Always Changing

Fifth Grade Puberty Education Program
Instructor’s Guide

New! Magazine for moms in Girls’ Kit

Dear Educator:

Thank you for choosing the Always Changing Program as part of your puberty education curriculum. If you’re teaching puberty education for the first time, the experience of health educators who have used Always Changing may be useful. Here’s their advice:

Inform your school administration of your plans, and review the Always Changing Program with them, including the student take-home materials.

Inform parents of the date(s) you will be teaching the program. Follow your school’s policy for obtaining parents’ written permission. (A sample letter to parents is on page 25.)

Choose the classroom activities (pages 4-5) that will be most effective for your students. Make arrangements with your colleagues if all or part of the program will be taught to boys and girls separately.

Gather teaching materials, arrange for a VCR or DVD player, duplicate the reproducibles and create a question box as appropriate for your lesson plan.

Plan how much time you will need for each activity or section. Be sure to leave time for discussion and questions.

Inform students in advance.

We care deeply about the health of students and their families, and we are grateful to you for inviting us into your classroom. Educator feedback is an essential part of our ongoing efforts to improve our programs. We welcome your questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Fan Bonnett
Always Changing Program
Procter & Gamble

Contents

Teaching Materials. ..................... 3
Classroom Activities for Teaching Puberty. ................. 4
Overview of Growth and Development at Puberty. ............ 5
Female Stages of Development .............. 6
Overview of the Female Reproductive System ............. 7
Explaining Menstruation ................. 8
Choosing Feminine Protection Products ............... 9
Menstrual Calendar ................. 12
Male Stages of Development .............. 14
Overview of the Male Reproductive System ............. 15
Puberty Experiences for Boys ........... 16
Perspiration and Body Odor ............ 17
Commonly Asked Questions ............ 18
Video Discussion Guide ............... 20
Reproducible Pre- and Post-Tests ......... 21
Sample Letter to Parents ............ 25
Other Resources ..................... 26
Advisory Panel .................... 27

Learning Objectives

This program is designed to be used either in co-ed or single-sex classes. Using the complete Always Changing Program will help students:

- Understand the physical and emotional changes they experience during puberty, and acknowledge these changes as a normal part of growth and development.
- Understand that personal hygiene is each individual’s responsibility.
- Learn the physiology of their bodies and correct terminology for parts of the reproductive system.
- Understand the menstrual cycle, what to expect during a period, and how to manage periods while continuing with normal activities.
The Always Changing Program has been a trusted curriculum source for puberty education among school nurses and health educators for over 20 years; it has been taught to millions of students nationwide. The look of the program has been updated, but the information and educational goal remain the same – to teach preteens about their changing bodies and the beginning stages of puberty.

This program is provided as a free educational service by the Always® brand of feminine protection products, and by Secret® and Old Spice® brand deodorants and anti-perspirants.

Program content is based on national research and consultation with school nurses, health educators, parents, fifth-grade students and medical professionals. It is designed to provide fifth-grade students with a broad overview of the beginning stages of puberty. Program materials include:

**Instructor’s Kit**
- 28-page Instructor’s Guide
- Live-action video or DVD with girls-only, boys-only, and co-ed segments (usage instructions below)

**Girls’ Kit**
- Guidebook for girls about growing up
- New content on hygiene and exercise
- Personal care product samples
- New magazine for mom, to help her talk to her daughter about puberty

**Boys’ Kit**
- Guidebook for boys about growing up
- New content on hygiene and exercise
- Personal care product sample

**Always Changing Video**
Below is what you should see in the lower right corner of your video screen:

- **Girls’ Only**
  - Section Length: 20:40 minutes
  - Contains:
    - Hygiene
    - Female Growth & Development

- **Boys’ Only**
  - Section Length: 18:02 minutes
  - Contains:
    - Hygiene
    - Male Growth & Development

- **Co-Ed**
  - Section Length: 31:52 minutes
  - Contains:
    - Hygiene
    - Female and Male Growth & Development

Educators and students can also find more information at BEINGGIRL.COM
**Program Organization**

The *Always Changing Program* is designed to be adaptable to each instructor’s individual needs and preferences. It is appropriate for co-ed classes, but it can also be taught effectively to girls-only or boys-only classes. Some instructors choose to distribute the girls' and boys' booklets as take-home materials at the end of the program; others use them as classroom texts throughout the program. Choose the format and specific activities you prefer to make your puberty lessons and reminders interesting, informative and effective for your students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Activity</th>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Test (girls and boys)</strong></td>
<td>Instructor and students will understand how much knowledge the students already have about the subject of puberty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Students will develop a base of knowledge about the puberty experience. The Video Discussion Guide will help the instructor lead students through the topics raised in the video.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Video and Video Discussion Guide</strong></td>
<td>Students will understand the major components of the male and female reproductive systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reproductive Systems</strong></td>
<td>Girls will learn about the feminine protection samples and how they work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Photocopy the diagrams onto transparencies for use on the overhead.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Review diagrams, pronounce vocabulary words, and discuss physical changes at puberty.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distribute Take-Home Kits</strong></td>
<td>Students will understand the reasons for and process of keeping a menstrual calendar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explain sample pack to girls. Refer to the chart in the Girls' booklet that explains how to choose the right product for comfort, protection and discretion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consider allowing girls to take their packets to their lockers before they go to the next class. If your class is co-ed, you might let the boys leave before distributing the girls' 'kits.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Menstrual Calendar</strong></td>
<td>Students will receive answers to many of their questions and concerns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students complete and discuss a few “example months” to help understand the menstrual calendar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Using the calendar on page 13 of this Instructor’s Guide, have each student complete January, February and March on her calendar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask and discuss:</td>
<td>Students will recognize the many changes puberty will present, and they will appreciate the value of the different points of view in their class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What does each symbol in the example mean?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many days are there in each menstrual cycle?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When is the next period/menstrual cycle likely to begin?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Question and Answer Time</strong></td>
<td>Students will personalize information from the lesson, as well as develop writing and vocabulary skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Before the lesson, place a “question box” in your classroom. Students can ask their questions discreetly, and you can prepare answers in advance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compare lists</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students each make lists of 3 things they are looking forward to most about puberty – and 3 concerns, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students then compare and discuss their lists with the class.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Assignment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Each student writes a short essay. Topics might include:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The most important change he/she has noticed in his/her own life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The most important new responsibility he/she has assumed in the last few months.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A similar topic relevant to your students.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Test (girls and boys)</strong></td>
<td>Instructor and students will understand how much knowledge the students have gained from the puberty lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>Girls: 1 f, 2 t, 3 t, 4 t, 5 f, 6 t, 7 t, 8 t, 9 c, 10 d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys: 1 t, 2 f, 3 t, 4 t, 5 f, 6 f, 7 d, 8 t, 9 t, 10 b</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Centuries of cultural and religious traditions have led us to treat puberty as everything from a reason for celebration to a cause for shame. Although it is a complex time of change — emotionally, physically, socially and intellectually — today, puberty is commonly seen as a positive transition. Helping students understand the physical and emotional changes taking place will contribute to their development of a positive and informed approach to adolescence.

