

OUT OF  
SCHOOL  
YOUTH

# MODULE 5

## MY BODY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Facilitator Manual



SAMOA

### **Out-of-school Family Life Education (FLE) resource package**

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 = CORE ACTIVITY





## MODULE 5 INTRODUCTION

### Before getting started

The out-of-school (OOS) Family Life Education (FLE) package is an important part of delivering comprehensive sexuality education to young people in out-of-school settings throughout the Pacific. The package has been divided into seven modules to cover topics suggested in the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE).

Each module is designed as a training tool for youth workers, peer educators and other relevant staff from government and non-government organisations within their community. Prior to facilitating this module, it is important that facilitators have completed the Facilitator Guidance. The Facilitator Guidance provides essential information and guidance to facilitators to support them when designing and facilitating sessions in the community. The Guidance will aid facilitators to build sessions to suit time schedules and tailor sessions to specific groups of young people.

It is important for facilitators to plan their sessions according to the needs of their audience. Suitability of activities might vary based on where and to whom the facilitators are facilitating the sessions. Literacy supports, access to technology or age ranges should all be considered when adapting sessions.

### Who is this module for?

This module is intended for use with all young people in Samoa. The definition of a 'young person' varies from country-to-country. The World Health Organisation defines 'young people' as anyone between the age ranges of 10–24 years. The OOS sub-committee in Samoa have defined 'young people' as between 16–35. Whether your audience includes adolescents, young parents, families or caregivers, the OOS FLE package will provide them with the knowledge and skills to achieve healthier lives and empower them to advocate for sexual and reproductive health and rights across their communities.


**Module 5: My body and its development** is the fifth module of the OOS FLE package and includes topics that explore anatomy, puberty, menstruation and body image. It is important that young people have a strong understanding of their body and the changes that might be occurring as they grow up. This knowledge will support young people to notice when they may experience a sexual or reproductive health issue and the confidence to seek help if and when they might need it.



## MODULE 5 INTRODUCTION cont...

### How to use the module

The modules present information in a format which is designed to be reinforced and explored through activities. Each module is designed to deliver information on set topics as reflected in the learning objectives. Module 5 is divided into four topics and each topic is divided into several activities.

Each topic of this module contains **'core activities'**  which cover foundational knowledge and essential learning. It is recommended that when planning sessions in a program, core activities are always included and can be used as building blocks from which facilitators can create the rest of the session plan in a program. More detailed information on how to create a program using the core activities from different modules can be found in Facilitator Guidance.

Each activity lists a set of learning objectives. The facilitator should outline the objectives at the start of the activity. The objectives should be written up and placed for all to see throughout the activity. At the end of the activity the group should be able to refer back to the objectives to determine whether they have been met.

Each activity has a suggested time in which participants are asked to complete a group discussion, role play, charade, individual work etc. By staying within the times suggested the module will be completed within a suitable timeframe.

Activity feedback is an important part of the learning process. The facilitator should support and encourage the participants in this process through active listening and positive feedback. The participatory nature of the activities reflects the different styles of adult learning techniques and offer the participants the opportunity to link new knowledge learnt from this module with their own experience.

The activities provide speech prompts for facilitators to help them guide their delivery. All text written in *italics* can be spoken directly by the facilitator. All discussion questions are underlined and example answers for each question are provided to support the facilitator to prompt discussion.

At the end of each activity, the participants are asked to share something they have learned and the facilitator will also share some of the key messages.

### Using a trauma-informed approach

This module includes topics and activities that discuss sensitive content areas which might trigger any past or current trauma for the participants. What is considered 'triggering' can be specific to each individual, location and group. Facilitators are encouraged to decide when and what to mention when practicing trauma-informed approaches at the beginning of these activities. Each activity under this topic lists areas that may be considered 'sensitive' and these can be used as a guide to help facilitators create a trigger warning at the beginning.

Example of how to start a topic which contains sensitive areas:

*In this session, we will be doing a few different activities which include sensitive contents like... As we do these activities, it is important that we practice self-care. During these activities, you might feel uncomfortable or not okay. If you do not feel okay, please feel free to sit and watch without participating, or excuse yourself from the room. One of the facilitators will come and talk to you.*

# 1

## MODULE 5

### TOPIC 1

#### MY (SEXUAL) BODY



## Topic overview

It is important that young people can identify and describe their sexual and reproductive body parts and understand how they work. This knowledge will help young people communicate about health issues, injuries, sexual abuse and how to avoid unplanned pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. It also helps young people understand that their bodies are as unique and normal as any others and promotes self-confidence and positive body image.


Sexual responses and feelings can be complex and young people may have a lot of questions. This curiosity is normal and should be supported. Ideally young people should have a trusted adult they feel comfortable to speak to about any questions or concerns.

## Topic learning objectives

Facilitator version	Participant version
Identify and describe the basic body parts involved with sexual health and reproduction	Identify and describe the basic body parts involved with sexual health and reproduction
Acknowledge that everyone's body is unique, and that differences in our bodies, and how they function are acceptable, including for young people with a disability, and it is normal to be curious and have questions about their bodies and sexual functions	Understand that everyone's body is unique and works differently, including people with a disability. It is normal to be curious and have questions about bodies and sexual functions
Summarise the sexual and reproductive capacity of men and women over the life cycle	Summarise how men and women can reproduce (make babies) and be sexual over their lifetime
Analyse the role hormones play in emotional and physical changes over a lifetime	Explore how hormones impact emotional and physical changes over a lifetime
Explain the key functions of the body that contribute to reproduction (e.g. menstrual cycle, sperm production and ejaculation of semen)	Explain key parts of how the body reproduces (makes babies) including the menstrual cycle, making and releasing sperm (male orgasm)
Identify a trusted adult to whom questions can be directed and demonstrate ways to ask about sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology	Name a trusted adult they can ask questions about sex and their body
Understand that sexual stimulation involves physical and psychological aspects and people respond in different ways at different times, including being influenced by illness, stress, sexual abuse, medications, substance use and trauma	Understand that sexual feelings are complex, and these feelings can be influenced by many different things including illness, stress, sexual abuse, medicine, drugs and alcohol and trauma
Recognise that understanding a body's sexual response can help individuals understand their body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so they can seek help	Recognise that knowing how sexual parts of our bodies work can help people understand their own bodies, including when something is wrong, so they can get help

Facilitator version	Participant version
Understand how to carry out basic testicular and breast self-checks and express understanding of the importance of doing so regularly	Understand how to do basic testicular and breast self-checks, and why it's important to do them often
Differentiate myths and facts about sexual behaviour and question myths	Tell the difference between myths and facts about sex, and question myths

## Activities

Activity	Time	Page	Handout
1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology 	60 minutes	5	Yes
1B: Model making	30 minutes	19	No
1C: So that's how babies are made	45 minutes	22	No
1D: My body true or false	30 minutes	26	No
1E: Visiting a health clinic	45 minutes	29	Yes
1F: Happier, healthier, longer	30 minutes	35	Yes

## 1A

## Activity: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology



### Activity overview:

This activity helps participants define and identify the basic body parts involved in sexual and reproductive health. It is important that young people know how to identify different body parts and speak about them with confidence if they need to seek health advice or services. It can also help them identify when something might not be right and they need medical attention.

In sessions about anatomy, consider that participants may use informal language or slang to talk about body parts. As a facilitator, it is important to watch out for and acknowledge harmful language and encourage more neutral and accurate terms.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 60 minutes

### Learning objectives:

- Identify and describe the basic body parts involved with sexual and reproductive health
- Acknowledge that everyone's body is unique, and that differences in our bodies, and how they function are acceptable, including for young people with a disability, and it is normal to be curious and have questions about their bodies and sexual functions
- Summarise the sexual and reproductive capacity of men and women over the life cycle
- Analyse the role hormones play in emotional and physical changes over a lifetime
- Explain the key functions of the body that contribute to reproduction (e.g. menstrual cycle, sperm production and ejaculation of semen)
- Recognise that understanding a body's sexual response can help individuals understand their body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so they can seek help
- Differentiate myths and facts about sexual behaviour and question myths

**Sensitive areas:** Sex

### Resources:

- Butchers paper
- Pens or markers
- Handout 1Aa: Male external anatomy
- Handout 1Ab: Male internal anatomy
- Handout 1Ac: Female external anatomy
- Handout 1Ad: Female internal anatomy
- Anatomy information table





## TOPIC 1 – My (sexual) body cont...

**Preparation:** Prepare all handouts by printing four copies of each. You should have a total of 16 pages.

**Group composition:** Four groups

**Prior learning:** None

**Literacy support:** Required - this activity involves basic reading and writing

**Technology:** None

### Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology<sup>(1)</sup>

#### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *This topic is all about our bodies and how they relate to sex and reproduction. Our bodies are amazing! They keep us healthy, they get us from one place to another, and they can make babies. Our bodies heal when they're hurt and they help us deal with stress, illness and trauma.*
2. Have an open discussion following these questions:

Are all human bodies the same? What makes each body different to another?

(You can ask participants: Are there just two types of bodies, for male and female? Or are there child bodies, teenage bodies and adult bodies? What about bodies with and without physical disabilities? What different things can bodies do?)

#### Example answers:

- No human body is exactly the same as another
- Bodies are different between biological sexes: male, female or intersex
- Bodies are different for babies, adolescents, adults and elders
- Our bodies can look different depending on our race, ethnicity, age, genetics, gender identity, disability and expressions
- Difference from one person to another is okay and expected; all bodies should be celebrated
- Bodies change throughout our lives
- Some differences may mean one person's body works differently to most – but that's okay!

Do you think many young people are curious about their bodies?

#### Example answer:

- Yes! It is normal to be curious and have questions about your body
- It can be helpful to talk to someone about what is happening to your body, even if it might feel awkward
- When we break our arm or have a cold it's easy for us to seek information, talk to a health worker or ask questions. It should be the same for sexual body parts!

3. Explain to participants that when we go through puberty and our bodies start changing, we might have lots of questions. **Say something like:** *Young people can have a lot of questions about these changes. They can have questions like "How much pubic hair do people have? Why do females develop breasts? Why do males have testes?" These are all common questions and hopefully, this topic can help answer some of them!*
4. Tell participants this activity will focus on our reproductive systems, the organs involved in creating a fetus and baby.
5. Ask participants: What do our sexual and reproductive systems do? What is their function?

**Example answers:**

- To make babies
  - To make the sperm (in males) and eggs (in females)
  - To transport sperm and eggs
  - To protect a developing baby
  - To produce hormones (hormones are chemicals that race around the body and signal body parts to change what they are doing)
  - For sex and sexual enjoyment
6. Explain that they are now going to be looking at some images of sexual and reproductive anatomy and ask whether participants are comfortable with seeing these images before proceeding.
  7. Remind participants that not all bodies look like the images in the handouts. Bodies can look many different ways and sometimes, bodies do not fit 'neatly' into entirely male or entirely female categories. Remind participants about how bodies can be all different shapes, sizes and colours. This is totally normal.
  8. Set up four 'stations' in different corners of the room. In one corner, place all copies of handout 1Aa. Repeat for the other three handouts (put all four pieces of paper of the same handout in one corner).
  9. Split the participants into four teams and let them choose a team name.
  10. Instruct each team that they will have 2 minutes at each station to correctly label the diagram in the handout.
  11. Instruct teams to make sure they write their team name at the top of their diagrams at each station and then when the round is over, take their diagram with them.
  12. After 10 minutes, teams need to sit together with their four filled handouts.
  13. Go through answers using the information in the facilitator's answer sheet.
  14. After this is complete, on some butchers paper at the front of the room, draw three columns with the headings 'Male', 'Female', 'Both'.



15. Explain by **saying something like:** *Knowing how your body works can help you explain to a healthcare worker if you have a question or you think there might be a problem. It will also help you later when there are lessons about family planning and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Let's brainstorm the sexual and reproductive anatomy we all have and try to determine if it's a male part, female part, or body part everyone has. Some people's bodies don't fit neatly into one category or another and they might be born with a mix of different genitals or sexual and reproductive organs (private parts).*

*Those people are called "intersex". Let's now think of the names of the parts of the body, both inside and outside, that are part of the sexual and reproductive systems.*

16. Ask participants to start naming body parts one at a time.

17. As each body part is named, do the following three things:

- Ask participants which column the body part belongs in and write it in the correct column.
- Ask what other terms are used among young people for that body part, including local language terms.

**Example:** *When you write down 'breasts', other names could include 'titi', 'boobs', 'boobies', etc.*

- Share some information about that part of the body using the anatomy information table at the end of this activity. You don't need to share all the information, just what you think is important.

**i Facilitator note**

Be mindful that participants may use language here that is harmful. If so, remind them to use a more accurate or neutral word.

18. Ask participants to get into pairs to discuss the following questions between themselves. This will help to conclude this activity.

**Discussion questions:**

- What is one new piece of information you have learnt from this activity?
- Do you have any more questions about the female or male sexual and reproductive systems?
- Are there particular groups of young people who may need extra support when it comes to learning about body parts?



### Example answers:

- Young people with a disability
- Young people with differing gender identity or expression
- Young people with differing sexual orientation
- Young people who are transgender
- Young people who are intersex

Why might these groups need extra support?

### Example answers:

- They may have received education before that was not inclusive of their experiences
- They may have been excluded from proper education
- They may not have support around them
- They may have experienced discrimination because of their differences
- They could have been made to feel that their bodies or sexual orientation are 'wrong' or 'abnormal', which is not true

Who is one adult in your life that you trust and feel comfortable to ask questions if you needed more information about your body?

19. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

20. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

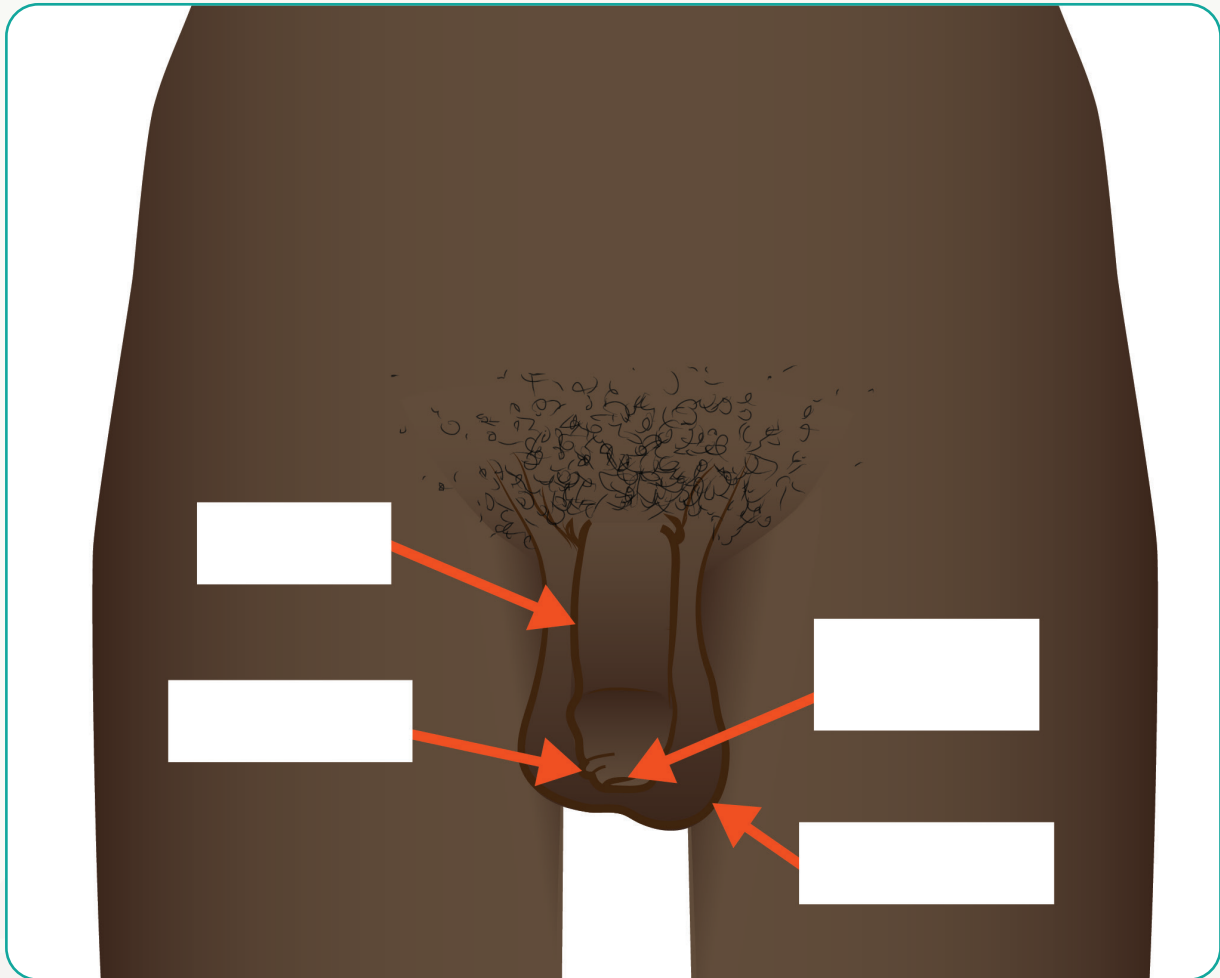
- All bodies look different, and that is totally normal
- It is normal to be curious about your body, and it's helpful to ask questions or find information on reliable sources such as health services
- The reproductive system supports pregnancy and helps make babies
- Learning about our bodies work can help us to talk about them accurately with health workers
- Knowing how to talk about our bodies can help us communicate with our partners, and understand how pregnancy works
- If you think something might be wrong or unusual about your body, see a healthcare worker as soon as you can

21. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Handout 1Aa: Male external anatomy

TEAM NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**Male external anatomy**

**Penis:** You may have grown up calling it different things, but the formal English term is penis. The penis can be different colours, shapes and sizes. The penis can either be circumcised (when the foreskin is removed) or uncircumcised. Both are normal.

