Pregnancy and birth
Learning objective

Through research, students develop an understanding of the physical, emotional and social changes that occur as a result of pregnancy and birth. Students create a poster or movie to demonstrate their understanding.

Take Home Messages

- Sexual activity can result in conception, pregnancy and the birth of a baby.
- Conception occurs when a sperm fertilises an ovum.
- Healthy and unhealthy behaviours can affect the growth of an unborn baby.
- Conception, pregnancy and birth require a level of social and emotional readiness for all people involved.

Note: Revise the learning activities - [Reproductive systems](#) (Year 5) and [Menstruation and conception](#) (Year 7).

Materials

- Items to represent the size of a foetus as it develops - salt, pea, kidney bean, lime, avocado, rockmelon, 30cm ruler, pillow (approx. 55cm for last trimester)
- Teaching Resource: Stages of pregnancy
- Teaching Resource: Pregnancy card sort [one set per group]

Before You Get Started

- It is important that the social and emotional readiness of pregnancy and birth is discussed throughout this activity. Students require the understanding that being pregnant and having a baby is a major life transition and can impact significantly on a person's existing lifestyle

(physically, socially and emotionally).
- This activity is concerned with conception through sexual intercourse but it's important to inform students that there are families where other methods such as in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) are better and more appropriate. It is also important to recognise that there are families where the young person is adopted or fostered and/or where the parents are of the same sex.
- The topic of pregnancy and birth may be an exciting and interesting topic for some, but be mindful that some students may feel embarrassed, uncomfortable or worried about how their bodies may change. Increase the comfort of students through introducing this topic with excitement and fun. Providing popcorn (or something similar) for students to share can reduce their anxiety levels.
- Students may have questions that they feel uncomfortable to ask. Providing a question box for students to place their questions in anonymously will ensure their questions are answered in a safe environment.
- The WA Department of Health has developed a free resource for parents: Talk Soon. Talk Often. A Guide for Parents Talking to their Kids About Sex. It is recommended that teachers communicate to parents and explain the topics that will be covered such as healthy relationships, puberty, hygiene, emotions, resilience, etc. and that you are not teaching their child to have 'sex'.
- Puberty kits: The use of a puberty kit can be a useful tool in the classroom. Check with your school's public health nurse to see if there are any kits readily available or that can be made up to use.
- If you are using an educational video, students can often be distracted if the videos are obviously out of date, as evidenced by the clothes, hairstyles and quality of the video, although this could be used to add humour to the experience. Ensure that any multimedia used is current, relevant, appropriate and sufficient time is allocated for a discussion afterwards.
- Many teachers ask the question of whether or not they should separate the boys and the girls for such classes. Research shows that there is no significant difference for either strategy. You may choose to separate your class by gender, keep them all together or mix strategies by separating your class for certain activities. If you do choose to separate the sexes, ensure that both groups receive the same information. It is just as important for students to learn about their changing bodies as it is for them to learn what the other sex is going through in order to promote compassion. Remember when making this decision that all students need to overcome any potential discomfort in order to be able to effectively communicate sexual matters in relationships when they are older.
- Provide students with a copy of the booklet Girls and Boys in Puberty to take home and read.
- Refer to the Guide: Pregnancy and young people for further content information related to this activity.

Learning Activities

Whole Class

This activity provides a practical and visual learning opportunity for students to develop an understanding of foetal development. It provides the foundation for later discussion regarding the importance of maintaining a healthy baby prior to and after birth, and subsequently the social and emotional impact pregnancy and birth can have on a person.

1. Revise the learning activities Reproductive systems (Year 5) and Menstruation and conception (Year 7). Use the Background Notes on Pregnancy and birth: A brief overview of biology and physiology to review the process of conception.
2. Using the KWL template, ask students to complete the first two columns on their own: What they Know and what they Want to know about pregnancy and birth.
3. Show students the items that represent the size of the foetus as it develops (listed in materials) without explaining the reason why you are showing them.

- Ask students to suggest reasons that the objects have been shown.
        - Show students the Teaching Resource: Stages of pregnancy (projected on a screen and/or handouts).
        - Go through each image and relate each stage back to a relevant object (e.g. at 4 weeks a foetus is the size of a grain of salt). Emphasise that even though the foetus is small, vital changes are happening. The foetus is vulnerable to alcohol and other drugs even during the first weeks.
   4. In pairs or small groups, students sort Teaching Resource: Pregnancy card sort into 2 groups:
        1. Increases chances of having a healthy baby; and
        2. Decreases chances of having a healthy baby.
   5. When complete, clarify any misunderstandings (e.g. What is folate? Why should some raw foods be avoided?)

Independent or Small Group

This activity provides students with the opportunity to extend their understanding of the biological aspect of pregnancy and birth to explore the social and emotional impacts on a person's life.

   1. Students research the social and emotional impact of being pregnant and having a baby, e.g. may have to give up study/work, loneliness while caring for the baby at home, feeling worried about looking after a baby. Ensure the students have a clear understanding of the concepts social and emotional first.
   2. Students create a poster, PowerPoint or iMovie that highlights the social and emotional impacts of being pregnant and giving birth to a baby. The project could be titled 'Strengths, skills and support I would need to be a parent'.