Puberty begins (usually between the ages of 9 and 14) when the pituitary gland sends a signal to the brain to begin producing a hormone; in girls, it’s estrogen produced by the ovaries; in boys, it’s testosterone produced in the testicles. This sets in motion physical and emotional changes that lead to sexual maturity.

**Emotional Changes at Puberty**

The wide emotional swings that girls and boys experience in puberty are caused by these hormones. As an educator, helping them know what to expect can lessen the ups and downs of growing up. Explain and emphasize the following changes:

- **Mood swings.** Normally caused by changing hormone levels, mood swings are part of puberty for both boys and girls. For girls that have started menstruation, this may be most noticeable around day 15 of their cycle (see page 8 on pre-menstrual phase as a discussion guide).

- **Change in self-confidence.** A growing body — whether it’s ahead of their peers, behind or keeping pace — can be a major concern for pre-teens. Increase in awkwardness and embarrassment about their body is common. Stressing that it’s good to be an individual, physically and emotionally, can help pre-teens cope with all these changes.

- **Emotional instability.** Thanks again to hormones, pre-teens often become more emotional and react more strongly than they did when they were younger, regardless of whether it’s a school- or peer-related issue. Conversation is the key to helping pre-teens learn self control.

- **Need for independence.** As a natural part of puberty, pre-teens will begin to question boundaries set by their parents and other authority figures in their lives, including you. Finding ways to offer pre-teens more responsibility while maintaining firm boundaries is an ideal way to help them grow without stepping out of bounds.

Remember, the more pre-teens understand what’s happening physically and emotionally, the more they can recognize and cope with the upcoming changes in all aspects of their lives.
Physical Changes at Puberty for Girls

The female stages of development are typically described by the five Tanner stages of breast development and pubic hair growth, along with other signs of female maturation: the growth spurt, the onset of vaginal discharge, and the start of menstruation. The drawing below describes these five stages with average age ranges.

It is important to emphasize that each girl’s progression through the stages will be slightly different according to her own body’s timetable.

Female Stages of Development

**Stage One:**
- Up to ages 8 to 12
- Childhood stage; no visible signs of pubertal development

**Stage Two:**
- May begin ages 8 to 14
- Height and weight increase rapidly
- Breast buds appear; nipples become raised and this area may be tender
- Fine, straight hairs start growing close to the labia

**Stage Three:**
- May begin ages 9 to 15
- Height continues to increase
- Breasts become rounder and fuller
- Pubic hair becomes darker, thicker and curlier
- Hips may start to widen in relation to waist, giving a softer, more rounded shape
- Vagina begins secreting a clear, whitish fluid called vaginal discharge
- For some girls, ovulation and menstruation begin late in this stage

**Stage Four:**
- May begin ages 10 to 16
- Underarm hair appears
- The nipple and the dark area around it (areola) may stick out from the rest of the breast
- Pubic hair starts to form a triangular patch in front and around sides of the genital area
- For many girls, ovulation and menstruation begin during this stage

**Stage Five:**
- May begin ages 12 to 19
- Adult stage; overall look is that of a young woman
- Areola rejoins breast contour and breast development is complete
- Pubic hair forms a thick, curly, triangular patch
- Adult height is probably reached
- Ovulation and menstruation occur regularly
Overview of the Female Reproductive System

Understanding the reproductive system is as important as understanding any other organ system of the body. Encourage students to learn this system and understand the function of each part. By becoming familiar with the female anatomy, girls can better grasp what happens during the menstrual cycle. Require that they learn the correct terminology as well. Review pronunciation. Help students understand the approximate location, size and shape of each organ.

Cervix – The base of the uterus with a small opening between the uterus and vagina.

Egg – Also called an ovum; the female reproductive cell.

Endometrium – Spongy, blood-filled tissue that lines the uterus and nourishes a developing embryo. Discharged during menstruation.

Fallopian tubes – Two tubes connecting the ovaries to the uterus through which the egg travels.

Ovaries – Two glands, one on either side of the uterus, that contain a woman’s egg cells and produce estrogen, progesterone and other hormones.

Ovulation – Moment at which an egg is released from an ovary.

Urethra – Tube that carries urine from the bladder out of the body.

Uterus – Also called the womb; a muscular organ, lined with soft nourishing tissue, that carries the fetus until birth.

Vagina – The flexible passageway leading from the cervix to the outside of the body. Menstrual fluid flows through the vagina.