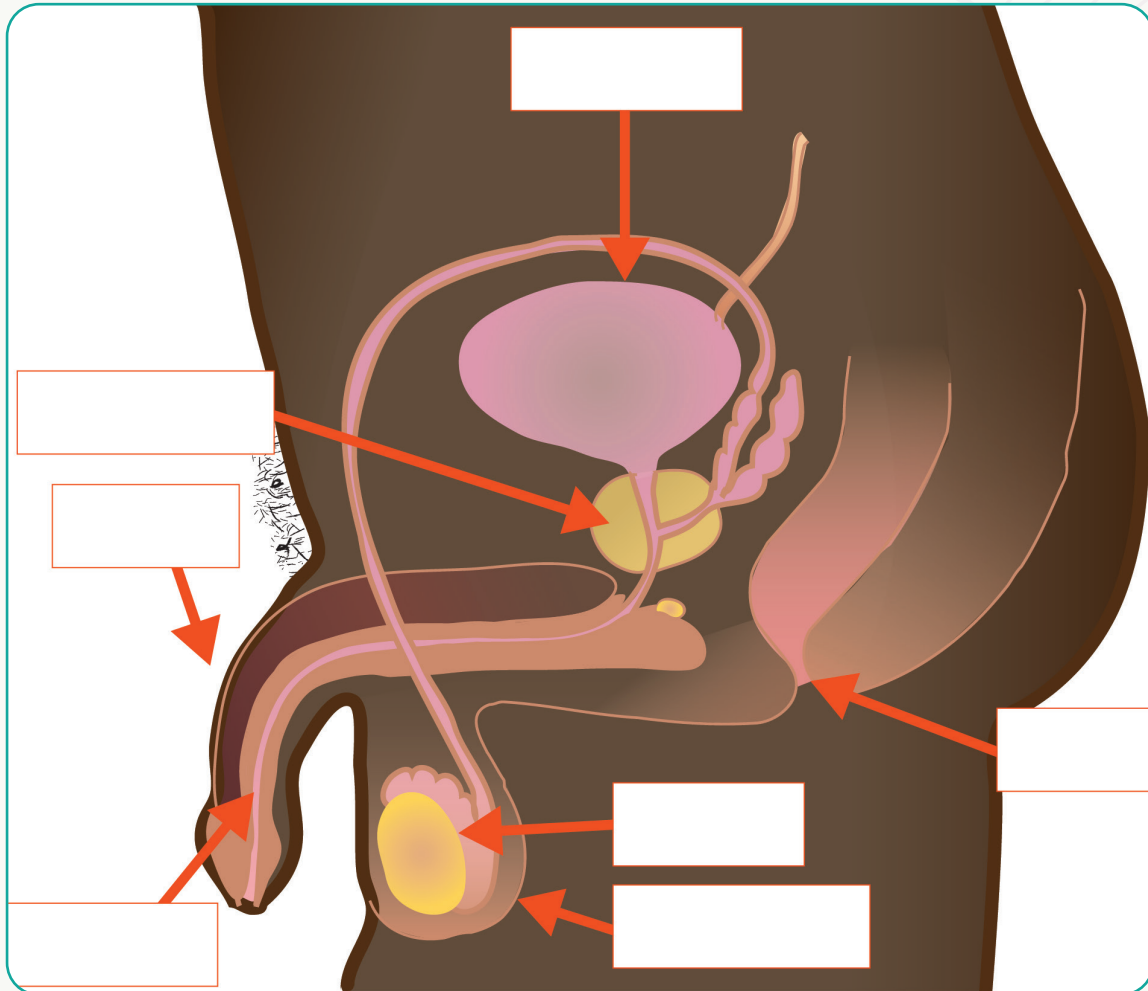
**Foreskin (prepuce):** This is the fold of skin which can cover the head of the penis. The foreskin is sometimes removed for cultural, religious or medical reasons. This is called circumcision.

**Urethral opening:** This is the opening of the tube that carries urine (wee) and semen (cum).

**Scrotum:** The scrotum (sack) holds two small ovals called testes (balls). During puberty, testes grow bigger and start to make sperm. It is normal to have one testis that is a little bit larger than the other and hangs a little bit lower than the other.

## Handout 1Ab: Male internal anatomy

TEAM NAME \_\_\_\_\_



### Male internal anatomy

**Testis/testicle:** There are two testicles in the scrotum. They produce sperm and the male sex hormone, testosterone. Testosterone is the main hormone in males that cause changes in puberty. Testicles are sensitive, so boys should wear well-fitting underwear, especially during sports.

**Urethra:** The tube that carries urine (wee) and semen (cum).

**Bladder:** The bladder holds urine and is shaped like a sac.

**Anus:** The hole in the bottom (bum) that allows faeces (poo) to pass outside the body. Both males and female have an anus.

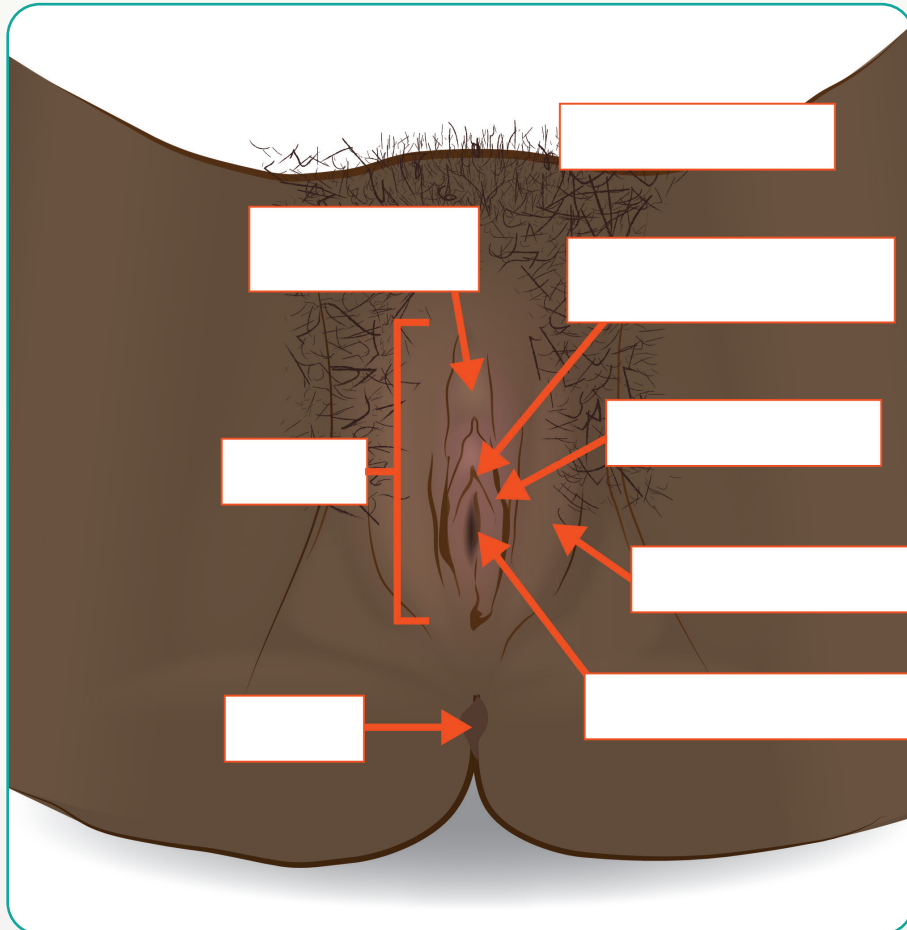
**Scrotum:** The sac of skin around the testes/testicles.

**Penis:** The male sex organ through which urine and semen pass. When a man is sexually aroused (turned on), his penis becomes stiff (an erection) and ejaculation of semen may occur.

**Prostate:** A small gland that surrounds the urethra and makes fluid that makes up a part of semen.

## Handout 1Ac: Female external anatomy

TEAM NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**Female external anatomy**

**Vulva:** This is the external female genitals. It consists of two pairs of fleshy folds (labia), the opening of the vagina, the urethral opening and the clitoris.

**Labia majora:** This is the outer parts of the vulva (like fleshy lips) which protect the opening of the vagina and the urethral opening.

**Labia minora:** These are the inner lips around the vaginal opening.

**Clitoris:** A small, sensitive organ that is at the top of the inner lips above the urethral opening.

**Urethral opening:** A tiny hole where the urine comes out.

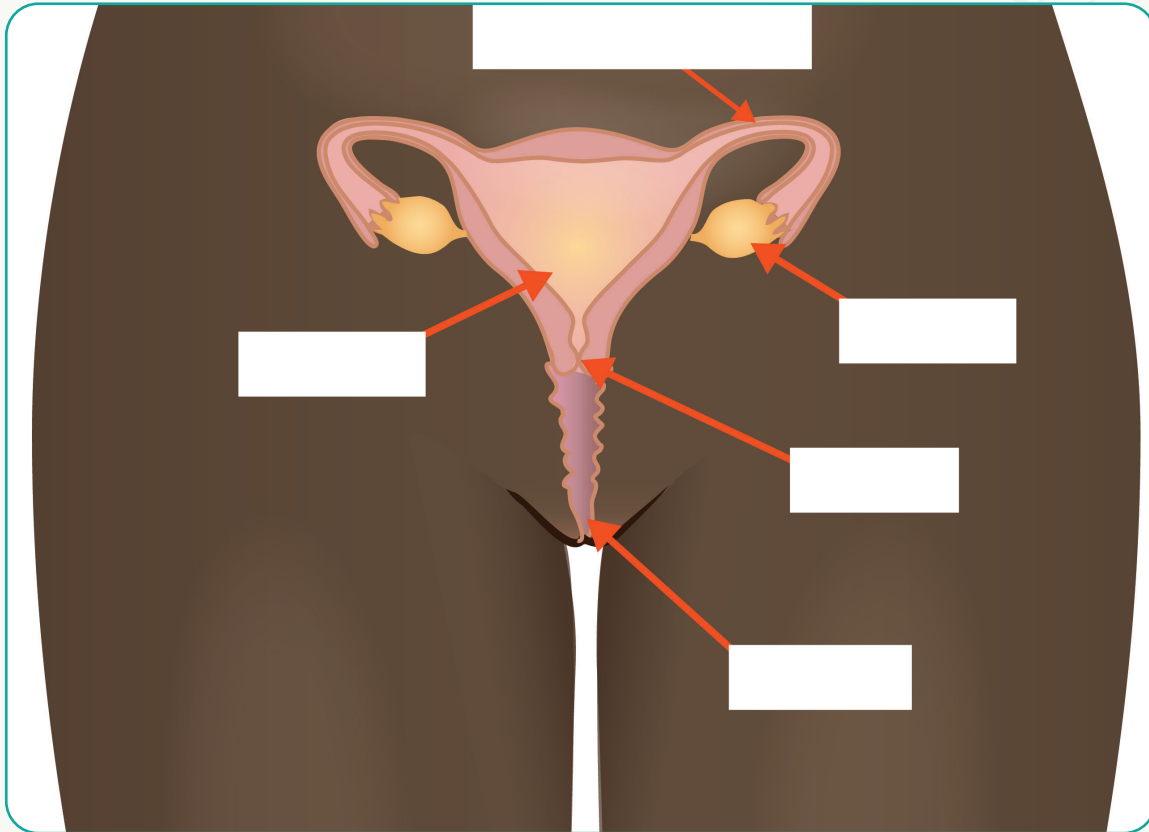
**Anus:** The hole in the bottom (bum) that allows faeces (poo) to pass outside the body. Both males and female have an anus.

**Vaginal opening:** This is the entrance to the vagina.

**Pubic hair:** Pubic hair protects the skin and body around the vulva.

## Handout 1Ad: Female internal anatomy

TEAM NAME \_\_\_\_\_



### Female internal anatomy

**Vagina:** This is the passage from the uterus to the outside of the body. This is where babies and menstrual blood leave the body.

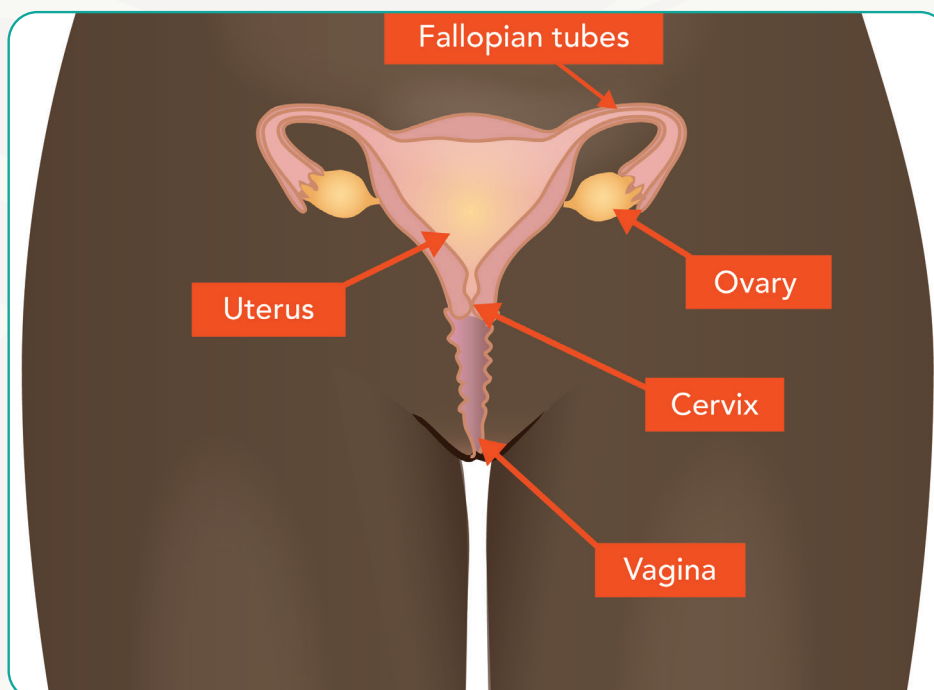
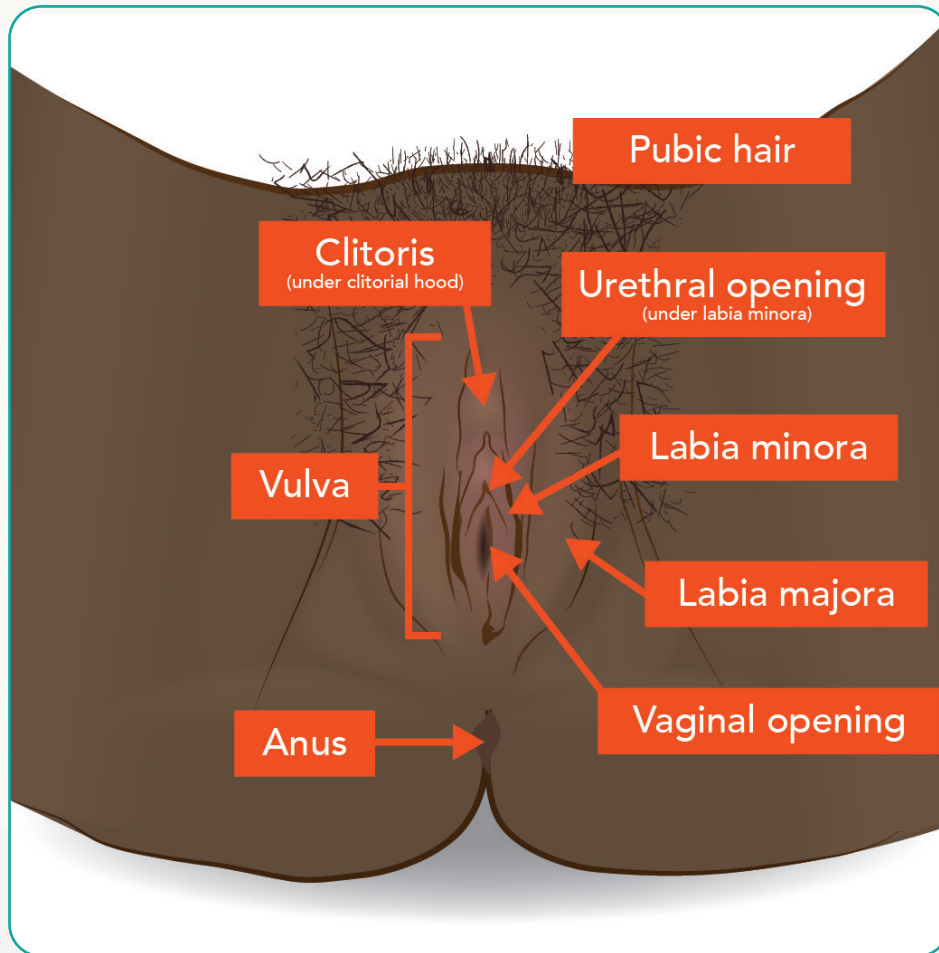
**Cervix:** This is the lower opening of the uterus at the top of the vagina. During childbirth the cervix stretches to allow the baby to come out.