3-2-1 Reflection

   1. Students present their poster, PowerPoint or iMovie to the rest of the class.
   2. Students complete the 'what I have Learnt' component of their KWL chart.
   3. Highlight that being pregnant and having a baby is a lifelong commitment and requires a lifestyle change for all people involved.

Puberty part 2
Learning objective

Students explore the physical, emotional, and social changes associated with puberty.
Take Home Messages

   1. Remind students of the take home message:enlightenedPuberty positivity! There are many positives about puberty - and also some challenges.enlightened Most people find sharing their thoughts and concerns with others helps them to deal with puberty in a positive way.
   2. Remind students that there are lots of free services that offer help to young people over the phone, online chat and in person if they need help. See Websites - Students for a list of reliable websites and services for young people.
   3. Remind students that Get the Facts has a completely confidential 'Ask a question' service they may wish to use. All questions are answered by a qualified health professional with a week.
   4. Allow students time to write any questions they have for the question box. Remember to ask all students to write something on the small pieces of scrap paper at the same time and put it in the box (even if they draw a smiley face) to ensure confidentiality.

Curriculum Links

Year 7

- Management of emotional and social changes associated with puberty through the use of: coping skills; communication skills; problem solving skills and strategies (ACCPS071).

Year 8

- The impact of physical changes on gender, cultural and sexual identities (ACCPS070).

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Curriculum Links

Key understandings

enlightened Puberty positivity - positives of puberty and ways to cope with the challenges associated with puberty.

enlightened Emotional and social changes of puberty and how to manage them.

Materials

- Access to internet
- Laugh and Learn video - puberty part 2 (2min 19sec)
- 3 hoops (or pieces of butchers paper)
- Sticky notes or scrap paper
- Preferred media for large and small group work and individual work (e.g. paper and textas or iPads/tablets)

Before You Get Started

- Students must complete Puberty part 1 prior to this lesson.
- Protective interrupting - Teachers need to know and understand how to use this technique to prevent students from potentially disclosing sensitive information or abuse in front of other students.
- Dealing with disclosures - Teachers must be aware of school and legal procedures if a student discloses personal issues, particularly disclosures of sexual abuse.
- Question box - Have a question box available in every lesson to allow students the opportunity to ask questions that may be too embarrassing or unsafe for them to ask openly in class. See Setting up the question box and Types of questions for further information. For ways to answer some of the curly questions, see Student FAQs.
- Preview Laugh and learn - puberty 2 video (2min 19sec) to determine suitability for your students.

Learning Activities

Group agreement

5 Minutes   Whole Class

Teaching tip: A group agreement must be established before any RSE program begins to ensure a safe learning environment. Read: Essential information: Establishing a group agreement for tips on how to create one and what to include.

1. Revise the class group agreement.

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Learning Activities

Laugh and learn videos - puberty part 2

5 Minutes   Whole Class

2. Say: "Many of you have probably covered much of this information in primary school. This session is going to look at what you would like to have known about puberty when you first started learning about it. As with all things, there are positive and there are challenges about puberty."
3. Watch Laugh and learn video - puberty part 2 (2min 19sec)
4. Ask the following questions: What do you think of the use of humour in this video? Does it help get the information across? What is the message/information you took from this video?

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Learning Activities

Puberty positivity

10 Minutes   Whole Class

5. Think-pair-share: Discuss the positives of puberty (Puberty positivity).   (Possible answers: getting older and more mature; having greater independence; body changes are interesting; able to do different things; getting taller and stronger.)   Students may like to use the following resources for reference: How to order free hardcopies.
   1. Get the Facts: Puberty
   2. Get the Facts: Puberty animation
   3. SECCA App - includes a bank of 2000 images designed to support access to RSE for people of all ages and abilities
6. Share ideas with whole class and discuss.

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Learning Activities

Changes during puberty

10 Minutes   Whole Class

7. Acknowledge some of the negatives that many people associate with puberty.
8. Guess my category: Place three hoops on the group (or butchers paper, or record electronically) to represent the categories 'physical', 'emotional', and 'social/relationships' but do not tell the students what they represent (i.e. do not label the categories).
9. Ask students to write a challenge associated with puberty onto sticky notes. Read each sticky note to the class and place them into the relative hoop.
10. Ask: How have I grouped these answers? or Why have I grouped the answers this way?   What labels would you give each group?   Do any of the groups overlap? (Hoops can then be joined

to form a [Venn diagram](#) and sticky notes regrouped accordingly) (Emotional and social overlap in most ways. Many of the physical answers could lead to some of the emotional/social answers)   Do some groups have more sticky notes than others? Why do you think this is?   (Society? Parents? Culture? Pressure?)

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Learning Activities

Trigger warning: Students may raise sensitive topics in this session. Teachers will need to be prepared for potential responses related to things such as [gender identity](#), [sexual identity](#), religious beliefs, cultural beliefs, etc).