Educators and students can find more terms and definitions at beinggirl.com
Explaining Menstruation

Begin by explaining that menstruation is part of the female reproductive process. Every month or so, a woman’s body prepares for possible pregnancy with a pattern of changes known as the menstrual cycle. Explain that the use of a 28-day cycle is for teaching purposes and is based on the average length of a menstrual cycle. Emphasize that everyone has her own cycle, which varies from person to person, and even from period to period for the same person. These differences are normal. To help girls be better prepared for upcoming cycles, encourage them to mark the days of their period on a calendar (see Instructor’s Guide page 13). They can do this with discreet marks like stars, flowers or smiley faces. Students can use beinggirl.com – click on About Me, then click Period Predictor – to help be prepared.

There are four phases in the menstrual cycle, each controlled by rising and falling levels of hormones. The cycle can vary in length for each girl or woman. For purposes of discussing the four stages, a 28-day cycle is used. Although the cycle length is counted from the first day of menstruation, it is easier to explain if we start with the pre-ovulatory phase, before the egg is released.

1. **Pre-Ovulatory Phase, Days 6-13**
   Each month, the pituitary gland and ovaries produce hormones which cause one egg in one of the ovaries to mature, or “ripen.” Usually, the ovaries “take turns,” releasing an egg every other month. At the same time, estrogen causes the uterian lining to get thicker, forming a cushion of blood and tissue (the endometrium).

2. **Ovulation Phase, around Day 14**
   The egg is fully mature and is released by the ovary to start traveling through the fallopian tube toward the uterus. Finger-like projections at the fallopian tube “reach out” to grab the egg as it leaves the ovary. Now the egg can be fertilized if sperm from a male are present. If fertilization occurs, a woman becomes pregnant.

3. **Premenstrual Phase, Days 15-28**
   The egg is on its way toward the uterus. In the meantime, the uterus is preparing for the egg’s arrival and builds up its lining with blood and tissue. If the egg has met a sperm in the fallopian tube (fertilized), it attaches itself to the endometrium. Here, the fertilized egg grows into a baby. However, if the egg gets to the uterus unfertilized, it breaks down and mixes with the endometrium.

4. **Menstrual Phase, Days 1-5**
   During the last phase of the cycle, if the egg has not met a sperm and been fertilized, the uterus does not need the extra lining of blood and tissue (the endometrium) to nourish a baby. The lining dissolves into a reddish fluid and flows out of the body through the vagina. This usually lasts about 3 to 7 days. The first day of the menstrual period is counted as Day 1 of a new cycle. Around Day 5, a new egg starts to mature inside an ovary. And the cycle begins again.

**Hygiene Tip:**
Pantiliners are safe and practical for everyday use throughout a girl’s cycle. Not only do they offer added confidence against leaks or a surprise start, they absorb discharge and keep her feeling fresh and clean as well.
Choosing Feminine Protection Products

Always® research shows that most girls rely on their mothers for advice on which feminine protection products to use when their period begins. However, not all girls have mothers or someone they feel comfortable talking with. Moreover, some girls are still embarrassed by that first trip to the store to buy feminine protection products. As an educator, you can play a role in helping girls understand the range of products that will fit their needs.

Explain that feminine protection products are made to absorb menstrual flow and vaginal discharge. They can be worn externally using pads placed in panties, or internally using tampons. It might be helpful to talk about products as a system: maxi pads or tampons for the beginning of the period when the flow might be the heaviest, all the way to pantiliners designed for everyday use and also for very light days prior to and following menstruation. Tampons can be convenient for girls when they bathe, swim, participate in other sports, or when they are not comfortable with a pad. Always stress that the choice of feminine protection products is a personal decision.

Girls’ primary concerns at this age are avoiding accidents with an appropriately absorbent pad, avoiding a wet feeling, and using a pad that doesn’t show. A demonstration of pad thicknesses and sizes can be very enlightening. Also talk about how often to change pads (at least every 4 to 6 hours) and how to dispose of tampons and pads (never in the toilet). Tampons may be used overnight for up to 8 hours and then alternated with pads. Like pads, tampons must be changed frequently, at least every 4 to 8 hours for maximum protection and safety. With the range of products on the market today, making selections can be confusing.

Here are some feminine protection facts:

❤ Today, many pads are thin, but as absorbent as thick pads. Pads with wings will help prevent leaks and staining of panties.

❤ Pads can’t be seen under most clothing. But ultra thin pads may help you feel sure of this.

❤ Pantiliners are great for keeping you fresh every day by absorbing discharge. They can also help you remain confident when you’re not sure when your period is coming and at the end of your period when flow is light.

❤ Tampons give internal protection and can be used for activities such as swimming or other sports. Tampons are used for menstrual protection only.

❤ If you are using tampons, pantiliners are good for backup in case your flow is more than your tampon can absorb.

All Always Maxi Pads have the unique Dri-Weave® Topsheet that helps keep the surface clean and dry. Some Always pads have Flexi-Wings™ that wrap smoothly around your panty, helping to protect the sides of your panty from accidents and helping to hold the pad in place. Always pads also come individually wrapped with “Quickwraps®” so you can carry them in your purse or backpack. Always Odor Absorbing Pantiliners can help you feel clean and fresh any day of the month.
Choosing tampons

Some students may have questions about tampons and Toxic Shock Syndrome. Emphasize that the choice of pads or tampons is a personal choice. Explain that tampons are worn inside a woman’s body, in the vagina. The vagina has the ability to stretch significantly, then regain its original shape. For example, most mothers give birth to their babies through the vagina, and it soon returns to its original size and shape.

A tampon is made of soft, absorbent material compressed into a small cylindrical shape, with a cord running through the middle. It is held in place by the walls of the vagina, and it will expand to fit a woman’s shape as it absorbs her menstrual flow.

Tampons come in a range of absorbencies. Individuals need to choose the right absorbency for their flow – which can take a bit of practice. Women should:

- Change tampons regularly, about every 4 to 8 hours.
- Never leave a tampon in for more than 8 hours. You can wear a tampon overnight up to 8 hours.
- Always use a tampon with the lowest absorbency necessary for their flow.
- Choose a tampon with a higher absorbency if a tampon has absorbed as much as it can and has to be changed in less than 4 hours.
- Try a tampon with a lower absorbency if the tampon still has lots of white patches when it is removed after about 4 hours.