**Uterus (womb):** Where a fetus/baby grows and develops during pregnancy. The uterus is where menstrual blood is from.

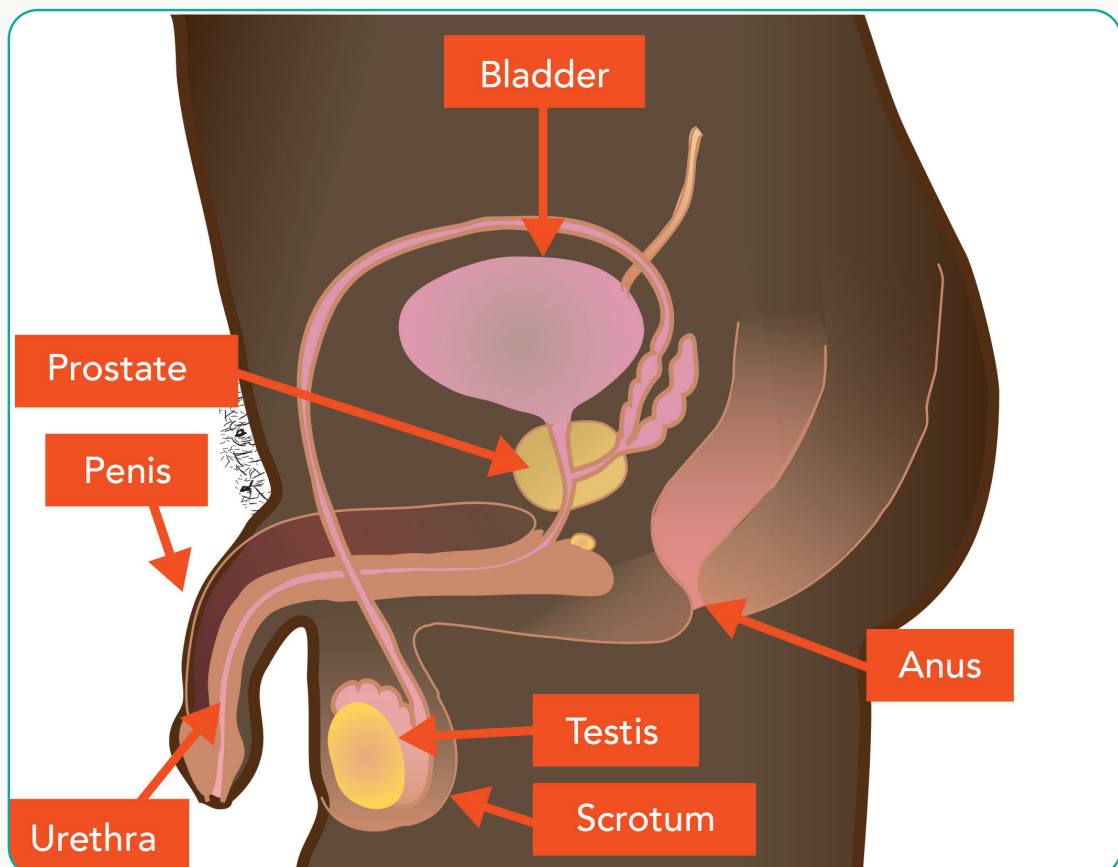
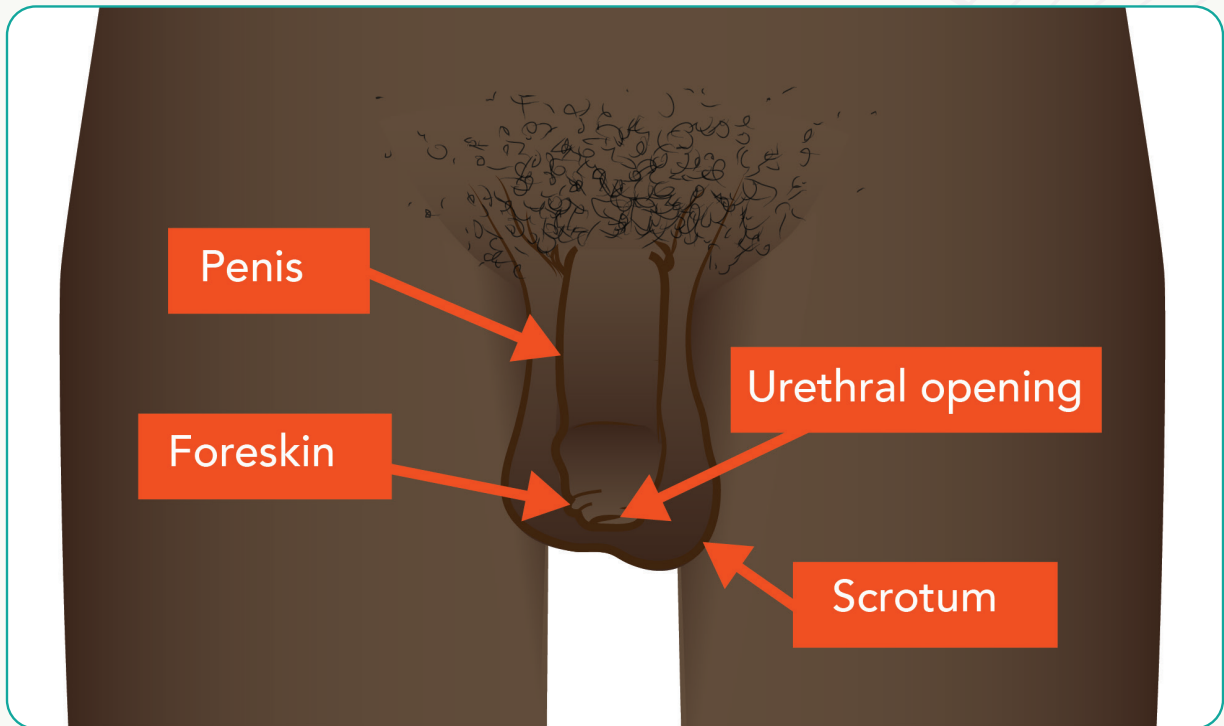
**Fallopian tubes:** Two hollow tubes on either side of the uterus. They provide a passage for the eggs (ova) from the ovaries to the uterus. They are the place where a sperm may fertilise an egg.

**Ovaries:** The two ovaries are the main female reproductive organs. Thousands of eggs (ova) are stored in the ovaries. They produce the female hormones called oestrogen and progesterone, which cause the changes of puberty.

## Facilitator answer sheet



## Facilitator answer sheet





## Anatomy information table<sup>(1)</sup>

### Facilitator background on reproductive systems

#### **i** Facilitator note

Facilitators do not need to share all this information. This may just be helpful for facilitators if young people have questions about any words that refer to body parts that they may have heard of before. Facilitators can just use this to clarify any questions if they need to.

Female parts	Function
Uterus (womb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where the embryo/fetus/baby can grow and be protected</li> <li>Expands during pregnancy as baby grows, after returns to normal size</li> </ul>
Cervix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connects the vagina to the uterus</li> <li>Widens during birth for baby to pass through</li> </ul>
Vagina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong, stretchy passage that connects the cervix to the vulva</li> <li>This is where babies and menstrual blood leave the body</li> <li>The middle of the three openings between a female's legs</li> <li>Produces fluid to clean itself, which may appear in underwear as white discharge</li> <li>Produces fluid when sexually excited as lubrication for sexual intercourse</li> </ul>
Ovum (egg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A single cell released from the ovaries</li> <li>Capable of developing into a new organism when fertilised (united) with a sperm cell</li> </ul>
Ovary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides storage for the ovum (egg)</li> <li>Allows eggs to grow</li> <li>Produces sex hormones</li> <li>Becomes active during puberty to release an egg monthly</li> </ul>
Fallopian tubes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where egg and sperm can meet for fertilisation to occur</li> </ul>



Female parts	Function
Vulva (made up of labia majora, labia minora)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labia are folds of skin sometimes called lips</li> <li>• Protect opening of urethra and vagina</li> <li>• Sensitive and pleasurable to touch</li> <li>• Come in many shapes, sizes, textures and colours which are all normal</li> </ul>
Clitoris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very sensitive organ full of nerve endings, making it pleasurable to touch</li> <li>• Visible as small bump covered by a fold of tissue called the 'clitoral hood', extends deeper within the body</li> <li>• Provides physical feelings</li> </ul>
Both male and female	Function
Pelvis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bony structure that support and protect the internal reproductive organs</li> <li>• Men's and women's pelvises are shaped differently so that women can give birth if they choose</li> </ul>
Urethra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows urine (pee) to pass</li> <li>• In males allows semen to pass</li> <li>• In males is the tube inside the penis and the opening is at the tip of the penis</li> <li>• In females it is a tube inside the pelvis and the opening is below the clitoris and above the opening of the vagina</li> <li>• Some females pass a clear fluid that is not urine from their urethra during orgasm. This is normal and natural, and it is not pee</li> </ul>
Anus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hole in the bottom (bum)</li> <li>• Allows faeces (poo) to pass through the bowel outside the body</li> <li>• Both males and female have an anus</li> </ul>
Pubic hair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coarse hair that grows on external reproductive organs around puberty</li> <li>• People can have a little or a lot of pubic hair</li> <li>• Both males and females have pubic hair</li> </ul>

Male parts	Function
Penis (made up of shaft, glans and foreskin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows urine (pee) and semen to pass</li> <li>Provides sensation (has many nerve endings)</li> </ul>
Foreskin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can cover the tip of the penis</li> <li>Can provide physical feelings</li> <li>Males who have been circumcised don't have a foreskin</li> </ul>
Scrotum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscular sac, which is shorter when cold, longer when warm</li> <li>Holds testes</li> <li>Controls temperature</li> <li>Provides physical feelings</li> </ul>
Testes/testicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produces sperm and sex hormones</li> </ul>
Vas deferens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides storage for sperm</li> <li>Allow passage of sperm from the testes to the urethra</li> </ul>
Semen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps sperm live longer and travel better</li> <li>About a teaspoon per ejaculation</li> <li>Contains hundreds of millions of sperm</li> </ul>
Prostate gland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produces most of the fluid that makes up semen</li> </ul>

## 1B

Activity: Model making<sup>(2)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity is a fun and interactive activity to help participants name and create models of basic reproductive organs. It is helpful to complete Activity 1A with participants before beginning this activity, so that everyone has a basic understanding of the different parts and where they are located in the body.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Identify and describe the basic body parts involved with sexual health and reproduction
- Acknowledge that everyone's body is unique, and that differences in our bodies, and how they function are acceptable, including for young people with a disability, and it is normal to be curious and have questions about their bodies and sexual functions

**Sensitive areas:** Sex

**Resources:** Bush resources (sticks, rocks, leaves, fruit etc.)

**Preparation:** Check your environment to see what kinds of resources can be used. This can include sticks, bark, leaves, grasses, flowers, fruits etc.

**Group composition:** Small groups

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** None



## 1B: Model making

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *This activity will help us remember what we have been learning about the reproductive parts of male and female bodies. We will be doing this by creating models of the reproductive systems using bush materials.*
2. Divide the large group into small groups of mixed genders.
3. Allocate half the groups to work on the male reproductive system and the other half on the female reproductive system. Make sure that it is not only girls working on female parts and boys working on male parts. They can look at the flipchart to help them create the shape.
4. Ask the participants to go out and collect bush materials from the surrounding area (fruits, vegetables, leaves, rocks, etc.) that will help them create a model of the reproductive system.
5. Give the group 20 minutes to complete the activity. This activity can be done inside or outside.
6. After all the groups have finished, ask them to explain their reproductive system to the other participants. Compare their bush material reproductive systems to the handouts 1Aa, 1Ab, 1Ac, 1Ad from activity 1A. Add any missing parts and answer questions.

### Facilitator note

These two images are examples of how to create a model of reproductive organs using leaves, flowers, vegetables etc.



7. Spend 5-10 minutes as a large group discussing the following questions (the answers can be framed as key messages as well).

What did this activity teach you about your reproductive anatomy?

**Example answers:**

- Everyone can look different
- Our bodies can come in all different shapes, colours and sizes
- The more we talk about our body parts, the less embarrassing it can be
- It is important to talk about our body parts so we can seek help if we need it

Why is it important that we learn about and celebrate the differences in our bodies?

**Example answer**

- So that people feel less embarrassed to access healthcare
  - So people feel more included
  - So people with disabilities, diverse gender identity or expression feel included
  - To reduce negative body-image and low self-esteem
  - To improve relationships; if people are happier with their bodies and more confident, they will not feel ashamed or unsure about how they look
8. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*
- Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.
9. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
- All our bodies are unique!
  - There is no right or wrong way to have body parts
  - When it comes to our external and internal organs, we are all different
  - Our body parts are different by shape, colour and size, just like our bush models
  - We should feel comfortable talking about our reproductive organs, this will help us seek health care when we need it
  - Knowing how our body functions is important to keeping it healthy
10. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## 1C

Activity: So that's how babies are made <sup>(1)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity explores how sex is part of the reproduction process, and how it can lead to pregnancy through a cartoon video. This video is designed to be light and funny. It is okay if participants are laughing, as long as they are also listening!

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Identify and describe the basic body parts involved with sexual health and reproduction
- Summarise the sexual and reproductive capacity of men and women over the life cycle
- Explain the key functions of the body that contribute to reproduction (e.g. menstrual cycle, sperm production and ejaculation of semen)

**Sensitive areas:** Sex

## Resources:

- Rope or string
- Chalk
- Handouts 1Aa – 1Ad in activity 1A (they do not need to be printed again, just use them as a guide)

**Preparation:** Check the capacity for your room or venue to play a video to participants using internet or wifi

**Group composition:** Work as a large group

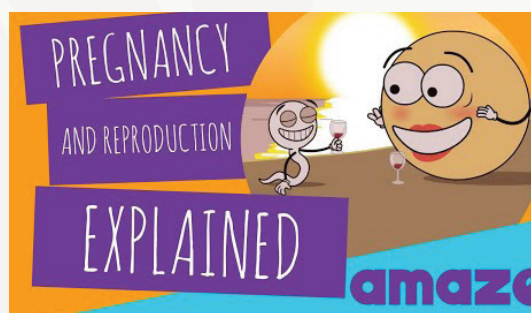
**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Required

AMAZE video titled, 'Pregnancy and reproduction explained' (2 minutes 32 seconds)

<https://amaze.org/video/pregnancy-reproduction-explained/>



## Activity 1C: So that's how babies are made

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *We have learnt about different body parts and their location in the body, but how do they all work together to achieve make a baby? In today's activity we will be thinking about how sex is part of the reproduction process, and can sometimes lead to pregnancy.*
2. Introduce the AMAZE video "Pregnancy and reproduction explained" (2 minutes 32 seconds) by **saying something like:** *We're now going to watch a video that provides a brief explanation of how pregnancy happens.*
3. Play the video.
4. After the video, **say something like:** *That video covered a lot of information about pregnancy – let's see what everyone remembers.*
5. Ask the following questions:

The video said that two things, or cells, are needed to start a pregnancy. What are those two things?

**Answer:** An egg/ovum and sperm.

Who remembers where sperm are made?

**Answer:** In the testes.

Where are eggs made?

**Answer:** In the ovaries.

Does anyone know what hormones are?

**Answer:** Hormones are like little chemical messengers that tell your body how to react, what to produce and how to feel.

Does anyone know the name of the two main hormones responsible for reproduction?

(Hint: there is one male hormone and one female hormone.)

**Answers:** Testosterone (male) and oestrogen (female).

6. Use the flipchart to point to the different areas of female internal organs as you explain the reproductive process. Alternatively, you can use a floor diagram and get participants to "act out" the process. If they are acting it out, use string or rope on the floor to create a large outline of the vagina, uterus and fallopian tubes or draw the diagram with chalk. It can use simple shapes - this will help young people understand the process by acting it out physically.
7. Ask for a female volunteer to play the role of the egg, and a male volunteer to play the role of the sperm.





8. Get the volunteers to move along the floor diagram as you speak.
9. Describe the path of the egg.

**Say something like:** *The ovum (egg) leaves the ovary...*

(Have female participant standing in one of the ovary sections and the male participant standing at the bottom of the vagina)

*...and travels down the fallopian tube.*

(Female participant walks down the fallopian tube that is close to the ovary she was standing on)

*If there is sperm, it will travel from the vagina, through the cervix and meet the egg somewhere in the fallopian tube.*

(Male participant walks up through the bottom of the uterus and meets female participant in the fallopian tube)

*The sperm and the egg can join together (fertilisation)...*

(Participants hold hands)

*...before travelling to the uterus.*

(Participants hold hands and walk into the uterus)

*If none of the sperm joins with the egg, the egg and wall of the uterus shed and leave the body through the vagina approximately once a month, which is called her menstrual period.*

*If a sperm joins with the egg, the fertilised egg can attach to (implant) in the lining of the uterus and a pregnancy begins.*

10. Repeat the same steps for the male system (you can use string on the ground or draw with chalk again to show the process).
11. Make sure to describe the path of a sperm from being made in the testes by **saying something like:** *The sperm are made in the testes and eventually leaves through the urethra in the penis during ejaculation. Ejaculation is when sperm is pushed out of the male penis, usually during sex when the male orgasms.*

#### Facilitator note

You can use the handouts from activity 1A to help as well.

12. **Say something like:** *The video we saw at the beginning of this activity said that there were three ways that fertilisation (meeting of sperm and egg) can happen. What is the only way fertilisation can happen without using technology?*

**Answer:** Penis-in-vagina sex



13. Ask participants the following questions:

When we are talking about ways that fertilisation can occur, why do we use the term penis-in-vagina sex and not just 'sex'?

**Example answer:** Because there are lots of different kinds of sex. Only penis-in-vagina sex can lead to fertilisation and pregnancy. Other kinds of sex, like oral sex (when someone uses their mouth on another person's genitals), sex between two males or two females or anal sex, cannot lead to fertilisation and pregnancy.

How does contraception stop fertilisation?

**Example answer:** Contraception (or family planning) works in different ways to prevent the sperm and the egg from meeting. This includes barrier methods like condoms, which prevent the sperm from entering the female's vagina. Hormonal methods (such as the contraceptive pill) stop the ovaries from releasing eggs. There is more information about how contraception works in Module 5 topic 2.

14. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

15. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Fertilisation begins when a male sperm enters a female egg
- Fertilisation is a necessary step for pregnancy to occur
- Only penis-in-vagina sex can cause fertilisation and pregnancy
- This happens when male sperm and female egg connect inside the female's body
- Sometimes, fertilisation doesn't happen even during unprotected sex
- Not all eggs that have been fertilised will successfully implant in the uterus
- Contraception works in different ways to stop the sperm and egg meeting

16. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## 1D

Activity: My body true or false<sup>(3)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity will help participants learn the differences between facts and myths that exist when it comes to people's sexual bodies. This activity is an opportunity to correct any misinformation and explore topics like pleasure, assault, fertility and sexual responses.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Acknowledge that everyone's body is unique, and that differences in our bodies, and how they function are acceptable, including for young people with a disability, and it is normal to be curious and have questions about their bodies and sexual functions
- Explain the key functions of the body that contribute to reproduction (e.g. menstrual cycle, sperm production and ejaculation of semen)
- Understand that sexual stimulation involves physical and psychological aspects and people respond in different ways at different times, including being influenced by illness, stress, sexual abuse, medications, substance use and trauma
- Recognise that understanding a body's sexual response can help individuals understand their body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so they can seek help
- Differentiate myths and facts about sexual behaviour and question myths

## Sensitive areas:

- Sexual assault
- Pleasure and masturbation

**Resources:** None

**Preparation:** If there are any myths about fertilisation or sexual bodies that exist among young people that you know of, they can be included as part of this activity. Feel free to add your own true or false questions if you have the answers.

