- Help the children to work in groups to identify solutions for the identified problems.
- In plenary, help the groups to prepare jointly a final list of possible actions, for example on the blackboard.

Drawing

Drawings can help students to open up on a sensitive issue.

- Ask the children to draw about an event or a development during puberty that embarrassed them. The drawing may be about themselves or about someone imaginary.
- Ask the students to display their drawings on the wall or lay them out on the floor.
- Discuss the drawings in a plenary. Invite children to explain their drawings if so wanted.
- Facilitate a discussion, asking for example:
 - Do others in the class recognise the situation/feeling?
 - What can be the reactions of classmates?
 - What would help you and your classmates in these situations?

Application:

- Take the children to visit the school toilets/latrines. Both sexes will visit both types of toilets/latrines and observe the facilities.
- Ask them to make a list of pro's and con's on the conditions, as individuals or in groups.
- In plenary, help them to consolidate the findings in one list.
- Discuss and make decisions on follow-up action to deal with the negative points.
- Decide on a time table and monitoring of effectiveness.

Possible points that may emerge:

- Presence of water in/near all toilets for personal hygiene
- Reliability of supply of water
- Equity in water collection
- Bucket available in girls' toilets for hygienic disposal of sanitary towels
- Wrapping materials available, e.g. old newspaper
- Bucket and wrapping materials in use

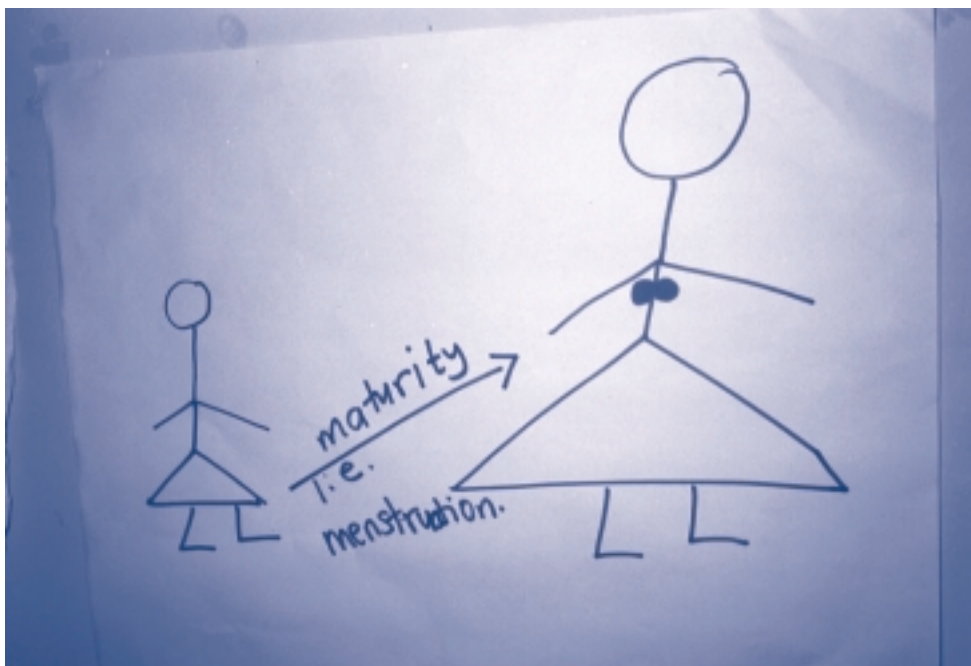
- Presence of cover for bucket; cover seen on top
- Safe final disposal of contents (burning or deep burial)
- Sanitary pads available in school in case of emergencies
- Design and location of toilets does not encourage abuse (bullying, smoking, drug use, vandalism)
- The school has rules on the proper use of toilets and monitors their application

Learning indicators:

Children can mention physical changes in girls and boys during puberty.

Girls can describe how and when to clean private parts, with reasons, to a female teacher. Boys can do the same to a male teacher. (Boy and girl adolescents should know how women and men can safely clean their private parts. Both boys and girls need to keep clean to avoid infections, and to know that when they are adults infections can be passed between sexual partners.

Facilities, e.g. water, bucket, wrapping material are available in toilets/latrines and used correctly for disposing of sanitary towels. Bucket contents are disposed of timely and in a safe way.



Drawing during training of master trainers in Zambia (Photo: Christine Sijbesma, IRC)

Competence:

Preservation of personal hygiene during puberty