A girl may feel a little uncomfortable when she starts to put a tampon into her body because there are nerve endings at the vaginal opening. But inserting and wearing a tampon shouldn’t be painful. It takes a little practice. If it feels uncomfortable, she probably hasn’t put it in far enough above the muscles at the opening to the vagina. This is a very common mistake. The girl can just remove it and try again with a new tampon.
Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS)

Although it has been more than 20 years since the discovery of the potentially life-threatening illness known as Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), many questions still remain unanswered about its cause, diagnosis and treatment. Even the definition of this illness is still discussed within the medical community.

TSS is so rare that even most physicians are not well informed about it, and most of them will never see a single TSS case. TSS can occur in men, women and children. About one-half of all cases occur in menstruating women and girls. There is an increased risk of TSS when using tampons. TSS is caused by toxins produced by the bacterium Staphylococcus aureus, which is commonly found in the nose and the vagina.

TSS can occur any time during a period, or shortly afterward. It is not a contagious disease; but if you have had TSS once, you can get it again. Be sure to talk with your doctor before using tampons again if you have had TSS.

TSS Symptoms

TSS symptoms are similar to the flu. They can include:

- Sudden high temperature (usually 102˚F/38.8˚C or higher)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- A sunburn-like rash
- Muscle aches
- Dizziness
- Fainting or feeling faint when standing up

Any of these symptoms could be an indication of TSS, though a woman may not experience all of them. If a woman is using tampons and has any of these symptoms, she should:

- Remove the tampon immediately and see a doctor.
- Tell the doctor she has been using tampons and is concerned about TSS.

Reducing TSS Risk

When you discuss TSS with your students, explain that they can reduce TSS risk by:

- Always using the lowest absorbency tampon suitable for their flow.
- Using a pad instead of a tampon at least once for several hours each day during their period.
- Not wearing a tampon.

It is important that tampons are changed regularly, every 4 to 8 hours. Never use a tampon before or between periods, and never use a tampon to absorb vaginal discharge. If a woman needs feminine protection for vaginal discharge, she should use a pantiliner instead.

Make sure students consult a doctor before using tampons if they or anyone in their family has ever suffered from TSS.
Using a Calendar to Track Your Menstrual Cycle

Explain to your students that many women use a calendar to keep track of their menstrual cycle and discharge, and to help prepare them for their next period.

The “Period Predictor” at [beinggirl.com](http://beinggirl.com) is an interactive online calendar that is easy and fun for girls to use. Or you can reproduce the calendar on page 13 (opposite) for use in a classroom activity.

**Classroom activity:*** Students complete a few “example months” in their calendars to help understand this process.

- Small stars (or flowers, smiley faces or Xs) mark the dates when you have your period. Use a different symbol to mark the dates when you have vaginal discharge.
- Draw 1, 2 or 3 *s to show the level of flow for each day.
  - ** light
  - *** medium
  - **** heavy
  - ○ discharge
- Count the days from the first * of one period to the first * of the next. This is the length of your menstrual cycle.
- Have each student complete the first three months of her calendar.
- When they have completed the three example months on their calendars, ask and discuss:
  - What does each symbol mean?
  - How many days are there in each menstrual cycle?
  - When is the next period/menstrual cycle likely to begin?
- Remember, it can take 2 years or more for periods to settle into a regular pattern.
Calendar

**to track your menstrual cycle**

You can use a calendar to keep track of your menstrual cycle and help you prepare for your next period.

- Draw small stars (or flowers, smiley faces or Xs) to mark the dates when you have your period. Use a different symbol to mark the dates when you have vaginal discharge.
- Draw 1, 2 or 3 *s to show the level of flow for each day.
  * light
  ** medium
  *** heavy
  ○ discharge
- Count the days from the first * of one period to the first * of the next period. This is the length of your menstrual cycle.
- Remember, it can take 2 years or more for periods to settle into a regular pattern.

| YEAR: 20___ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| January     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| February    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| March       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| April       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| May         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| June        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| July        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| August      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| September   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| October     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| November    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| December    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
Physical Changes at Puberty for Boys

The male stages of development are typically described by the five Tanner stages of genital and pubic hair growth, along with other signs of male maturation: the deepening of the voice, the growth spurt, muscle development, and the growth of facial and body hair. It is important to emphasize that each boy’s progression through the stages will be slightly different according to his own body’s timetable, and boys usually move through the stages of puberty one or two years later than girls.

Male Stages of Development

**Stage One:**
Up to ages 9 to 13
- Childhood stage; no visible signs of pubertal development

**Stage Two:**
May begin ages 9 to 15
- Testicles and scrotum grow larger
- Fine, straight hairs start growing at the base of the penis

**Stage Three:**
May begin ages 11 to 16
- Testicles and scrotum continue to grow
- Penis grows larger
- Pubic hair becomes darker, thicker and curlier
- Vocal cords increase in size, causing voice to deepen
- Height and weight may start to increase noticeably

**Stage Four:**
May begin ages 12 to 17
- Growth spurt continues
- Shoulders begin to broaden and physique becomes more muscular
- Penis grows in width as well as length
- Pubic hair coarsens and takes on a triangular shape
- Underarm hair appears
- Traces of hair may appear on upper lip and chin
- Testicles start to produce sperm; ejaculation occurs for the first time

**Stage Five:**
May begin ages 14 to 18
- Adult stage; overall look is that of a young man
- Genitals and pubic hair have an adult appearance
- Growth spurt slows down
- Facial hair growth becomes heavier
- Body hair growth, especially on the chest, may continue into the twenties
Overview of the Male Reproductive System

Understanding the reproductive system is as important as understanding any other organ system of the body. Encourage students to learn this system and understand the function of each part. By becoming familiar with the male anatomy, boys can better comprehend the changes in their bodies as they grow. Require that they learn the correct terminology as well. Review pronunciation.