**Group composition:** Individual work

## Prior learning:

- Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology
- Module 5, Activity 1C: So that's how babies are made

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** None



## Activity 1D: My body true or false

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Sometimes, we hear 'information' or ideas about our bodies that may be false or misleading. We can hear or see this misinformation sometimes in movies, TV shows, from our friends or family members. It is important that we know what is a fact and what is a myth when it comes to our bodies and how they work. In this activity, we will be playing a true or false game to help us learn more about our bodies.*
2. Ask all participants to stand.
3. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Now we are going to test what we have learnt about our bodies with a quiz. If you think the answer is 'true', stay standing. If you think it is 'false, sit down. Some facts we have already covered, and some are new and might be interesting for you to know.*
4. Read out the statements below one-by-one, giving participants time to decide their answer and either stay standing or sit down.

Statement	Answer
When it comes to sex and relationships, a woman has as much right to pleasure as a man.	<b>True:</b> Women can be just as interested in sex as men. That is totally normal.
You should always keep your concerns or questions about your body to yourself. No one else should know about your body!	<b>False:</b> It is important that all young people have a trusted adult who they can go to if they need to ask questions.  It is normal to have questions or to be unsure about your body.
A woman needs time to reach orgasm.	<b>True:</b> Usually women do not just have orgasm or 'come' straight away. This is a myth commonly seen in pornography.
The penis cannot produce urine and sperm at the same time.	<b>True:</b> The male body automatically closes off the tube to the urinary bladder when a man releases sperm.
A man has to lie on top of a woman to have sex.	<b>False:</b> There are many different ways to have sex. Sex is not only an act of penetration of the vagina by a penis. There are many different ways that people can have sex. Sex is also not just between a man and a woman.
People can have orgasms without sexual intercourse.	<b>True:</b> Many men and women have orgasms by touching sensitive spots – rubbing their own or each other's genitals. This is a reason why many people might masturbate.

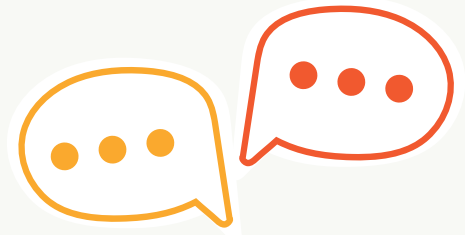
Statement	Answer
The brain is the biggest sex organ.	<b>True:</b> Sexual enjoyment has as much to do with thoughts and feelings as with physical activity.
Age plays a large role in fertility for women and men.	<b>True:</b> Age is the most important factor in fertility. Women are born with all of their eggs in the ovaries. Women are most fertile below the age of 35 years and may find it harder to become pregnant after 35. Men experience a decrease in sperm quality as they age. It can take longer to get pregnant if the man is over 40 years and there are higher rates of losing a baby while pregnant where the man is over 45 years. Other factors like lifestyle, eating habits and stress also play a significant role in addition to age when it comes to fertility.
When couples are unable to have a baby, it is usually always the woman's fault.	<b>False:</b> Infertility (when you can't have a baby after trying for one year) can result from many factors related to either the man or the woman.
The testes are located outside the body because they keep sperm at a lower temperature.	<b>True:</b> Healthy sperm requires a cooler temperature than normal body temperature.
If you don't have an orgasm, you are not normal.	<b>False:</b> Having an orgasm is completely normal. But if you don't have an orgasm, that's completely normal too. Many people don't always have an orgasm.
If someone's body becomes aroused during a sexual assault, it means it wasn't really a sexual assault.	<b>False:</b> Human sexual response is a physical reaction. It can be confusing to someone who is sexually abused if they get an erection or their vagina becomes wet. But all it means is that their body is working correctly. Unfortunately, their body doesn't understand whether a sex act is consensual or non-consensual.  Sexual assault is determined by lack of consent, NOT by your body's reaction.
If a man has an erection and doesn't have sex or masturbate, he will be negatively affected by the sexual tension he feels.	<b>False:</b> It does no harm to anyone to feel sexy and not have sex. The blood in the penis, which makes it hard, just flows out into the blood vessels again and things go back to normal. Sometimes men use this myth to pressure their partners for sex. No one should pressure another person for sex just to 'relieve' them from tension. Masturbation can help relieve sexual tension.

5. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

6. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- There are many myths about sexuality; talking about them openly with partners and friends can help break down these myths
- People of all genders can enjoy sex
- Having an orgasm doesn't always happen and that is normal
- There are many different ways people can have sex
- Sex isn't just between a man and a woman, but can be between any consenting people
- Consent is always needed, no matter what someone's body is doing (e.g. if they appear aroused)



7. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.

## 1E

### Activity: Visiting the health clinic



#### Activity overview:

This activity allows participants to practice role playing the experience of visiting a nurse or doctor or any health care professionals and describing a concern about their sexual or reproductive health. As a FLE facilitator, it is important to remember that one of the most useful things you can do is to connect young people with health services. It is not your responsibility to personally solve young people's health concerns, but as a facilitator you can help connect young people to healthcare workers who have the appropriate knowledge and training to address their concerns.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

#### Learning objectives:

- Identify a trusted adult to whom questions can be directed and demonstrate ways to ask about sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology
- Understand that sexual feelings are complex, and these feelings can be influenced by many different things including illness, stress, sexual abuse, medicine, drugs and alcohol and trauma
- Recognise that understanding a body's sexual response can help individuals understand their body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so they can seek help



## TOPIC 1 – My (sexual) body cont...

### Sensitive areas:

- Sex
- Abortion

### Resources

- Handout 1E

**Preparation:** Print enough copies of handout 1E for each participant

**Group composition:** Pairs, groupwork

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology

**Literacy support:** Required - activity involves reading

**Technology:** None



## Activity 1E: Visiting the health clinic

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Now we have learnt more about anatomy and the body, in this activity we will be putting our knowledge into practice. In this activity, we will be doing a role play where young people seeking help for sexual and reproductive health issues at a clinic.*
2. Divide the participants into pairs.
3. Assign each group a case study from handout 1E.
4. Explain to each pair that they will be acting out a 2-minute role play of a young person seeking healthcare at a clinic. One person will play the role of the patient/young person, and the other will play the role of a healthcare worker.

In the scenario, the job of the young person is to:

- Describe the issue
- Explain how you feel about it
- Ask for advice

The job of the healthcare worker is to:

- Listen respectfully to the young person
- Provide advice following the hints in your role play card

5. Give the groups 10 minutes to prepare in pairs, and then ask each pair to act out their role play for the rest of the group.

6. Lead a group discussion about the role plays using the following questions as a guide.

**Ask the participants who played young people:**

What was it like visiting the clinic in this role play? What were some of the feelings your character might have felt? Did these feelings change before and after you performed the role play?

**Example answers:**

- Awkward
- Embarrassed
- Nervous
- Relieved
- Reassured
- Grateful
- Positive

What are some of the barriers that may prevent young people asking for help with their sexual and reproductive health?

**Example answers:**

- Feeling embarrassed or ashamed
- Worried that it's private and shouldn't be discussed
- Worried about confidentiality (other people finding out their issues)
- Uncertain where to seek help
- Worried about stigma
- Do not realise that help is available for their issues

Why is it important to help young people overcome these barriers and seek professional healthcare?

**Example answers:**

- It is almost always easier to treat a health issue if it is found early
- Healthcare workers have the right knowledge and training to answer tricky questions
- Young people's health issues can impact others (for example STIs or contraception)
- Young people may need specialised treatment only a healthcare professional can provide
- Introducing young people to the healthcare system will make it easier for them to seek treatment when they have other health concerns in the future



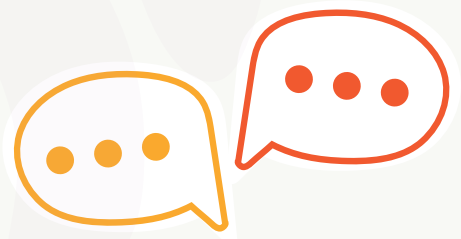
**Ask the participants who played healthcare workers:**

How did it feel to listen to young people talking about their health issues? Did you feel able to answer their questions? Was there anything you felt unsure about?

**i Facilitator note**

Probe for answers such as: awkward, don't know the answer, unsure what to say, uncomfortable or 'out of their depth'.

7. **Remind the participants:** *Sometimes friends or peers might come to you with health problems you do not feel able to comment on, for example eating disorders or issues with pregnancy. This can be confusing because you want to help but you do not know what to say. It is okay if you do not know everything. Instead, you can support them by advising them to talk to a professional who has the appropriate training and knowledge to provide help.*
8. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*  
  
Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.
9. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - There are lots of different sexual and reproductive health topics young people may have questions about
  - These could include contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, body image, sexual function, relationship issues, among many other things
  - Talking to a healthcare worker is a positive step and should be encouraged
  - Healthcare should be private and confidential
  - It is always better to seek healthcare sooner rather than later
  - If your friends or peers tell you about their health issues, you can help them by connecting them with healthcare professionals to discuss their concerns
  - It is not your responsibility to solve young people's healthcare problems by yourself, and you are not expected to do this
10. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.





## Handout 1E: Visiting the health clinic – Role play

**Instructions:** Make a copy of this page for each participant.

Patients	Healthcare worker
<p><b>A. Ame</b></p> <p>Ame and her boyfriend Alo had unprotected sex about 6 weeks ago. Ame has noticed her period has not arrived on time and her breasts are feeling sore and bigger. She is feeling confused about what to do next.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Ame for coming to the clinic.</li> <li>• Explain that Ame may be pregnant.</li> <li>• Advise Ame that she can keep the baby or put it up for adoption.</li> <li>• Explain where Ame and Alo can get information about a healthy pregnancy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Tana</b></p> <p>Tana and his partner TJ have decided they want to have sex and that they are going to use contraception, but Tana is worried that using condoms will make him lose his erection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Tana for coming to the clinic.</li> <li>• Explain why it is important to wear condoms.</li> <li>• Reassure Tana that his problem is common and many men sometimes have trouble with erections.</li> <li>• Explain that there are different types of condoms he can try.</li> <li>• Ask Tana if he would like to speak to a relationship counsellor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. Mema</b></p> <p>Mema has been with her partner for 6 months and they have decided to have sex. She wants to find out more information about contraception options but she feels embarrassed to ask.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Mema for coming to the clinic.</li> <li>• Reassure Mema she is doing the right thing by seeking contraception.</li> <li>• Explain that it is her right to access information about contraception.</li> <li>• Briefly describe at least two different contraception options she could try.</li> </ul>

Patients	Healthcare worker
<p><b>D. Pesa</b></p> <p>Pesa is married with three kids and started his own business this year. Pesa is worried that he does not experience sexual desire like other men do. He worries that he is not a “real man” because lately he has not been feeling sexual urges very strongly or very often.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Pesa for coming in and talking about his experience.</li> <li>• Reassure Pesa that it is normal for sexual desire to change over time.</li> <li>• Explain that men feeling less desire could be due to many reasons.</li> <li>• Reasons could include higher stress, ill health, relationship problems or other causes.</li> <li>• Explain talking to his partner can help.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E. Ena</b></p> <p>Simi and Ena have been married for 3 years. In the last few weeks Ena has noticed vaginal itchiness and a burning feeling when she pees. She suspects Simi has been having unprotected sex with other people but she is scared to confront him.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Ena for coming in and talking about her experience.</li> <li>• Explain that vaginal itchiness and a burning feeling while peeing can be signs of an STI.</li> <li>• Advise Ena to get tested for STIs.</li> <li>• Explain that most STIs are treatable with medicine.</li> <li>• Ask Ena if she would like to speak to a relationship counsellor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>F. Noa</b></p> <p>As a teenager Noa has become very self-conscious of his body. He lifts weights for hours a day and has started to eat an extremely limited diet, cutting out more and more foods. He is having very negative thoughts and feelings about his body and he is thinking about harming himself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank Noa for coming to the clinic and opening up about his issues.</li> <li>• Explain that you think he may have an eating disorder, a condition which is linked to poor body image.</li> <li>• Explain that eating disorders can affect men as well as women.</li> <li>• Advise him to speak to a counsellor who specialises in eating disorders.</li> </ul>

## 1F

**Activity: Happier, healthier, longer<sup>(4-6)</sup>****Activity overview:**

This activity explores why it is important to do regular self-checks of sexual and reproductive organs to identify when they are not functioning. Through this activity participants will learn about the importance of regular testicular and breast self-checks. This will help participants become familiar with their look and feel, notice any changes or possible problems. Changes in testes or breasts could be a sign of something common like an infection or something less common like testicular or breast cancer. As these sessions will teach participants to perform self-checks on their breasts and testes, participants may feel more comfortable with a facilitator of the same gender to them. This activity can be done by splitting the male and female participants if that is more appropriate.

**Age:** 16+

**Time:** 60 minutes (30 minutes per group if gender is split between two groups)

**Learning objectives:**

- Identify a trusted adult to whom questions can be directed and demonstrate ways to ask about sexual and reproductive anatomy and physiology
- Recognise that understanding a body's sexual response can help individuals understand their body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so they can seek help
- Understand how to carry out basic testicular and breast self-checks and express understanding of the importance of doing so regularly

**Sensitive areas:** Nude graphics

**Resources:**

- Flipchart to show the steps of breast and testicular self-checks
- Handout 1Fa
- Handout 1Fb
- Butchers paper
- Markers

**Preparation:**

- Print enough copies of handout 1Fa for each male participant
- Print enough copies of handout 1Fb for each female participant



**Group composition:** Mixed gender groups are a good way to ensure both genders have information about testicular and breast self-checks

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology

**Literacy support:** Required – involves reading but images can be used as an aid

**Technology:** None

## Activity 1F: Happier, healthier, longer

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Today we are going to discuss the importance of self-checks for men and women, so they become familiar with how their bodies look and feel and notice any changes or possible problems. Changes in your testes or breasts could be a sign of something common like an infection or something less common like testicular or breast cancer. First, it is a good idea to have an understanding about what cancer is.*
2. **Explain:**
  - Our bodies are made up of millions of cells
  - Our bodies grow new cells and replace worn out cells every day
  - Sometimes during this process, some cells may grow abnormally and become unhealthy
  - A person would not know if their cells were becoming unhealthy
  - The body usually fixes unhealthy cells. However, if abnormal/unhealthy cells grow and divide without being repaired, they can turn into cancer
  - Cancer is a disease of the body's cells
3. **Ask participants:** What is a "self-check" or "self-examination"?

**Example answer:** "Self-checks" or "self-examinations" are really simple ways that you can become familiar with your body. This way, you will learn what is normal and you will also notice when something doesn't quite feel right. Today we are going to learn how to do testicular checks and breast checks.
4. Tell participants that they will begin by focusing on testicular checks.
5. Ask: What is the most common cancer among boys and men aged 15-40?

**Answer:** Testicular cancer (which is cancer inside the male testes).

6. **Say something like:** *It's important that we talk about health issues facing men. This is because lots of men can find it difficult to talk about their emotions or worries about things going on in their lives. This means lots of men don't talk about health problems. This activity is going to help us talk about self-checks as a tool to look after our health, to understand how the testes look and feel and to notice any changes or possible problems. If we can talk about our health and how to check if we need help, we can help ourselves stay healthy. Changes in your testes could be a sign of a common benign condition, such as an infection or a cyst, or a less common condition, such as testicular cancer. Many forms of cancer are treatable if found early, so it's important not to avoid health checks, even if you feel well.*

7. **Ask participants:** How often should boys and men be doing self-checks on their testes?

**Answer:** Once every month.

8. Give each participant handout 1Fa, a piece of butchers paper and some markers. Give participants 5 minutes to read through the handout and understand how to do a testicular self-check.

**i Facilitator note**

If the group has lower literacy skills, the steps in the handout can be read by the facilitator.

9. Tell participants to create a poster for a health clinic advertising testicular checks for young men. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.
10. After 10 minutes, allow 5 minutes for everyone to present their posters and ask if anyone has any questions.
11. Introduce the breast self-checks for women by **saying something like:** *Now, we are going to discuss the importance of self-checks for women to understand how the breasts look and feel, to detect any changes and be alert to possible problems. Changes in your breasts could be a sign of something common like an infection or something less common like cancer.*

**i Facilitator note**

Use the explanation of cancer in step 2 if participants need to be reminded.

12. Explain by **saying something like:** *Usually, breast self-checks are for girls who are older, there are a couple of reasons why.*

**Breast problems are mostly rare in adolescent girls, and breast cancer is also rare in this age group.** *If a health worker is worried about your breast health, they will do a breast examination and keep an eye on you through regular visits.*

**Your breasts are still growing and changing.** *The reason women do breast self-checks is to learn what's normal for their breasts. During the adolescent years, what's "normal" can change based on where a girl is in her development. Your breasts can feel different depending on where you are in your menstrual cycle so it is best to do a self-check after your period. You might notice that they feel more tender (sensitive) or bigger just before or during your period. Breasts also change during pregnancy and breastfeeding.*

- 13. Say something like:** *It's good to get used to the way your breasts normally look and feel. A good way to do that is to try this: when you're lying down, lightly touch your breasts with your fingertips. You might be surprised at how they feel. Breasts are a complex system of tubes and tissues so you'll notice normal lumps and bumps.*

*At some point in your life, you may have seen in healthcare facility posters, on television, on the radio or from a health worker about breast self-checks and how to do it. It is important that you know the correct way to do it yourself at home to notice any of the following changes:*

- Pain in your breast that isn't related to your period
- A new lump, bump, or other change in your breast
- A red, hot, or swollen breast
- Fluid or bloody discharge from your nipple
- A lump in your armpit or near your collarbone

- 14.** Give each participant a copy of handout 1Fb.