Possible responses

Physical

Getting first period

Waiting for first period

Period cramps

Managing periods at school or when out

Sweat/body odour

Developing breasts

Not developing breasts

Size of breasts

Voice breaking

Growing pains

Getting taller

Not getting taller

Pimples and acne

Pubic hair (growing early, growing late, growing too much, not growing enough, etc)

Making decisions about whether to remove hair or not

Weight gain

etc.

Emotional

Mood swings/mood changes

Embarrassed

Anxiety

Selfishness

Become self-involved

Withdrawn

Isolated

Emotional

Fear of being judged

No one understands me

My parents don't 'get' me

Exam pressure

Negative body image (dieting, eating disorders, self-harm)

Confusion

Sexual feelings

Shy

etc

Social/relationship

Changing relationships with friends

Best friend moves to a different school

Best friend has a boyfriend/girlfriend (and no time for me)

Friend smoking/drinking/using drugs and I don't like it

I fancy my best friend

Nasty things were posted about me online

Not fitting in (i.e. not having the 'right' clothes, phone, etc)

Challenging family boundaries

Too much independence or not enough independence

I'm not allowed to date boys/girls

I have a curfew

I have to work or do chores

I'm not allowed to cut my hair, get a piercing, shave my legs, etc

Not allowed to go out without an adult

Restrictions on screen time/internet/phone use

Restrictions on clothing (e.g. Mum says I can't leave the house like this. e.g. 2 Cultural clothing)

Fancying someone and not being able to tell them

All my best friends have boyfriends/girlfriends. I don't.

Crushes

Dealing with rejection

Navigating new relationships

Breaking up

Questioning sexual identity (e.g. Am I gay?)

I sent a naked pic

A private image I sent got shared without consent

etc

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Learning Activities

Positive coping strategies

20 Minutes   Whole Class

11. Say: "It is important for people to have a range of positive coping strategies to help with the potential challenges of puberty. No one person will feel exactly the same as others and no one strategy will work for everyone, so lots of different ideas are needed. Lots of skills that you already have can be used to think about how you can deal with these potential challenges - seeking help, problem solving, and communication. We are going to come up with lots of ways that you or someone you know might find useful."
12. In pairs, students to be given one challenge of puberty. Use the mindmap strategy to brainstorm some ways of dealing positively with the challenge allocated. (PC options: Word SmartArt Tools; Canva - Education - Mindmap; Xmind; Bubble.us. Table app: Popplet). Model an example and have students offer some positive coping strategies.
13. Other possible copings strategies:
    1. Talking to a teacher/school nurse/school psychologist/chaplain/doctor
    2. Getting enough sleep
    3. Turning off phones/devices and going outside
    4. Using Kids Helpline
    5. Meditation/Yoga
    6. Remembering that puberty doesn't last forever - you will get though it!

7. Getting questions answered on [Get the Facts](#) website
14. Share and display the mindmaps.

3-2-1 Reflection

Reflection: What I wish I had know about puberty BEFORE puberty!

5 Minutes   Small Group

15. Using preferred medium, students complete the following sentence: 'Puberty! I wish I had known that....because...'   Examples: Puberty! I wish I had known that I could talk to Headspace when I was feeling low because I didn't realise there were so many organisations like Headspace that offer help for free.   Puberty! I wish I known that I didn't need to worry about hair growing in weird places because now I think it's cool.   Trigger warning Some students may disclose personal information when using 'I' statements. Some students may find this 'I' statement too personal or confronting. Consider if this following alternate wording is better for your students or offer them the choice.   'Puberty! One thing I would tell someone that is about to start going through puberty is....because...'
16. Share in small groups.
17. Discuss the following in small groups or record in a journal.   How easy was it to think of the positives of puberty? Why?   Why does puberty have so much misinformation around it?   What are two coping strategies that appeal to you and why do you like them?   What's one positive thing about puberty that you would say to a younger person?

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3-2-1 Reflection

Assessment task

- SCSA Assessment task [How to cope with puberty](#).

Health Promoting Schools

Background teacher note: [Health promoting schools framework](#).

Partnerships with parents

- [Talk Soon. Talk Often: a guide for parents talking to their kids about sex](#) is a free resource that can be bulk ordered by schools and an [interactive website](#). Send a copy home to parents prior to starting your RSE program. The booklet offers ages and stage related information on puberty (and other topics) so that parents can reinforce the topics covered in class. ([How to order hard copies](#).)
- Order copies of [Puberty](#) and [Relationships, sex and other stuff](#) to be sent home for parents.
- Run a parent workshop prior to delivering RSE lessons so that parents can see the resources used, ask questions and find out how to support the school program by continuing conversations at home.
- Add the [Get the Facts](#) link to your website or e-news.
- The [SECCA app](#) is a free resource that includes a bank of 2000 images designed to support access to RSE for people of all ages and abilities. Share the link in your newsletters.

Partnerships with school staff

- Invite the school health professionals and pastoral care staff (school nurse, school psychologist, chaplain, boarding house master, etc) to a class or an assembly to introduce them to the students. Have them talk to the students about their role and how they can help. For example:
    - If you get your period at school and need help, you can go to...
    - If you are worried about something and need to talk, you can go to...