Begin by explaining that the main purpose of the male reproductive system is to produce sperm – the male reproductive cells. During puberty, testosterone enables the testicles to start producing mature sperm for the first time. (When a sperm reaches an egg of a woman and fertilization takes place, the woman becomes pregnant with a baby.) Sperm is combined with other fluid in the vas deferens to make the seminal fluid, which is called semen.

To explain how semen leaves the body (through ejaculation), you may want to trace the path of the sperm from the testicles, through the vas deferens (sperm duct), seminal vesicles, prostate gland, and urethra. Define erection and ejaculation. Be sure to explain that urine also leaves the body through the urethra, but never at the same time as semen.

**Epididymis** – Tube at the back of each testicle that carries sperm to the vas deferens (sperm duct).

**Foreskin** – This fold of skin covers the end of the penis. Not all boys have a foreskin because in some cultures, it is removed (an operation called circumcision) when a baby boy is only a few days or weeks old. Uncircumcised boys and men pull the foreskin back and wash under it as part of daily hygiene.

**Penis** – Male sex organ; also used to urinate.

**Prostate gland** – Gland next to the bottom of the bladder; it forms a fluid that combines with sperm and a fluid from the seminal vesicles to make semen.

**Scrotum** – Sac of skin that holds the testicles, just underneath the penis.

**Semen** – Also called seminal fluid, it’s a white, milky liquid that carries sperm out of the penis during ejaculation.

**Seminal vesicles** – Two glands on either side of the bladder that secrete seminal fluid.

**Sperm** – Male reproductive cells.

**Testicles** – Also called the testes; two oval-shaped organs that are contained in the scrotum. They produce the male hormone testosterone and sperm.

**Urethra** – Tube that carries urine and semen out of the body, but not at the same time.

**Vas deferens** – Tubes in which sperm is combined with other fluids from the prostate gland and seminal vesicles to make semen.
Puberty Experiences for Boys

Whether or not you discuss the Male Stages of Development, you may want to review these changes and discuss areas of concern for boys. Testosterone triggers a number of physical changes for boys. These changes take place over a period of four to five years and usually happen in about this order.

- The scrotum, testicles and penis will become larger.
- Curly hair will begin to grow in the pubic area around the base of the penis.
- The voice will deepen. (Boys may experience voice “cracking” or changing pitch in mid-sentence. That’s because the vocal cords are growing, too.)
- Boys may notice that sometimes their feelings about things change without any apparent reason. One day they may be in a great mood and the next they may feel irritable or supersensitive.
- The first ejaculation of semen will occur.
- There will be a rapid increase in height. This is what’s often known as the “growth spurt.” A boy may shoot up several inches in a relatively short time and may feel like he’s all arms and legs for a while. Boys and girls may experience “growing pains,” occasional dull aches – usually in the legs and often in the morning or evening – that result from the strain their vigorous daytime activities put on growing muscles and bones. Perfectly healthy children have them, and there’s usually no need to reduce their activity. In addition, boys’ muscles will develop, the chest will become broader, and weight gain will probably occur.
- Hair will begin growing under the arms and become darker and longer on the legs, and then coarser hair will appear on the upper lip and chin. Hair may also grow on the chest, although this may not happen until well into the twenties.

Areas of frequent concern to boys are nocturnal emissions and involuntary erections. Let students know that these are common during puberty.

Wet dreams, also called “nocturnal emissions,” happen to boys going through puberty. This is when ejaculation unknowingly occurs during sleep. And it’s not necessarily because a boy is dreaming about sex. He may find wet semen on his pajamas or sheets when he wakes up. Wet dreams can be embarrassing, but they are also perfectly normal.

Involuntary erections are also perfectly normal. An involuntary erection is when an erection occurs for no apparent reason. A boy doesn’t have to be thinking about sex or anything in particular. This can happen without warning as a boy reaches puberty, but it’s not always noticeable, and it will go away as the muscles at the base of the penis relax and allow the blood to leave the penis so that it gets smaller and softer again.

Boys may also wonder about penis size. Penises, like other body parts, come in different shapes and sizes. Some are smaller, some are larger, but the size of the penis is not related to the size of other body parts. And the size of the penis has nothing to do with masculinity or fertility.
Perspiration and Body Odor

Your students may not know they are beginning to sweat differently. The human body has eccrine and apocrine sweat glands. The eccrine glands produce clear, odorless sweat and have been active since birth. They are located all over the body to help control body temperature and help eliminate water, salt, and other waste products by releasing perspiration through pores.

At puberty, the apocrine glands (located primarily under the arms and in the genital area) become active. Emotions like tension, nervousness, and excitement stimulate these glands to produce a milky-looking perspiration, causing body odor when it comes into contact with bacteria on the skin.

New Routines for Preteens

Daily Bathing – The first step in helping control perspiration odor is regular bathing with soap and water. Washing removes dirt and oil from the skin and reduces the bacteria that can lead to body odor.

Daily Face Washing – During puberty the oil glands in the skin (especially in the face) produce excess amounts of an oily substance called sebum. As a result, most young people will develop some form of acne – what they know as pimples, blackheads or whiteheads. Daily face washing with a medicated facewash can help prevent acne by gently removing pimple-causing bacteria without overdrying the delicate skin on the face.

Deodorant/Anti-Perspirant – The second step in controlling perspiration odor is using a deodorant or deodorant/anti-perspirant.

• Deodorants: a deodorant counteracts odor and helps you smell good.
• Anti-perspirants: an anti-perspirant reduces perspiration and underarm wetness – and since these are the main cause of body odor, anti-perspirants actually help prevent odor before it starts.

Deodorants and deodorant/anti-perspirants come in a variety of scents and forms. Students should select a product based on the level of effectiveness and how it feels on the skin. Generally, the most effective forms in order are: soft solid, solid, roll-on, and aerosol. All anti-perspirants are deodorants, but not all deodorants are anti-perspirants.