- 15.** Give participants 5 minutes to look through the handout to understand how to do a breast check.

**i Facilitator note**

If the group has lower literacy skills, the steps in the handout can be read by the facilitator.

- 16.** Ask participants: How often should girls and women be doing self-checks on their breasts?

**Answer:** Once every month

- 17.** Give each participant a piece of butchers paper and some markers.

- 18.** Tell participants to create a poster for a health clinic encouraging at-home breast checks for young women. Allow 10 minutes for this activity.

- 19.** After 10 minutes, allow 5 minutes for everyone to present their posters and ask if anyone has any questions.

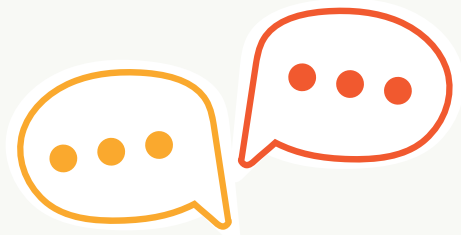
- 20.** To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

21. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Self-checks are a really simple way that you can become familiar with your body. This way, you will learn what is normal and you will also notice when something doesn't quite feel right
- Men and boys should check their testes once a month and if they notice any changes, they should see a health care provider straight away
- Doing a testicular or breast check at home is easy and free
- Many types of cancer, like testicular or breast cancer, are treatable if found early enough
- Similar to testicular checks, breast self-checks should be done once a month; it is best to do a breast check after your period
- If a person notices any changes in their breasts, they should see a health care provider straight away

22. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.





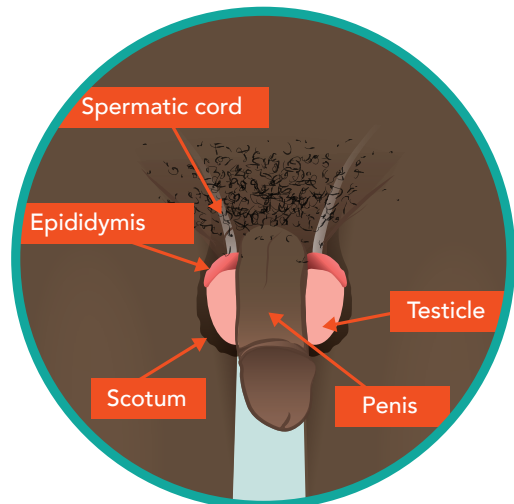
Handout 1Fa: Testicular checks<sup>(4,5)</sup>

## Testicular self-check

**Step one: Getting started**

Choose the right time to do your exam. It's best to do it during or just after a shower. This is when the scrotum is more relaxed and it can make it easier to check for lumps.

Lumps may be as small as a piece of rice or a pea.

**Step two: Place your hand**

Examine one testicle at a time. Start by gently gripping the top of the scrotum, with your thumb on top and your fingers underneath. Pinch gently so that the testicle doesn't move.

**Step three: Feel for lumps**

With your free hand, gently glide your thumb and fingers along both sides of the testicle, from top to bottom. Feel for any lumps or bumps.

Then glide your fingers over the front and back of the testicle.

On the back at the top, you should feel the epididymis, a tube that carries sperm. This is a normal lump and may feel tender to the touch.

If you feel a lump or anything unusual, go to the health clinic right away.





## Handout 1Fb: Breast checks<sup>(6)</sup>

**The best time to check your breasts is after your period.  
There are three ways that you can check your breasts.**

### 1. In the shower

With your three middle fingers, check the entire breast and armpit area pressing down with light, medium, and firm pressure.

Check both breasts each month feeling for any:

- Lump
- Thickening
- Hardened knot, or
- Any other breast changes



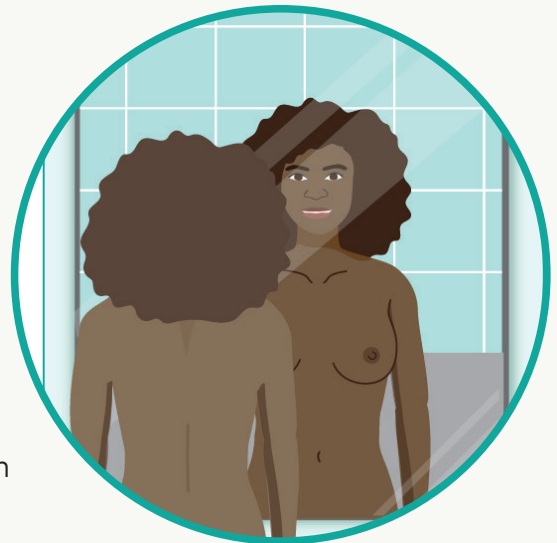
### 2. In the mirror

Look at your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms high over your head.

Look for any changes in:

- The shape
- Swelling, or dimpling of the skin
- Changes in the nipples (crusts over nipple, redness or nipples going inside)

Next, rest your palms on your hips and press firmly to tighten your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match – few women's breasts do, so look for any dimpling, wrinkling, or changes, particularly on one side.



### 3. Lying down

When lying down, the breast tissue spreads out evenly along the chest wall. Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast gently covering the entire breast area and armpit.

Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple; check for discharge and lumps. Repeat these steps for your left breast.



## Topic 1: My (sexual) body

### Key messages of this topic

- Everyone's body is unique, and that differences in our bodies, and how they function are normal
- It is normal to be curious and have questions about our bodies and sexual functions
- Sexual and reproductive capacity (fertility) of men and women changes significantly over the life cycle
- Testosterone and oestrogen are the two main reproductive hormones
- The menstrual cycle, sperm production and ejaculation of semen are all important parts of reproduction
- It is important to have a trusted adult who can help us answer questions or seek help
- Sexual response involves physical and psychological aspects and can be impacted by illness, stress, sexual abuse, medications, substance use and trauma
- Understanding our sexual response can help us understand our body, and help identify when things are not functioning properly so we can seek help
- Self-checks for breast and testicular cancer are easy and simple and help you understand the look and feel and notice any changes or possible problems





## Topic overview

Puberty is a time of rapid growth, identity formation and change. Even if the participants you are working with are past the stage of puberty, it can be helpful information for them when they themselves become parents and their children are going through puberty.



It can be challenging to talk about puberty because it can sometimes be a time of confusion, bullying, teasing and young people can be made to feel ashamed or embarrassed about what is happening to their bodies. While everyone experiences puberty at a different time and in a different way, all experiences are normal and healthy. If young people are concerned or have any questions about puberty, they should have a trusted adult or health clinic they feel comfortable going to for support.

## Topic learning objectives

Facilitator version	Participant version
Describe the process of puberty and the maturation of the sexual and reproductive health system	Describe what happens during puberty and how our sexual and reproductive body parts mature during this time
Assess and categorise physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes of puberty; compare the similarities and differences between boys and girls in relation to these changes	List physical, emotional and mental changes that puberty brings. Compare how boys and girls are similar and different during puberty
Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently	Accept that puberty is normal and healthy, and different for everyone
Understand that during puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason (i.e. erection and wet dreams in males)	Understand that sometimes during puberty, sexual responses happen for no specific reason (such as erections and wet dreams in boys)
Recognise that teasing, shaming or stigmatising others based on the changes of puberty is hurtful and may have long lasting psychological impacts	Realise that making fun of someone's body during puberty can cause long term harm
Acknowledge that puberty may be particularly challenging for some children, particularly those who are gender non-conforming, transgender or intersex, and for young people with a disability	Realise that puberty can be a hard time for people of diverse genders, and for people with a disability
Describe male and female responses to sexual stimulation	Describe how males and females can have sexual feelings and reactions

Facilitator version	Participant version
Explain that many boys and girls begin to masturbate during puberty, and this is normal	Explain that masturbation is normal for all people
Acknowledge that masturbation does not cause physical or emotional harm but should be done in private	Accept that masturbation is healthy and safe but should be done in private
Describe personal hygiene and sanitation practices and apply understanding to a personal plan for staying healthy while growing up	Describe how to stay healthy and clean while growing up and becoming an adult

## Activities

Activity		Time	Page	Handout
2A: Puberty – Riding the waves		30 minutes	45	No
2B: Understanding puberty		60 minutes	48	Yes
2C: Everybody is different		45 minutes	55	Yes
2D: The pleasure principle		30 minutes	60	No
2E: Masturbation myths		45 minutes	66	No
2F: Making a hygiene plan		45 minutes	70	No

## 2A

## Activity: Puberty – Riding the waves



## Activity overview:

This activity introduces the concept of 'puberty' and asks participants to think of puberty as a wave going up and down. It can be exciting, scary or confusing, and there can be many 'ups and downs' but participants should always be reminded that puberty is a normal experience for everyone. Everyone experiences puberty in a unique way but young people should never feel alone during this time. Having a trusted adult for support is always important.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently

**Sensitive areas:** Sexual responses (erections etc.)

## Resources:

- Paper
- Pencils or markers (anything young people can use to draw)

**Preparation:** Ensure you have some paper and drawing material available for young people. Facilitators should also check that their venue or room has the capacity to play a video online to participants (access to free wifi, laptop, projector etc.)

**Group composition:** Individual work

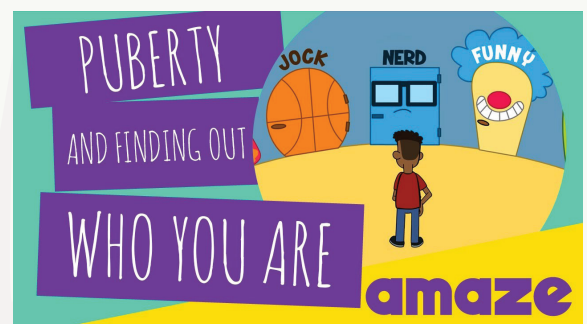
**Prior learning:** None

**Literacy support:** Required - involves a small amount of writing

**Technology:** Optional

AMAZE video titled 'Puberty and finding out who you are' (2 minutes 34 seconds)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mxhzcskL3A>



## Activity 2A: Puberty – Riding the waves

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the topic of puberty by asking participants: What is puberty?  
(There might be lots of different answers and this is okay!)

#### Example answers:

- Puberty is when a child's body begins to change and develop as they start becoming an adult
  - Puberty is the process of physical changes that makes a body capable of sexual reproduction
  - Puberty is the time when hormones change your body on the outside and your feelings and emotions on the inside
2. If you have the option to play the video, explain that you are about to show a video about puberty, and how puberty is like a rollercoaster.
  3. Ask: Does everyone know what a rollercoaster is?
  4. If anyone is not familiar with the concept of a rollercoaster, explain that it is a carnival ride that goes up and down. Riding a rollercoaster is a like riding on a canoe on a windy day. Explain that in this video, puberty is compared to a rollercoaster, but we might compare it to riding a canoe in rough water.
  5. Show the AMAZE video titled 'Puberty and finding out who you are' if possible. (2 minutes 34 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mxhzcskL3A>
  6. Have a discussion using the following questions. The questions are related to the video but can also be discussed without having seen the video.

#### Discussion questions:

In the video, they refer to being a teenager as a rollercoaster, why do you think that is?

**Example answer:** While you are growing up and going through puberty, your emotions can be up and down, you can feel overwhelmed or feel like you are experiencing all your emotions in extremes. It might feel difficult to manage your emotions and stay in control. Mood swings are normal and are caused by hormones. Another way to imagine this is by thinking of a wave – first the wave goes out to sea, then it comes crashing back in. Waves can be big and loud or small and gentle.

Do you think young people face a lot of pressure during this time? What kind of pressure?

**Example answer:** Some young people can face a lot of pressure. There can be pressure from family, friends, school, from their community or your faith/religion. Friends and peers often become more important for young people during puberty and this can involve pressure to try new things or rebel against their families. Friends can also be a place of support and positive influence. Young people might also feel more pressure from others to act or look a certain way or feel like they can't be themselves.

Do you think puberty can be a fun or exciting time for young people? Why/why not?

**Example answer:** Puberty can definitely be an exciting time for young people because it can mean the start of increased freedom. Young people might feel excited to see their bodies changing and feel like they are 'growing up'. They might enjoy additional responsibilities at home or spending more time with friends. There are lots of reasons why puberty might be an exciting time for young people.

7. Hand each young person a piece of paper.
8. Tell participants that they need to draw the waves of puberty. Tell them to think about all the 'ups and downs' of puberty and draw waves that represents all of these feelings, pressures, changes and the support people they might have during this time. They can represent these things in any way they like.
9. Tell participants that they will learn more about all the different changes that occur during puberty and they can add more waves as they take part in more activities in this topic.
10. Ask participants if they have any questions.
11. Give participants 10 minutes to draw and label their puberty waves.
12. After 10 minutes, ask if there are any volunteers who want to share some examples of their waves.
13. Thank any volunteers for sharing.
14. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

15. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - Puberty can be a time of rapid change and growth
  - Everyone goes through puberty in their own way and at their own pace
  - Puberty can feel a little like riding a wave that goes up and down
  - It can feel scary but also exciting
16. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.





## 2B

Activity: Understanding puberty<sup>(7)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity will explore all the different changes that can occur during puberty.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 60 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Describe the process of puberty and the maturation of the sexual and reproductive health system
- Assess and categorise physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes of puberty; compare the similarities and differences between boys and girls in relation to these changes
- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- Understand that during puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason
- Recognise that teasing, shaming or stigmatising others based on the changes of puberty is hurtful and may have long lasting psychological impacts
- Acknowledge that puberty may be particularly challenging for some children, particularly those who are gender non-conforming, transgender or intersex, and for young people with a disability

**Sensitive areas:** None

## Resources:

- Butchers paper
- Markers/pens
- Handout 2B (Facilitator copy)

**Preparation:** Ensure your venue has access to the internet/wifi and the capacity to play online videos using a laptop/projector etc.

**Group composition:** Small same-sex groups (two to four people)

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 2A: Puberty – Riding the waves

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Required

- AMAZE video 'Top signs girls are in puberty' (1 minute 58 seconds)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6oka\\_hqMjk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6oka_hqMjk)
- AMAZE video 'Top signs boys are in puberty' (3 minutes 25 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onggxBVI4qw>





## Activity 2B: Understanding puberty

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *As you grow up, a lot of changes happen within your body. This stage of your life is called puberty. Puberty is when a child begins to turn into an adult. During puberty, hormones race around the body and signal some body parts to change what they are doing. Puberty can cause physical, emotional and social changes. These changes can occur differently in everyone, at different stages, and that is completely normal.*
2. Play both AMAZE videos. This should take around 6 minutes.
3. Divide the participants into smaller groups.
4. Give each group a large butchers paper and markers. Ask them to make one group member lie down on the paper and trace the outline of their body.
5. Use this 'body map' to name the changes that take place for any gender. Groups can choose the gender for their body outline, as long as there is a good mix across the entire group.
6. Encourage participants to name the changes that can occur in the following areas.  
(Guidance for facilitator is included in handout 2B)

**On the body** – Ask participants to draw or write the PHYSICAL changes that happen to the body during puberty (write inside the body outline).

**In the thoughts** – Ask participants to draw or write the EMOTIONAL changes that can happen during puberty (give the body outline a 'thought bubble' and write within it).

**Around the body** – Ask participants to draw or write the SOCIAL changes that happen in the way other people treat young people once they have reached puberty (write outside the outline of the body) as well as changes in their relationships.

7. Tell young people to think back to the videos they have just watched to help them with this activity. Give them 15 minutes to complete this part of the activity.
8. Once the groups report back, ask them to say which of the changes are exciting, which are challenging, and which are mixed. They could mark each with a different symbol, e.g. a star for exciting changes, a cross for challenging ones, and a triangle for mixed.
9. As a group, discuss the following questions (tell participants to think about the videos and their diagrams). Allow 10 minutes for the discussion.

### Discussion questions:

What causes all of these changes during puberty?

**Example answer:** The main changes that happen during puberty are due to hormones. Hormones are the natural chemicals our bodies make. The two main hormones responsible for many of the changes in our reproductive organs are testosterone and oestrogen.

Puberty starts because a person's body starts to produce a very large amount of hormones that they were only producing in small amounts before. Male bodies start to produce a lot more testosterone and a little bit of oestrogen and female bodies start to produce a lot more oestrogen and a little bit of testosterone.

What are some things that might make puberty more challenging?

Example answers:

- Not having access to appropriate information. (e.g. there might not be enough information about puberty available for people with disabilities, young people with diverse SOGIE etc.)

### Facilitator note

If participants are confused about what 'transgender' means, you can refer to the glossary. This term may not be used a lot in Samoa

- Not having access to menstrual products such as pads, cloths or tampons
- Young people who are living away from home may not have enough support, information or money needed to buy things like menstrual products (pads, tampons, cloths etc.)

If some of these changes are challenging or confusing for a lot of young people, what impact can teasing, shaming or making fun of others have?

Example answers:

- This can make young people feel alone and embarrassed
- Young people might start thinking their bodies or their changes are abnormal
- Young people might start comparing themselves to others
- They might feel too embarrassed to ask questions if they are unsure
- Teasing and bullying can be harmful on a person's mental health
- It can have long-lasting effects

10. Tell participants that they are now going to play a quick game called "What are you doing?"
11. Tell them you will act out an action and one of them has to ask, "What are you doing?" You could act out 'sleeping' and when the participant asks you what you are doing, respond with, "I am digging the ground!" The participants might laugh or be confused. Tell them this is the game – for volunteers to come up to the front and act out something, but respond to the question with a totally different action.
12. Then the next volunteer has to come up and act out the action that was in the response, i.e., now that you have said you were digging the ground, the next participant volunteer to come up to the front of the room must act like digging the ground but respond with a totally different action, and so on.

13. Each time, the entire group asks the person acting, "What are you doing?"
14. After 5-7 minutes, stop the game and ask: What does this game have to do with our emotions growing up?

**Example answer:** Sometimes, when we go through puberty, we can have mood swings (feeling angry, happy, sad, excited etc. in a short time) and feel confused about how to express ourselves. This can be confusing and challenging for our family members to understand. We can say things we don't mean, or behave in a way that may seem like we are angry or annoyed when really we are just confused or unsure.

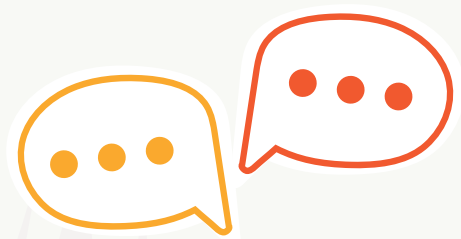
15. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

16. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Puberty can be a time of fast physical, emotional, social and mental development
- Puberty can be confusing and it is important that we have adults in our lives that we feel comfortable talking to or to help us answer questions
- There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to go through puberty
- Everyone goes through puberty at different times and experience different changes
- Experiencing physical responses like erections for males is completely normal – it can happen for no reason
- Teasing or making fun of someone's changes during puberty is hurtful and can have long-lasting bad effects

17. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Handout 2B: Puberty changes (Facilitator copy)

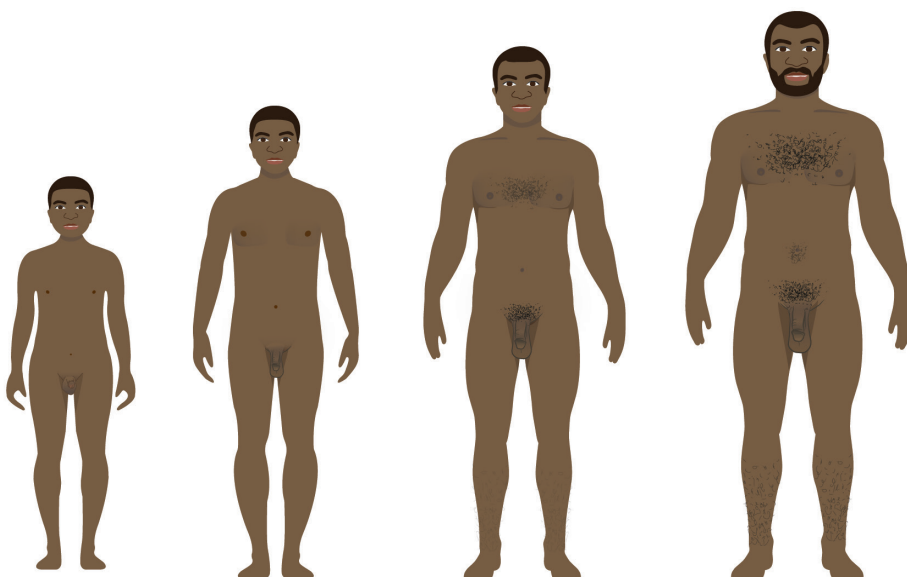
### PHYSICAL CHANGES

#### Males

- Increase in height and weight
- Shoulders and chest widen
- Skin and hair get oily and some people get pimples
- Voice gets deeper
- Facial hair appears
- Underarm, chest and pubic hair appears
- Muscles develop
- Sweating increases and body odour changes
- Testes and penis grow bigger
- Erections

An erection is the hardening of the penis. It is normal to have erections during puberty, even when you are asleep. Sometimes, you might wake up and find your underwear or bed wet. This is called a 'wet dream'. A wet dream is when you ejaculate (cum) during sleep. It's completely normal to have wet dreams during puberty.

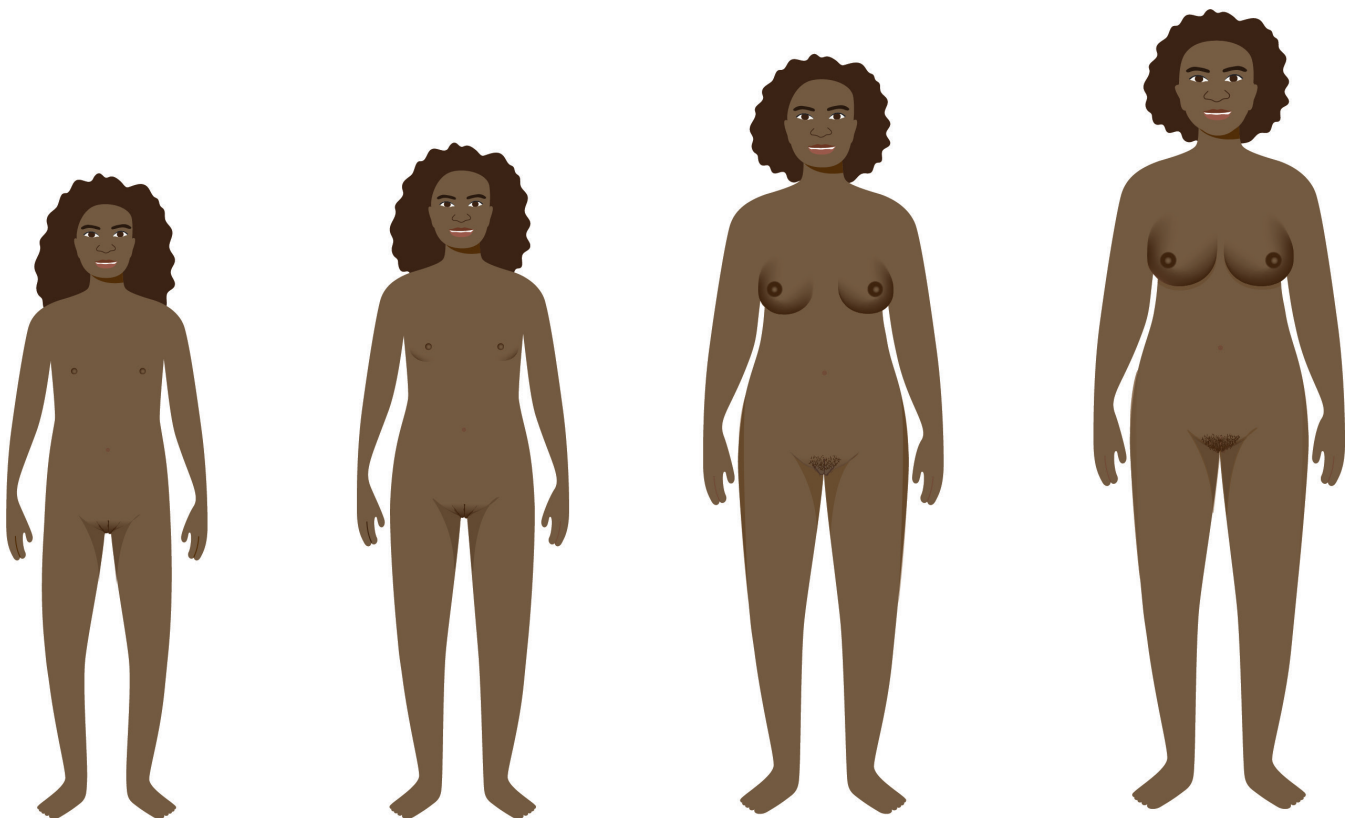
- Breasts may change shape and get bigger – this will settle down as boys get older
- Sexual arousal/feelings of arousal when touching genitals



## PHYSICAL CHANGES

### Females

- Increase in height and weight
- Skin and hair produce oil and some girls get pimples
- Sweat increases and body odour changes
- Hair starts to grow under the armpit, pubic hair appears
- Breasts develop and grow to various sizes
- The labia thickens and the clitoris starts to grow until around the age of 18
- Uterus and ovaries grow
- Menstrual periods begin and bodies may prepare to have babies
- Sexual feelings begin, such as excitement when touching our private parts
- The hips widen



## SOCIAL CHANGES

**Identity:** You might be working out who you are and where you fit in the world. You might try out new clothing styles, music, art or friendship groups.

**Independence:** You will probably want more independence from parents about things like how you spend your time, who you spend time with, and what you spend your money on.

**Responsibility:** You might be keen to take on more responsibility both at home and at school. This could include things like cooking dinner once a week or being a youth leader or captain of youth sports team.

**New experiences:** You are likely to look for new experiences, including risky experiences and setting your own boundaries. But because brain development is still happening, you might sometimes struggle with thinking through consequences and risks.

**Influences:** Your friends and peers might start to have greater influence on your behaviour, appearance, interests, sense of self and self-esteem.

**Sexual identity:** You might start to have romantic relationships or go on 'dates'. But these aren't always intimate or sexual relationships. For some young people, intimate or sexual relationships can happen later in life, often after marriage.

**Media:** The internet, mobile phones and social media can influence how you communicate with friends and learn about the world.

## EMOTIONAL CHANGES

**Mood swings:**<sup>(8)</sup> During puberty your emotions may become stronger and more intense. Your mood might change more quickly and randomly. It's common for you to feel confused, scared or angry and not know why. You also might be more sensitive and become more easily upset than usual.

### **Things that can impact your mood swings**

- Hormones
- Peer pressure
- Conflict with family
- Stress
- Busy schedule
- Feeling self-conscious
- Lack of sleep
- Feeling scared or alone
- Anxiety
- Physical changes

## 2C

Activity: Everybody is different<sup>(7)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity uses role play to encourage young people to think about some of the changes that occur during puberty and helps them acknowledge that everyone is different and puberty can happen in a variety of different ways for everyone.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Describe the process of puberty and the maturation of the sexual and reproductive health system
- Assess and categorise physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes of puberty; compare the similarities and differences between boys and girls in relation to these changes
- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- Understand that during puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason (i.e. erection and wet dreams in males)
- Recognise that teasing, shaming or stigmatising others based on the changes of puberty is hurtful and may have long lasting psychological impacts

## Sensitive areas:

- Sex
- Bullying

## Resources:

- Handout 2C
- Scissors
- Butchers paper
- Markers



**Preparation:** Facilitators can print enough copies of handout 2C for each pair of volunteers and assign each pair one of the scenarios

**Group composition:** Pairs and individual work



## Prior learning:

- Module 5, Activity 2A: Puberty – Riding the waves
- Module 5, Activity 2B: Understanding puberty

**Literacy support:** Required - involves reading from volunteers

**Technology:** None

## Activity 2C: Everybody is different

## Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *At different times, we feel many different emotions, especially when going through adolescence and body changes which happen at a different pace for different people. Life will always have ups and downs and every now and then we will face a challenge or a stressful situation. It is good to have some tools to use to help us cope in these situations. In this activity we are going to look at how we talk to ourselves, and how that talk can impact our wellbeing and stress.*
2. Write the term 'self-talk' on the board/flipchart. Ask participants to guess what they think this term means.
3. After a few responses, explain that sometimes our level of stress is affected by the things we say and how we speak to ourselves.

## For example:

I might miss a catch and tell myself "nice try", or I might tell myself "clumsy idiot, you are letting the team down". If I use the second approach, I am going to feel a lot more upset.

I might get a low score on a test, and tell myself "that's disappointing, but I am going to work at doing better next time", or I could tell myself "I am no good at this, I might as well give up". The second example is much more negative and is going to lead to feeling more upset.

4. **Say something like:** *This talk we do in our head is called our 'self-talk'. It makes a big difference to how we cope with the challenges. You can hear from the examples that we can have positive self-talk and/or negative self-talk. If we tell ourselves negative things all the time, it can make it hard to keep going when things go wrong. Using positive self-talk can help us get through challenging times and to maintain our determination and effort. It is an important life skill to learn to replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk.*
5. Ask participants to get into pairs. Distribute handout 2C and assign one of the role plays to each pair of volunteers from handout 2C.
6. Ask each pair to act out the situation together one by one (it doesn't matter if boys play female parts or girls play male parts – tell them this is part of the fun). Explain that they might like to practice "thought tracking" in their role play – which means speaking their character's thoughts out loud to the audience.



7. Give them 10 minutes to prepare their role plays and start with the pair that is ready first. Tell each pair that they have 2 minutes to do the play.

8. After each role play, ask each pair:

How did the role play feel?

Example answers:

- Relatable or familiar; many of the concerns or changes that are in the role plays might be similar to things participants have experienced
- The role plays could remind participants of feeling confused, unsure or embarrassed
- Reassured and confident; the role plays could help participants realise that changes during puberty are normal, even if they get teased or bullied about these changes

What was it like to be your character?

Example answers:

- Relatable
- Interesting; participants might have played people from the opposite gender and feel like they learnt something new
- Familiar
- Supported; in the case studies, the characters are supported by someone else through their changes, this might be different to the experiences that participants have had

What did you learn from the role play?

Example answers:

- Support is important during this stage of our lives
- It is not okay to make fun of someone for changes that occur during puberty
- Everyone's body goes through different changes at different times during puberty and these are all okay
- It is normal to be confused or have questions during these changes

What does it make you think about?

Example answers:

- Participant's own lives
- Experiences participants have heard about from friends or family
- How important it is to have a trusted adult or person who can support you during this time of rapid change

9. After each pair has performed, ask the pairs to remain sitting next to each other.
10. Explain: *Now we are going to think about how self-talk could have applied in these role plays. In your pairs, imagine one example of positive self-talk and one example of negative self-talk the characters in each role play might have had.*

11. Read out the following scenario to provide an example:

*Maud is shy and wants to make some friends. There is a group of girls around her age who play and laugh together. She wants to go and talk with them. She is struggling with both positive and negative thoughts about whether she can do this.*

- *On the positive side she might think, "I have met new people before, most people like a friendly smile, at least they will know I like them"*
- *On the negative side she might think, "they won't need any new friends, no one will think I am fun to be with"*

Give the pairs 5 minutes to discuss an example of positive and negative self-talk from their given role play, and then ask each pair to share their examples with the group.

12. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

13. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Puberty and our changing bodies can affect our confidence especially if we experience bullying or teasing
- Everybody goes through puberty in their own time - some early, some late
- It is important not to tease or make fun of others who may experience the physical, emotional and social changes of puberty at earlier or later stages
- You are unique and there is nothing wrong with your body or its changes
- Menstruation, erections and wet dreams are normal parts of these changes
- Positive self-talk can help us during puberty and remind us that our bodies are normal and help us develop positive body-image and confidence
- Just like any other skill, practice will make us better at positive self-talk

14. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Handout 2C: Puberty role plays

**Instructions:** Make enough copies of this handout for each pair of volunteers

### Role play 1

One person plays the mother; the other plays a 12-year-old girl.

The girl is worried because she has not developed breasts, although most of her friends have. The mother reassures the girl, letting her know that the age when breasts start forming varies and that breast sizes vary.

### Role play 3

Both people play 10-year-old girls. One girl teases the other girl because she is taller than all the other girls in the group. The tall girl explains that boys and girls grow at different paces and to different heights. She also explains why she does not like being teased and asks the other girl to be kinder.

The teasing girl apologises.

### Role play 5

One person plays an 11-year-old girl; the other plays her friend. The friend is worried because she has not yet started having periods but the 11-year-old girl has. The girl comforts her friend, letting her know that the age when girls start menstruation varies

### Role play 7

One person plays a 14-year-old boy; the other plays his father. The father tries to talk to his son about relationships, sex and reproductive health. The son wants to ask his dad about erections. They happen to him randomly and he is worried that he isn't normal.

Eventually, he tells his dad, and his dad makes him feel better by telling him that erections and wet dreams are totally normal at his age. He tells his son that if he has any questions, that he would be happy to answer them.

### Role play 2

One person plays a 12-year-old boy; the other plays the older brother.

The boy is sad because everyone at school teases him about his breaking voice (his voice is getting deeper). The older brother explains that his voice breaking is a normal part of puberty, and what to say to people when they tease him.

### Role play 4

One person plays a 12-year-old boy; the other plays his father (or uncle, grandfather). The boy is worried because he is growing hair under his arms and a little on his face. The father (or uncle, grandfather) comforts him and tells him that most boys develop hair in new places as they grow older. How much hair and where may be different for each person.

### Role play 6

One person plays a 13-year-old boy; the other plays his friend. The friend is worried because he is not as tall and big as the 13-year-old boy. The boy reassures his friend, letting him know that the age when boys start the physical changes of puberty varies.

### Role play 8

One person plays a 14-year-old boy and the other his 18-year-old brother. The younger brother is worried because he has no interest in romantic feelings or sex. He just wants to focus on school and do well in sports. But all his mates make fun of him and tell him it's 'not normal'. His older brother tells him not to listen to his mates. He reminds his little brother that everyone develops feelings (sexual or romantic) at different ages, or sometimes not at all. These are all completely normal.

## 2D

Activity: The pleasure principle<sup>(1)</sup>

## Activity overview:

During puberty, many young people will experience physical responses such as erections and wet dreams and often they can happen for no particular reason. Arousal and sexual stimulation will also begin during this time so it is important that young people understand that these experiences are normal and nothing to be ashamed of. This activity helps participants understand what is happening to their body during moments of sexual desire or excitement, and how to manage those feelings.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Assess and categorise physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes of puberty; compare the similarities and differences between boys and girls in relation to these changes
- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- Understand that during puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason (i.e. erection and wet dreams in males)
- Describe male and female responses to sexual stimulation
- Explain that many boys and girls begin to masturbate during puberty, and this is normal
- Acknowledge that masturbation does not cause physical or emotional harm but should be done in private

## Sensitive areas:

- Sexual assault
- Substance misuse
- Trauma
- Sexual responses (i.e. erections)
- Masturbation

### Resources:

- Butchers paper or board
- Markers or chalk

**Preparation:** Watch the video (listed under 'Technology') and ensure it is suitable for your group, including language and content. Noting anything that might be different in your country or language that you might need to explain to participants.