Changing Sweaty Clothes – Many times, students believe that if their bodies are clean they won’t have body odor. However, body odor can be held in the clothes they wear. Remind them that after a bath or shower, they should put on clean clothes, including undergarments and socks.

Personal Hygiene Quiz

Ask these questions orally in class

1. Apocrine glands produce odor-causing sweat in which part of your body?
   a. underarms
   b. scalp
   c. hands
   d. feet

2. These products help reduce odor caused by sweating:
   a. anti-perspirants
   b. deodorants
   c. all of the above
   d. none of the above

3. To reduce body odor, you should:
   a. wear the same clothes for a couple of days
   b. skip the deodorant sometimes
   c. bathe regularly with soap and water
   d. all of the above

4. Sweaty clothes that haven’t been washed recently:
   a. is fashionable
   b. can make you smell bad
   c. has nothing to do with cleanliness
   d. helps you make friends

Answers

Personal Hygiene Quiz
1. a, 2. c, 3. c, 4. b
Questions Girls Ask

Why do we go through puberty?
All the changes you experience during puberty are to prepare your body to reproduce – have a baby – one day, when you’re ready to accept the responsibilities of parenthood, if you want to.

What is a period?
A period is when you lose some fluid, including blood, from your vagina (an opening between your legs). Each month a soft lining thickens inside your uterus (womb). If you become pregnant, this lining is needed to look after and nourish the growing baby. If you don’t become pregnant, this lining is not needed, and most of it leaves your body through your vagina. This is your period. It is a sign of a normal and healthy body and is nothing to worry about.

How long does a period last?
It lasts for a few days – usually somewhere between 3 and 7 days.

How often will I have a period?
Most women have a period each month. The average time between periods is about 28 days, but for some women it can be less, and for some it can be more. Anywhere between 21 and 35 days is normal.

When will I start having periods?
Most girls start having periods between the ages of 10 and 16. There is no “right” time – your periods will start when your body is ready. It might be reassuring to talk to your doctor if you have not experienced any of the changes of puberty by the age of 14; or if your breasts and pubic hair have started to grow, but your periods haven’t started by the age of 16.

Will it hurt when I have a period?
Usually not – it’s not like losing blood from a cut or a wound. Some girls or women hardly notice any discomfort during a period. Others might have what are called “period cramps.” These are usually an ache or cramp in the lower abdomen. Or sometimes you might have an ache in your back or along your inner thighs. Period cramps are nothing to worry about – they are a normal part of having periods.

Some ways to ease period cramps:
• Try a warm bath.
• Hold a heating pad on your lower abdomen.
• Exercise.

If cramps continue to be a problem for you, make sure you check with an adult before taking any kind of medication.

What if I have my first period when I’m at school?
 Virtually all girls are taken by surprise when they get their first period – even if they are well informed – so don’t worry. It’s probably a good idea to carry a pad and a clean pair of underwear in your bag just in case. But if you don’t have a pad, it’s fine to use some toilet paper or tissues if you need to. Ask a friend, a school nurse or a teacher to help you – no one will mind. Most schools keep some spare pads for times just like this. (And any stains in your underwear will soon wash out with cold water and some soap.) Remember – it’s something that every adult knows about and no one will mind helping you.

Will I always have periods?
All women have periods from puberty until they are about 50 years old. At around this age, women’s bodies go through another change – called menopause. At this time, the ovaries stop releasing eggs and the menstrual cycle comes to a stop. The only other time you will not have periods is if you become pregnant. Then, instead of leaving your body through the vagina, the lining of the uterus stays where it is and grows to nourish the baby as it develops.

Who can I talk to if I have some worries?
It’s always good to talk to someone about your worries. The best person to talk to is probably your mom or perhaps your dad. But if you don’t feel comfortable talking to them, sometimes another older person such as an aunt, a teacher, a school nurse or a friend’s mom can help a lot. Older sisters can be very useful, as can friends at school – especially if they have already started puberty themselves.

Will I lose much blood during my period?
The amount of blood in the menstrual fluid varies from woman to woman, and from day to day during the period. A period usually ends quite lightly, with most menstrual fluids lost in the first few days. Even then, it doesn’t come out very quickly. You lose about 16-18 teaspoons of menstrual fluid during your period, but only about 7 teaspoons of it is blood – although some women do lose a bit more. It might look like a lot, but it’s not as much as you think. Your body contains more than 5 quarts of blood, so it doesn’t miss the little bit you lose during a period and quickly makes up for it.

Will anyone notice when I have my period?
Not unless you tell them!

Is there anything I will not be able to do when I have my period?
No – having a period is a normal and healthy part of being a woman. It doesn’t have to stop you from doing the things you usually do. You can still go to school, help at home, see your friends, play sports – whatever you want. If you want to go swimming, you can use a tampon. It’s a good idea to get into the habit of changing your tampon before and after you go swimming.

Is it okay to have a bath or shower when I have my period?
Definitely. During your period is the most important time to keep yourself fresh and clean.

Which are the best products to use?
There is a wide range of feminine protection products available, but there is no right or wrong answer to questions about which product you should choose. Some women prefer pads, some prefer tampons, and some like to use pads on some days and tampons on others. Why not try different options to find out what suits you best? See the charts from Always and Tampax on pages 28, 32 and 35 of the girls’ booklet to help you choose.
What is TSS?
Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) is a rare but serious illness associated with tampon use. If you suddenly have a high fever and feel sick during your period, remove the tampon and see your doctor. Remember to change your tampon every 4 to 8 hours and select a tampon with the minimum absorbency to control your flow.

Where can I buy sanitary pads or tampons?
You can buy them in all kinds of places, such as supermarkets, pharmacies and large discount stores. There's no need to feel embarrassed about buying them — all women have to get them. Some girls, though, prefer their mom or an older sister to buy pads or tampons for them at first.

How does a tampon work?
A tampon is worn inside your body, in the vagina. It soaks up the menstrual flow internally. It is made of soft, flexible material compressed into a small, cylindrical shape, with a cord fastened securely to it. The cord remains outside your vagina, so you can remove and dispose of the tampon easily.