**Group composition:** Entire group together

### Prior learning:

- Module 5, Activity 2D: A matter of consent and FRIES
- Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology
- Module 5, Activity 2C: Everybody is different

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Optional

AMAZE video 'Can anyone get an erection?'  
(1 minute 18 seconds)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5433Rwto1WQ>



## Activity 2D: The pleasure principle

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *So, we know about the male and female organs and how they help reproduction... but how does the sperm get into the vagina in the first place? Well, that's why we need to talk about sex. When our bodies feel good, we trust someone and we are attracted to someone, our bodies can respond in certain ways that let us know that they are ready for sex.*
2. If you choose to play the video, follow from step 3. If you are not playing the video, continue from step 5.
3. Show the AMAZE video 'Can anyone get an erection?' (1 minute 18 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5433Rwto1WQ>
4. **Say something like:** *That was a great clip to show us how our bodies respond when we feel sexually excited or stimulated.*
5. If you are not playing the video, explain what **"sexual stimulation"** means by saying: **"Sexual stimulation"** *means feeling sexy, feeling horny, being turned on. Sometimes this can happen when we see something we think is 'sexy', or sometimes it can happen for no reason at all. This is especially true as you are going through puberty.*

*When we are sexually stimulated, our body can respond in a physical way. For boys and men, this might mean you get an erection (a hard penis) and a faster heart rate. For girls and women, this might mean getting harder and more sensitive nipples, increased heart rate, wetness on the vulva and a swelling of the clitoris (the small sensitive organ at the top of the vulva).*

6. Ask: What are some important things to consider before any kind of sexual activity?

**Example answer:** It is vital to seek consent before any kind of sexual activity involving another person. Check in with your partner continuously and ask them "Do you like this? Does that feel okay?" and so on. It is also important to explore sexuality and sexual activity in a private setting.

#### Facilitator note

Remind participants of the FRIES model of consent, ask them what FRIES stand for? Refer to the FRIES activity in Module 4 if needed.

7. Ask participants to think about the video (or the definition of 'sexual stimulation that you gave before) and ask the following question:  
Our bodies can give off lots of physical signs that it is sexually stimulated ('aroused' or 'turned on'). What are some examples?

### Example answers:

- Penis becomes hard (erection)
- Clitoris becomes bigger
- Nipples can become bigger and sensitive
- Wetness on vulva
- Faster heart rate

8. Tell participants that these are all really great examples.

9. Ask participants: What are some non-physical ways people experience sexual stimulation?

### Example answers:

- Thinking sexual thoughts
- Imagining sexy things (also called sexual fantasies)
- Speaking to someone in a sexy way

Why do you think penis becomes hard or a clitoris gets bigger when sexually stimulated?

**Example answer:** This happens due to blood flow to a person's genitals. The inside of the penis and the inside of the clitoris both have tubes that, when filled with blood, become hard. There is also pooling of blood around other sexual body parts, such as nipples, testes, labia, and more. That's why the colouring in these areas can become deeper.

What is an "orgasm"?

**Example answer:** "Orgasm" is the physical and emotional sensation which is experienced at the peak of sexual excitement. In men, this usually comes with ejaculation; with women, muscles of the uterus and inside the vagina and elsewhere squeeze in different ways. For some girls and women, ejaculation can happen.

How does the body prepare for orgasm?

**Example answer:** Orgasms can happen quickly, slowly, or not happen at all. These are all okay! It can also take women a lot longer than men to reach orgasm and that might mean they require more build up, kissing, touching and doing things they find pleasurable. Sex should always be pleasurable for both people involved and is about the whole experience of connecting in a sexual way, not just reaching orgasm.

10. **Say something like:** *Our bodies can give off physical signs that we are stimulated. This can be in response to being touched by someone else, touching someone else, touching our own body, seeing things, watching things, using our imagination etc. However, there are other things that can affect our ability to become sexually stimulated.*



## 11. Ask the following questions:

What are some other things that can affect how our body responds sexually?

Example answers:

- Stress levels
- Hormone levels
- How old we are
- Being sick or healthy
- How much exercise we do
- History of sexual abuse
- Medications
- Substance use (such as kava, alcohol or other drugs)
- Trauma
- Disability status
- Smoking status

Why is it important to know about the way bodies respond sexually?

Example answers:

- So we can understand our bodies
- To help us notice when things may not be working well
- So we know when to seek help
- So we have more confidence and don't feel embarrassed about our bodies
- To work out what feels good to have better sex
- To work out what feels good to be intimate without having sex

What might young people do after they are sexually excited to feel good?

Example answers:

- They might masturbate

Masturbating is a normal, healthy and common practice for young people who want to explore their bodies, discover what feels nice and to have a pleasurable experience. Masturbation should always be done in private.

- Kissing, touching or petting each other
- Have sex with someone (if they both want to and have both given their consent); this could be oral sex, mutual masturbation or penetrative sex

12. Mention to participants that masturbation will be explored in greater detail in another activity.
13. Reflect on the importance of young people seeking help if they feel something isn't right. It is totally normal and natural for young people to have questions and be curious about their bodies. This includes young people with disabilities.
14. On a large sheet of butchers paper or on a board, write in the centre: Who could answer my questions?
15. Ask young people to brainstorm different sources they could go to for support if they had questions about their bodies or sexual responses.

**Example answers:**

- A trusted adult (family members, friends, older siblings, teachers, youth workers etc.)
  - Health professionals
  - Reliable internet sites or sources
16. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*  
Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.
  17. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
    - Our bodies experience changes when we are sexually excited
    - You always need consent to have any kind of sexual activity with someone, including kissing, touching, or any kind of sex
    - The build-up and peak of sexual desire is called orgasm
    - Orgasms are different for everyone
    - Speaking openly about sexual desire can help us communicate in intimate relationships, and can help us speak up if something feels good or bad
    - Sexual exploration and masturbation are safe and healthy ways to relieve sexual tension, but should be done in private
  18. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## 2E

## Activity: Masturbation myths



## Activity overview:

This activity helps participants to learn about masturbation and bust any masturbation myths. Masturbation is often only spoken about in relation to men and boys so it is important to ensure that women and girls are included in this conversation. Talking about masturbation can also cause participants to feel uncomfortable and they may laugh, make jokes or be silly. Some laughing is okay but you may need to remind participants of the group rules if it becomes unhelpful.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- Understand that during puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason
- Recognise that teasing, shaming or stigmatising others based on the changes of puberty is hurtful and may have long lasting psychological impacts
- Acknowledge that puberty may be particularly challenging for some children, particularly those who are gender non-conforming, transgender or intersex, and for young people with a disability
- Explain that many boys and girls begin to masturbate during puberty, and this is normal
- Acknowledge that masturbation does not cause physical or emotional harm but should be done in private

**Sensitive areas:** Masturbation

## Resources:

- Three pieces of paper
- Pen/marker

**Preparation:** Watch the video (listed under 'Technology') and ensure it is suitable for your group, including language and content, noting anything that might be different in your country or language that you might need to explain to participants.

**Group composition:** Individual work

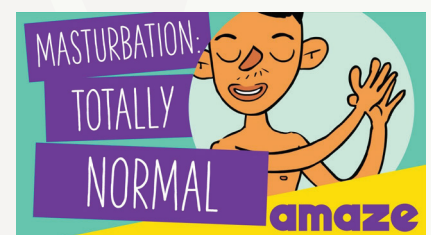
**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 2A: Puberty – Riding the wave

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Optional

AMAZE video 'Masturbation: Totally normal' (1 minute 48 seconds)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK48R722jyA>



## Activity 2E: Masturbation myths

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by informing young people that they will be having a discussion about masturbation, erections and wet dreams and busting some myths. Explain that it is okay to laugh, feel awkward and ask questions throughout the session. As a facilitator, it is important to encourage discussion and challenge any misinformation you hear throughout the session.

2. Ask participants:

What is an **“erection”**?

**Example answer:** An **“erection”** is a hardening of the penis that occurs when sponge-like tissue inside the penis fills up with blood. Usually, an erection causes the penis to enlarge and stand away from the body.

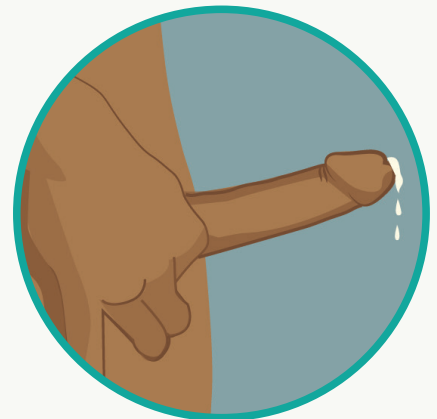
What is a **“wet dream”**?

**Example answer:** A **“wet dream”** is when a boy releases semen from his penis while sleeping. Semen is the fluid that contains sperm. Sometimes in his sleep a boy may dream about sex. On waking he may find that he has ejaculated in his sleep. Wet dreams are the natural way for the body to release the build-up of sperm in the testes and sexual urges in males.

Sperm build-up occurs as sperm is always being produced by the testes. Wet dreams are a sign that the boy is sexually maturing. It is important to practice good hygiene after experiencing a wet dream in order to keep your body clean and healthy. Take a shower or bath to clean your body and clean any clothes or linens that may have ejaculate on them.

What is **“masturbation”**?

**Example answer:** **“Masturbation”** is when someone touches themselves in a sexual way because it feels good. Masturbation may be done alone or with someone else. Masturbation is a safe and healthy way for everyone (both males and females) to express themselves sexually.



What names do people use for masturbation?

**Example answers:** 'Wanking', 'jerking off', 'touching yourself', 'playing with yourself' etc.

**i Facilitator note**

You can refer to any local terms.

What do you know or have you heard about masturbation from friends, parents, movies or TV, religion or cultural beliefs?

3. Allow this discussion to guide the next part of this activity.
4. Tell participants that it is important that they think critically about some of the information they might have heard or assumed about masturbation to determine if they are facts or myths.
5. Write 'TRUE', 'FALSE' and 'STILL DECIDING' on three pieces of paper.
6. Place 'TRUE' on one side of the room and 'FALSE' on the other side and 'STILL DECIDING' will go in the middle. Participants can move according to what they think about each statement. They can also change their answer as discussion occurs after each statement.
7. Read out the first statement and encourage participants to move according to whether they think the statement is TRUE or FALSE. Facilitators should also encourage participants to share their thoughts and discuss their answers.
  - a. Masturbation is okay and a normal part of growing up for boys – **True**  
Anyone of any age or gender, including people with a disability, can masturbate.
8. Repeat with the other statements
  - b. Masturbation is okay and a normal part of growing up for girls – **True**  
Anyone of any age or gender, including people with a disability, can masturbate. While there may be some stereotypes that girls don't have sexual urges, this is mostly incorrect. Anyone can experience sexual feelings. Masturbation is completely normal for women and girls, just like it is for boys and men.
  - c. People can masturbate with themselves or with another person – **True**  
Masturbation can be a safe way of expressing sexuality, alone or with someone else.
  - d. It is also normal NOT to masturbate – **True**  
Not everyone masturbates. This could be for a variety of reasons, including cultural or religious beliefs, lack of interest, or they don't know how to.
  - e. Masturbation is unnatural and an unsafe way to release sexual energy – **False**

- f. You can get pregnant or catch sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV by masturbating by yourself – **False**

Masturbation is a safe activity to do in private without any risk of catching an STI or HIV.

- g. Masturbation can lead to infertility – **False**

There are many myths about masturbation. However, masturbation does not affect your fertility (meaning your ability to have a baby) at all. This applies to men, women and people of all genders.

- h. Masturbation can change your sexual orientation (what gender or genders of people you are attracted to) – **False**

Masturbation does not influence sexual orientation in any way. Sexual orientation is a natural part of who you are – it is not a choice. A person's sexual orientation can change over time.

9. Finalise this activity by watching the AMAZE video (if you choose to play the video): 'Masturbation: totally normal' (1 minute 48 seconds). Introduce the video by saying something like: If anyone still has questions about what masturbation is, we are now going to watch a short video explaining how masturbation is normal.

10. Play the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK48R722jyA>

11. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

12. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Masturbation is a normal activity for all genders
- Masturbation should always be done in private
- It is also normal not to masturbate
- Masturbation will not have any negative effects

13. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## 2F

Activity: Making a hygiene plan<sup>(9)</sup>

## Activity overview:

This activity will give participants the skills to think about young people's personal hygiene needs, and how they can create a plan to ensure these are carried out. This is also very useful for young people with disabilities.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Appreciate that puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- Describe personal hygiene and sanitation practices and apply understanding to a personal plan for staying healthy while growing up

**Sensitive areas:** None

**Resources:** Handout 2F

**Preparation:** Photocopy handout 2F for each participant

**Group composition:** Individual work

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 2A: Puberty – Riding the waves

**Literacy support:** Required - involves writing

**Technology:** None



## Activity 2F: Making a hygiene plan

## Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by asking young people: What does “hygiene” mean?

**Example answer:** Practices or things you do to keep yourself healthy and clean.

2. **Say something like:** *When we were children, there were probably some basic hygiene skills that our parents, families or carers helped us learn. What would these include?*

**Example answers:**

- Brushing your teeth
- Brushing your hair



- Having a bath/shower
  - Covering your mouth when you sneeze/cough
  - Washing your hands after you go to the toilet
3. Remind participants that during adolescence and puberty, young people need to do extra things to stay clean and healthy.
4. Ask participants the following questions for discussion:

Why is personal hygiene important?

**Example answers:**

- Helps keep us healthy
- Helps us keep others healthy
- Avoids the spread of bacteria and viruses
- Helps us feel comfortable around other people
- Helps us to be confident

What are some additional things young people might need to consider when they want to stay hygienic as teenagers and adults?

**Example answers:**

- Body odour – wearing deodorant
- Periods or menstruation
- Body and facial hair – shaving
- Acne and pimples – washing face
- Oily hair

Can you think of any expectations about body hair in our culture?

**Example answer:** In some urban communities there are expectations that young women will shave their legs and underarms, and men will have a neat haircut. Deciding how to wear your hair, or to shave or not, is a personal choice. Growing body hair or facial hair is normal. Some women or girls grow facial hair and some men and boys don't. These are all completely normal and hair removal is entirely a personal choice. No one should feel pressured to do these things just because other people are doing them.

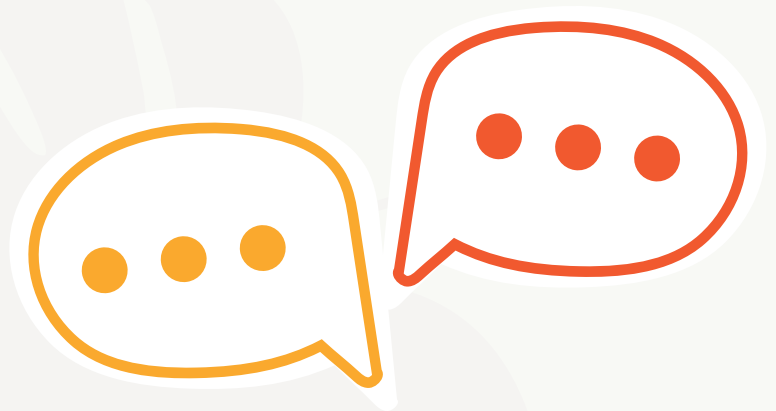
### **i Facilitator note**

Activities 2B and 2C in this module discuss the physical changes that occur during puberty in more detail.

5. Give each participant a copy of handout 2F. Encourage participants to think about things young people need to do every day to practice good personal hygiene. Ask them to think about what might need to be done once a week, or every month? Allow 20 minutes for this.
6. Ask if anyone wants to share some of their ideas for good hygiene practices and how often they think they should be doing it.
7. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

8. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - Hygiene is all about keeping ourselves clean and healthy and becomes especially important as our bodies change during puberty
  - When we were young, our families helped us with hygiene
  - As we grow older, it is time to start learning how to care for ourselves
9. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Handout 2F: My personal hygiene plan

### Instructions:

Think about all the things you need to do every day, week or month to stay healthy and clean.  
You can write your answers or draw them!

**Every day young people need to:**

**Every week young people need to:**

**Every month young people need to:**

## Topic 2: Puberty and becoming an adult

### Key messages of this topic

- Puberty is a time of rapid physical, emotional, cognitive and social changes
- Puberty is a normal and healthy part of adolescence, and everybody goes through puberty differently
- During puberty, experiencing physical responses is normal, either due to arousal or for no particular reason (i.e. erection and wet dreams in males)
- Teasing, shaming or stigmatising others based on the changes of puberty is hurtful and may have long lasting psychological impacts
- Puberty may be particularly challenging for some children, particularly those who have a disability, or who have diverse SOGIE
- Many boys and girls begin to masturbate during puberty, and this is normal
- Masturbation does not cause physical or emotional harm but should be done in private
- Personal hygiene and sanitation are important to stay healthy during puberty and adulthood



# 3 MODULE 5

## TOPIC 3

### MENSTRUATION

3

## Topic overview



Across the Pacific, menstruating girls, women and gender diverse people experience needless shame, discrimination and fear. They can also experience barriers to managing their periods such as a lack of menstrual products, water and sanitation infrastructure. For women and girls with disabilities, this can be even more challenging with added stigma and barriers due to inaccessible infrastructure or inadequate support and services.

Without proper education, advocacy and policy change, gender inequality and cultural taboos will continue to have a major impact on the ability for women and girls to menstruate safely. Men and boys can also play important roles as allies. Everyone is responsible for learning about menstruation, supporting women and advocating for gender equality. This is the purpose of this topic. Young people present a great opportunity to create change in their communities, challenge menstrual myths and advocate for improved menstrual health. This will help to reduce school drop-out rates and improve emotional wellbeing, safety and toilet facilities for women, girls and non-binary people across the Pacific.