What is premenstrual syndrome?
Premenstrual syndrome, or PMS, is the name given to symptoms some girls experience 1 to 14 days before their period begins. These symptoms are physical and/or emotional, and include breast tenderness and feeling moody or sad. It's quite normal to feel a bit up and down at times, especially with all these changes going on. Emphasize that not all girls experience PMS.

Why do I feel all heavy and awkward?
Before your period your body sometimes stores more water than usual, which can leave you feeling bloated. It's also normal to feel a bit clumsy during puberty — that's because you're growing and changing so fast.

Why do my breasts hurt right before my period?
The change in the level of hormones is responsible. It causes fluid to build up in your breasts, and this makes them sore and feel heavier. But don't worry, this feeling will soon go away when your period has finished.

Is it normal to put on weight during puberty?
Definitely. An adult woman has more body fat than a young girl. As well as getting taller, you will get wider in your hips, and your breasts will get larger and fuller, so gaining some weight is normal.

Should I go on a diet?
Puberty is not a good time to limit the amount of food you eat. You are meant to put on weight during puberty because your body is growing. You are likely to put on more weight than your body needs only if you eat too many fatty and sugary foods and don't exercise enough. It's difficult to predict how tall you will be, but height is usually determined by heredity, that is, how tall your parents and grandparents are. If both parents are tall, chances are you will probably be tall. If both parents are short, you may be shorter. But this is not true for everybody. Occasionally, a boy will continue to grow or get another growth spurt in his late teens.

When will I shave?
It depends on how soon your facial hair appears and how thick it becomes, as well as your personal preference. Generally, heavy facial hair doesn't develop until later in puberty, maybe not until you're 16 or older.

Does a lot of body hair mean you have more testosterone?
No, testosterone is the hormone that starts body hair growing. How much hair you have is determined by your racial/ethnic group and heredity, not by how much testosterone you have.

Help — I think I'm growing breasts.
Don't worry, you're not turning into a girl. It's quite normal for boys to have some swelling around the breasts and nipples. This area can also feel a bit sore. It won't last for long.

Why is one of my testicles higher than the other?
This is quite normal. No one is perfectly symmetrical, and generally the right one is higher than the left one.

When I examined my testicles, I found a ridge down the back. Is this normal?
Yes. What you can feel is the epididymis where the sperm is stored. There is an epididymis down the back of each testicle. If you find any other lumps, you should visit your doctor to get a full checkup.

Does it matter what size your penis is?
Not at all! Penises do vary in length and shape, but not as much as you may think. Remember, the size of your penis has nothing to do with your masculinity or fertility.

Sometimes I get erections for no apparent reason, and I feel embarrassed that someone will notice.
It is normal to get erections all your life, even if you are not thinking about girls or sex. Don't worry that someone will notice — erections are not as noticeable as you think. Try to ignore the erection, and it will go away again on its own.

Do men stop having erections when they get older?
No. If a man is healthy, he can have erections all his life.

I have been having wet dreams for three years now. Will they ever stop?
You will experience wet dreams less frequently when your body has been through puberty. Generally, as you grow older, you will have more control over your body. Some boys experience wet dreams regularly, while others have very few. It is nothing to worry about.

When do I need to wear a jockstrap?
This is a personal decision. As your body changes, you may be more comfortable with an athletic supporter when you swim or participate in other sports. In some sports, boys and men wear a plastic cup to protect the genitals. It can be very painful to be hit on the penis and testicles. Check with a parent, your coach, or a physical education teacher if you have questions.
Video Discussion Guide

The *Always Changing* video is designed to give a base of knowledge about the puberty experience. It can be shown co-ed or separately to girls and boys. Look for opportunities in the way students respond to pose thoughtful questions and to provide factual answers to concerns or questions they may have. Below are some general questions related to the hygiene section of the video to help engage all students in comfortable dialogue. Following are additional questions more specific to the separate girls' and boys' sections of the video. These may lead into more specific discussions and questions on changes during puberty.

**Questions for All Students**

- **What did you learn about how puberty affects personal hygiene?**
  Lead into understanding of physical changes in the body, sources for information and the need to recognize changing personal hygiene needs.

- **What are some of your new hygiene responsibilities now that you are an adolescent?**

- **What other new responsibilities are part of your life as an adolescent?**

- **What are the physical changes that make these hygiene responsibilities necessary?**

- **Does everyone go through puberty at the same time? Why not?**
  Explain that everyone develops at a different rate and that it is normal.

- **Why do you need deodorant or anti-perspirant now and you didn't a few years ago?**
  Emphasize activation of new glands and importance of keeping clean.

**Questions for Girls**

- **What are the physical changes that girls go through during puberty?**
  Acknowledge that the female body is getting ready for sexual maturity.

- **Why do women and girls menstruate?**
  Explain that this process prepares the body for pregnancy.

- **What are the signs your body is preparing for your first period? About how often do most girls have a period? How can you predict when you will get your next period?**
  Emphasize that periods may not be on a regular schedule for a while.

- **If you have cramps during your period, what are some things you can do to feel better?**
  Explain what girls can do to help ease cramps.

- **In the video, why did Allison get her first period before the other girls?**
  Explain that girls do not all develop exactly at the same time and that some girls may start their periods sooner.

**Questions for Boys**

- **What are some common signs of puberty in boys? Why do these changes happen?**
  Explain that the body is preparing for sexual maturity and that everybody goes through changes.

- **Do all boys develop at the same rate? Why not?**
  Explain that boys do not all develop at the same time and that every boy starts puberty according to his own timetable.

- **Describe some of the things that can happen as a result of puberty changes that you might not expect (e.g., voice cracking, wet dreams, etc.). Are these normal?**
  Help boys understand the changes during puberty and emphasize that these are normal.

- **Why are girls often taller than boys in middle school?**
  Acknowledge that girls tend to begin puberty sooner than boys, but boys “catch up.”
Girls Pre-test
For each of the statements below, select the best answer from the choices given.

1. Puberty involves physical and emotional changes.
   True/False

2. Sweat serves no useful function in the body.
   True/False

3. For most girls, puberty begins between the ages of 9 and 14.
   True/False

4. On average, the menstrual flow lasts 3 to 7 days.
   True/False

5. You should not bathe, exercise or swim when you have your period.
   True/False

6. Periods always come on a regular schedule.
   True/False

7. Everybody can tell when you are having your period.
   True/False

8. You should change a pad every 3 to 4 hours.
   True/False

9. The changes that happen to you during puberty usually happen:
   a. overnight
   b. gradually, over a few years
   c. on your 11th birthday
   d. in two weeks

10. During puberty, girls:
    a. develop breasts
    b. have their periods
    c. grow hair under their arms and in their pubic area
    d. all of the above
Girls Post-test

For each of the statements below, select the best answer from the choices given.

1. You can’t participate in any activities when you have your period.
   True / False

2. Menstruation occurs when the lining of the uterus is shed.
   True / False

3. Menstruation is the same thing as having your period.
   True / False

4. Periods always come on a regular schedule.
   True / False

5. During your period, you will lose about two cups of blood.
   True / False

6. Estrogen causes the changes that happen to your body during puberty.
   True / False

7. Feminine protection products should be selected based on your flow.
   True / False

8. Exercising during your period may help with cramps.
   True / False

9. Estrogen is:
   a. a sweat gland
   b. an emotional reaction to puberty
   c. the primary female hormone
   d. the primary male hormone

10. An average menstrual cycle is:
    a. 28 days
    b. 3 days
    c. 7 days
    d. 50 days
Boys Pre-test
For each of the statements below, select the best answer from the choices given.

1. For most boys, puberty begins between the ages of 10 and 17. 
   True / False

2. All boys start shaving during puberty. 
   True / False

3. Mood swings are often a part of puberty. 
   True / False

4. Sweat serves no useful function to the body. 
   True / False

5. During puberty, your voice may crack because your vocal cords are growing. 
   True / False

6. Wet dreams are abnormal. 
   True / False

7. Changes that happen during puberty usually happen at once. 
   True / False

8. Puberty involves physical and emotional changes. 
   True / False

9. For most boys, during puberty:
   a. voice deepens
   b. body grows taller and more muscular
   c. hair grows under arms, on the face and in the pubic area
   d. penis and testicles grow larger
   e. all of the above

10. One body change that happens to you during puberty is:
    a. you sweat less
    b. you sweat more
    c. your body naturally smells better
    d. you eat less
    e. none of the above
Boys Post-test

For each of the statements below, select the best answer from the choices given.

1. During puberty, some boys may have emotional ups and downs.  
   True/False

2. All boys start shaving during puberty.  
   True/False

3. Wet dreams are abnormal.  
   True/False

4. During puberty, your voice may crack when you are talking. 
   This is because your vocal cords are growing.  
   True/False

5. Physical changes in boys occur as a result of estrogen.  
   True/False

6. Everybody can tell when you have an erection.  
   True/False

7. Testosterone is:  
   a. a sweat gland  
   b. an emotional reaction to puberty  
   c. the primary female hormone  
   d. the primary male hormone

8. A growth spurt means you may grow several inches at once 
   and that is normal.  
   True/False

9. Semen is a fluid that contains sperm.  
   True/False

10. Sperm are made in:  
    a. pituitary glands  
    b. penis  
    c. scrotum  
    d. testicles
Dear Parents:

Our class is about to study an important lesson on the early stages of puberty, which many 5th graders are beginning to experience.

The *Always Changing Program* helps both boys and girls:
- Understand the physical and emotional changes they experience during puberty, and acknowledge these changes as a normal part of growth and development.
- Learn the physiology of their bodies and correct terminology for parts of the reproductive system.
- Understand that personal hygiene is each individual’s responsibility.

In addition, the program helps girls:
- Understand the menstrual cycle.
- Understand what to expect during a period.
- Learn how to manage periods while continuing with normal activities.

The *Always Changing Program* is based on national research and consultation with school nurses, health educators, parents, and medical professionals. It has been a trusted resource for 20 years and has been taught to millions of students, nationwide. It is provided as a free educational service to our school by the Always® brand of feminine protection products, and by Secret® and Old Spice® brand deodorants and anti-perspirants.

We will begin the program on ____________. Please sign and return this letter by ____________, indicating your permission for your child to participate in the lessons.

If you have any questions about the *Always Changing Program*, or if you would like to review the program materials in advance, please call me at ________________________.

Thank you very much for your interest in this important education program.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

☐ has my permission to participate in the *Always Changing Fifth Grade Puberty Education Program*.

☐ does not have my permission to participate.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

(student’s name)

__________________________________________________________________________________________

(parent’s signature)

__________________________________________________________________________________________

(date)
Other Resources

books


*My Body, My Self*, Lynda Madaras and Area Madaras, Newmarket Press, 1993

*Period.*, JoAnn Gardner-Loulan, Bonnie Lopez, Marcia Quackenbush, Volcano Press, 1993

*The New Teenage Body Book*, Kathy McCoy, PhD, and Charles Wibbelsman, MD, Putnam Publishing Group, 1992


*What’s Happening to Me?*, Peter Mayle, Carol Publishing Group, 1997


*At the Threshold: The Developing Adolescent*, S. Shirley Feldman and Glenn R. Elliot, Harvard University Press, 1993

*It’s Perfectly Normal*, Robie Harris, Candlewick Press, 1996

web sites

**www.beinggirl.com** – A fun and informational website geared for teenage girls to use with their parents. Remind students to check with their parents before using.

**www.always.com** – Always products and information

**www.tampax.com** – Tampax products and information

**www.nasn.org** – National Association of School Nurses

**www.nih.gov** – National Institutes of Health

**www.ama-assn.org** – American Medical Association
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