## Topic learning objectives

Facilitator version	Participant version
Describe the menstrual cycle and identify the various physical symptoms and feelings that women and girls may experience during this time	Describe the menstrual cycle and any symptoms women and girls may feel
Understand how changes in hormones regulate the menstrual cycle, and explain the specific phase of the menstrual cycle in which pregnancy is most able to occur	Understand the role of hormones during menstruation and when pregnancy is most likely to happen
Describe how to access, use, wash or dispose of menstrual products that are available locally	Describe where young people can get, wash or throw away menstrual products
Recognise the importance of having access to menstrual products, clean water and private toilet facilities during menstruation	Understand the importance of having menstrual products, clean water and private toilets during menstruation
Appreciate that menstruation is natural, normal and healthy	Appreciate that menstruation is natural, normal and healthy
Describe how gender inequality can contribute to women and girls' feelings of shame and fear during menstruation and restrict women and girls from participating in public life	Describe how gender inequality causes stigma and shame around menstruation
Demonstrate positive and supportive strategies for women and girls to feel comfortable during their menstruation, including the role of men and boys as allies	Demonstrate how society, boys and men can support women during menstruation

## Activities

Activity		Time	Page	Handout
3A: The menstrual cycle		60 minutes	76	Yes
3B: Picking your products		60 minutes	86	Yes
3C: Tackling period taboo		30 minutes	94	No
3D: Menstrual media campaign		60 minutes	98	No

### 3A

### Activity: The menstrual cycle<sup>(10)</sup>



#### Activity overview:

This activity covers what happens during the menstrual cycle. There are different stages of the menstrual cycle which all have different symptoms and things going on inside the body. It is very important that discussions about menstruation are gender inclusive and everyone is involved in this conversation, not just women and girls! This will help remove some of the mystery and stigma surrounding menstruation for both girls and boys.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 60 minutes

#### Learning objectives:

- Describe the menstrual cycle and identify the various physical symptoms and feelings that women and girls may experience during this time
- Understand how changes in hormones regulate the menstrual cycle, and explain the specific phase of the menstrual cycle in which pregnancy is most able to occur
- Appreciate that menstruation is natural, normal and healthy
- Demonstrate positive and supportive strategies for women and girls to feel comfortable during their menstruation, including the role of men and boys as allies

**Sensitive areas:** Sex

### Resources:

- Spare paper
- Markers, pens or pencils (have at least four colours available)
- Butchers paper
- Handout 3Aa
- Handout 3Ab
- Empty cardboard box to collect questions



**Preparation:** Print copies of Handout 3Aa and Handout 3Ab (one per person). Ensure your venue has the capacity to play an online video (i.e. laptop, projector, wifi or internet etc.)

**Group composition:** Whole group working together

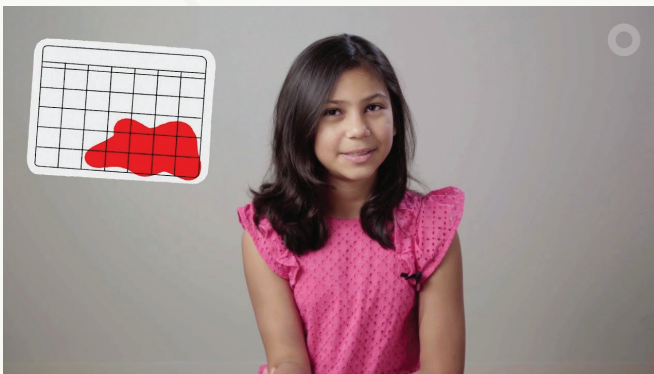
### Prior learning:

- Module 4, Activity 2C: Gender words
- Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology

**Literacy support:** Required. Involves writing

**Technology:** Optional

- Global Citizen video called 'Kids talk periods' (1 minute 40 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9fgxzfbYMQ>
- AMAZE video called 'All about getting your period' (2 minutes 26 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX4NJrJxwss>





## Activity 3A: The menstrual cycle

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the topic by asking participants: What is “menstruation”?

#### Example answers:

- Also known as a ‘period’, ‘moon’ or ‘flower’
- Happens to anyone with a uterus
- It begins at the start of puberty and ends at menopause (in your 40s or 50s)
- It is when a person with a uterus experiences normal bleeding from the vagina once every month
- Menstruation is a natural part of puberty that occurs each month for more than 1.8 billion people with a uterus around the world

During each cycle, the reproductive system of a person with a uterus goes through many changes. The most obvious part of the cycle is the menstrual bleeding, also called menstruation or a period.

- A “**period**” is when a person with a uterus bleeds from their vagina for a number of days; for most people, this happens every 28 days or so
  - People can have their first period (or menses) at different ages
  - Most people start to menstruate between the ages of 10-15
2. If there is internet access, you can show a short video on YouTube called ‘Kids talk periods’ by Global Citizen (1 minute 40 seconds). Explain that it is a video about some ideas and questions that kids have about periods.
  3. Ask participants: As you watch the video, think about whether these kids have the right information about periods?
  4. Play the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9fgxzfbYMQ>
  5. Lead a quick discussion by asking:  
What were some funny but incorrect things the kids thought about periods?

#### Example answers:

- Some thought periods lasted 5 minutes or whole days
- Some thought periods were ‘really messy’
- Some had no idea what some menstrual products looked like or what they did
- Some were shocked that some girls are made to stay home if they have their period

Why do you think the kids didn't know the correct information?

**Example answer:** It is likely they never had anyone explain menstruation to them properly. Some adults may avoid openly discussing menstruation because they think it is taboo or maybe they do not know themselves the correct information. However, everyone has the right to correct scientific information about sexual and reproductive health! All young people, regardless of gender, have the right to learn about menstruation.

6. Explain that in this activity, they are going to learn a lot about menstruation and periods. Mention that it is important for the young men and boys to participate and maybe even learn something new! It is important for boys and men to learn about menstruation because menstruation is a human rights issue that affects all people. Explain that when men and boys are educated about menstruation, the topic becomes less secretive and taboo. Having men and boys as allies and supporters empowers people who menstruate to make sure their needs are met.
7. Place an empty cardboard box at the front of the room.
8. Ask participants to think of any questions they have about periods. Ask them to write their questions down on paper and then put it in the box, or ask the question out loud if they feel comfortable.
9. After 3 minutes, ask participants to fold their paper and put it in the box.
10. Review the questions and check if this activity answers any of those questions. If there are questions that you don't know the answer to, or that won't be answered in the video, explain that you will do some research and get back to them during the next session.
11. If internet is available, introduce the next video by **saying something like:** *Now we have brainstormed some questions people often have about periods, let's see if this short video has any of the answers.*
12. Play the AMAZE video 'All about getting your period' (3 minutes)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX4Njrjxwss>
13. **Say something like:** *This activity is all about periods, the menstrual cycle and menstruation.*

#### **Facilitator note**

Check to make sure all these terms are familiar with the participants. If not, you can use the glossary to help define the words, or you can use local terms that are more acceptable.

14. **Say something like:** *The menstrual cycle usually takes around 28 days but anywhere between 21 to 35 days is normal. At the start of the cycle menstrual bleeding comes out of the vagina. When the bleeding stops, some discharge (fluid) comes out of the vagina for the rest of the cycle. This discharge keeps your vagina healthy. It can also help you know if something might be wrong. Vaginal discharge is very normal and can look and feel different throughout your cycle.*

*Healthy vaginal discharge helps keeps infections away, and helps your body get rid of dead cells and bacteria. Normal discharge is usually clear or creamy, or perhaps with a slight yellow tint to it. It does not have an offensive smell or cause irritation. If you notice a change in your discharge, let a trusted adult know or visit the nurse or doctor.*

15. Explain that there are four phases that occur during the menstrual cycle. They are called the:

- Ovulation phase
- Follicular phase
- Menstrual phase
- Luteal phase

16. Distribute both handouts to each person.

17. Use the handouts 3Aa to describe the four stages.

### **Phase 1: Menstrual phase**

The first day of the cycle. This starts on the first day of a period. A period usually lasts for 2-7 days.

### **Phase 2: Follicular phase**

This phase begins when a period is finished. An ovum (egg) is developing in an ovary and the lining of the uterus slowly builds. This phase can last from 11-27 days although the average length is 16 days.

### **Phase 3: Ovulation phase**

The egg is released from the ovary into the fallopian tube, this is called ovulation. Ovulation happens around day 14 of a cycle if someone have a regular 28 day cycle. If a cycle is longer than 28 days e.g. 32 days, then ovulation will be on day 18. So the ovulation day will depend on how long the cycle is. The egg can only survive for 24 hours. If having unprotected sex, the 5 days before ovulation and the day of ovulation is when becoming pregnant is most likely.

### **Phase 4: Luteal phase**

If the egg has been fertilised it takes around 5-7 days to travel to the uterus and attach itself (implants) into the lining to start growing. In most cases the ovum won't be fertilised or meet with a sperm, so it dissolves within 48 hours. It is common to experience pre-menstrual syndrome (also known as PMS) in the luteal phase due to changes in hormone levels. PMS is a very common condition that can affect a person's emotions and physical health at certain phases of her menstrual cycle, usually just before her period. Menstrual cramps (or pain in the lower abdomen) are also common in this phase. This phase lasts 11-17 days. Then, the whole cycle starts again unless there is a pregnancy.

18. Use the calendar from handout 3Ab and put it at the front of the room. Alternatively, you can draw a calendar for a month on a large sheet of butchers paper. Include 30 days.

19. Ask a volunteer to come up and mark the first 4 days on the cycle with a red circle and write the word 'period' (days 1-4 of the calendar).

### **i Facilitator note**

Participants can follow along by marking the days on their own calendar.

20. Ask another volunteer to come up and write, in blue, 'Ovulation day' on day 14.
21. Ask a third volunteer to draw the red circle and write 'period' on days 28-30.
22. Tell participants that every person's menstrual cycle can be slightly different but this is a brief example of how a menstrual cycle works.
23. **Explain:** *The most fertile days for a person with a uterus are the 5 days before ovulation and the day of ovulation. This is because sperm can survive in the uterus and fallopian tubes for up to five days while the egg can survive for 24 hours after ovulation.*
24. Ask another volunteer to come up and mark that on the calendar with a new symbol (maybe a green tick or star). **Say something like:** *This is a person's fertile window – or when they are most likely to fall pregnant if they are having unprotected sexual intercourse. Remember, your cycle may be longer or shorter than 28 days, so this will affect when your fertile window is. Fertility awareness (tracking your fertile window) can be used for family planning, but it is not a reliable method of contraception, especially when women are younger and are very fertile or have an irregular cycle. You can talk to a health care provider about the best method of contraception for avoiding pregnancy.*
25. As a large group, discuss the following questions:

What things might a person feel/experience before their period?

#### Facilitator note

The time before a person's period can be referred to as PMS which stands for 'premenstrual syndrome'.

#### Example answers

- They might notice dry or oily skin as well as more pimples or acne
- They can feel tired, have slightly more tender breasts, constipation or they might also be feeling easily annoyed or easy to upset
- They may feel bloated
- They may have diarrhoea
- They may experience food cravings

What things might a person feel/experience during a menstrual cycle?

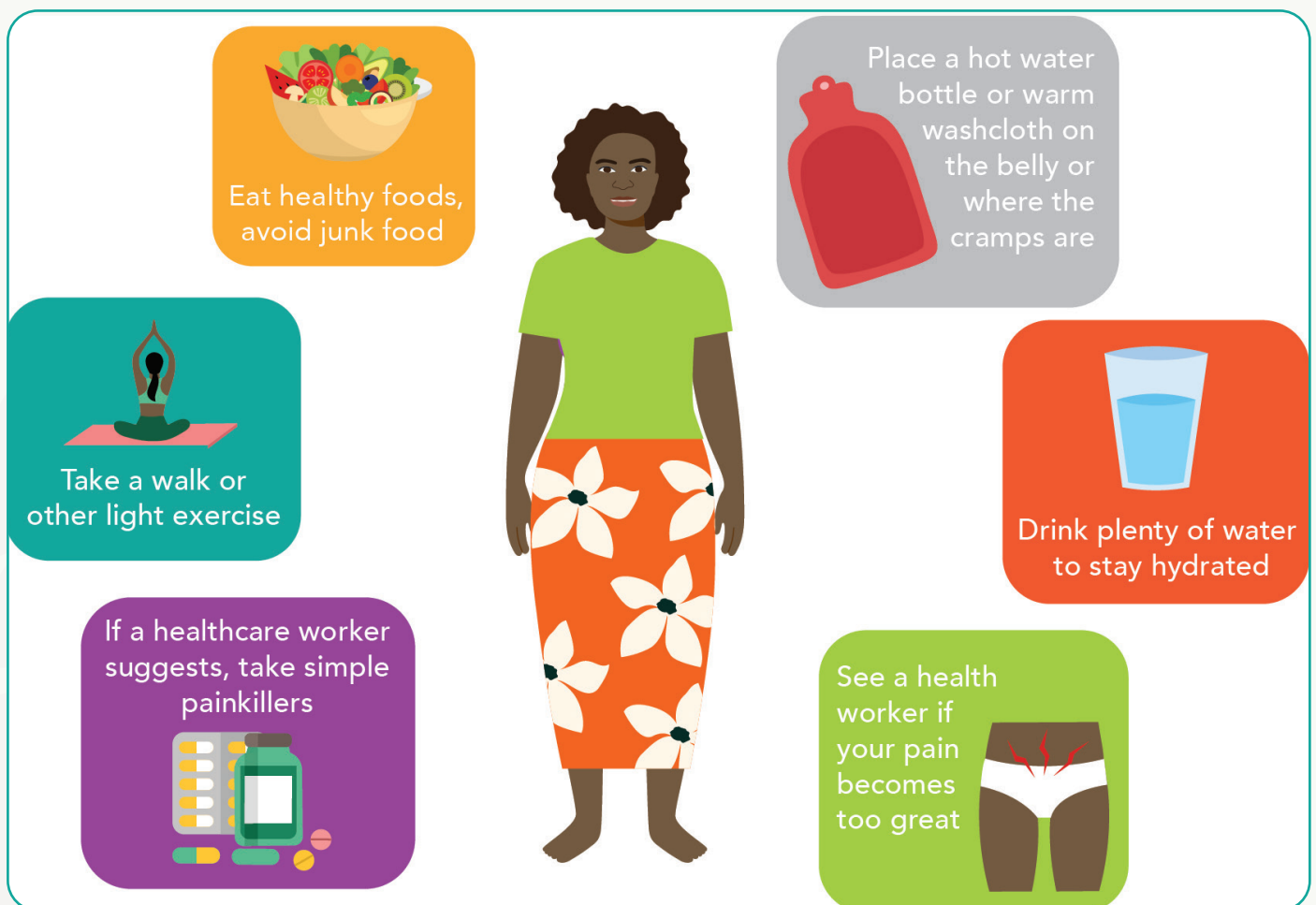
#### Example answer:

- Bleeding; if bleeding is very heavy, this can cause anaemia (when the body doesn't have enough healthy blood cells) and it may be important to seek medical advice
- Besides bleeding, they might experience period cramps
- Some people with a uterus find that their sex drive increases during menstruation due to a dip in progesterone levels, which is a hormone. In fact, period sex, or having sex whilst having a period, can relieve painful cramps and may even shorten menstruation!

Even though some of these symptoms can make you feel uncomfortable, there are lots of strategies that you can use in order to cope or feel better. What might these be?

Example answers:

- Getting physical exercise
- Using a hot water bottle or warm cloth on your stomach to relieve cramps
- Eating healthy foods: lots of fruits and vegetables
- Relaxing and getting a good amount of sleep
- Showering daily and practicing good personal hygiene
- Take simple painkillers (if advised by a healthcare professional)
- If bleeding is very heavy, speak to a healthcare professional
- With advice from a health care professional, hormonal methods of contraception can be used to time and lighten periods, reduce symptoms or skip periods



What are some of the key things you have learnt from this activity?

Example answers:

- Everyone's experience of their period and the menstrual cycle is slightly different
- If you notice something that doesn't feel right, seek advice from a health worker
- Your fertile window is the 5 days before ovulation and the day of ovulation
- Periods are controlled by hormones
- Healthy vaginal discharge is normal
- An average cycle lasts 26-32 days

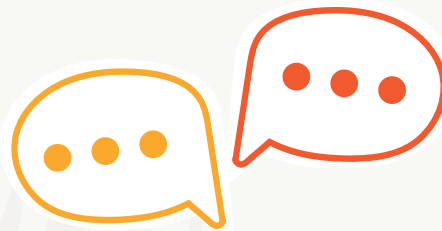
26. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

27. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

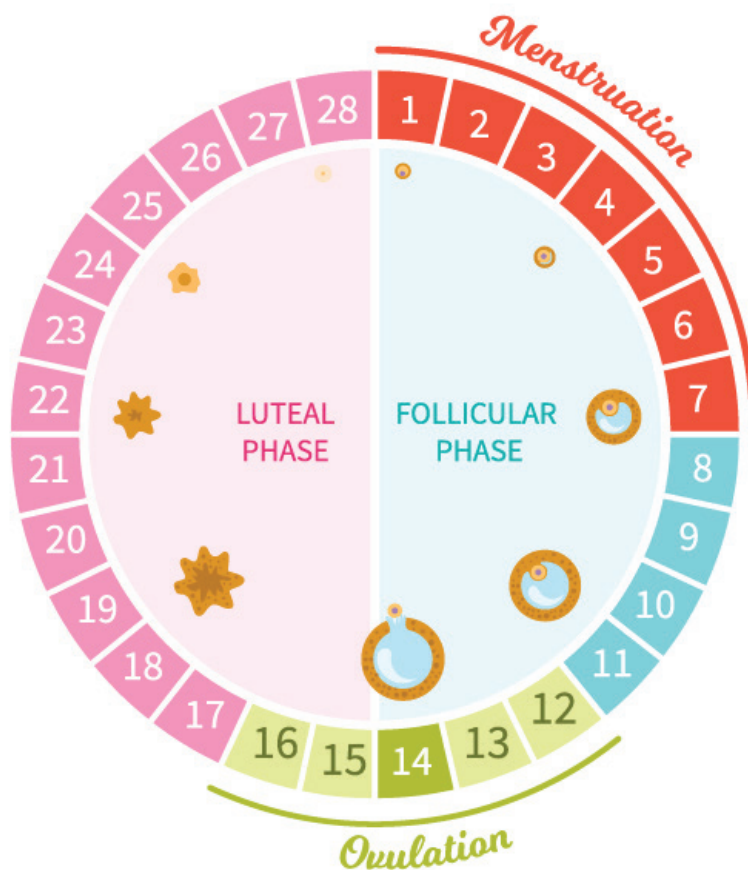
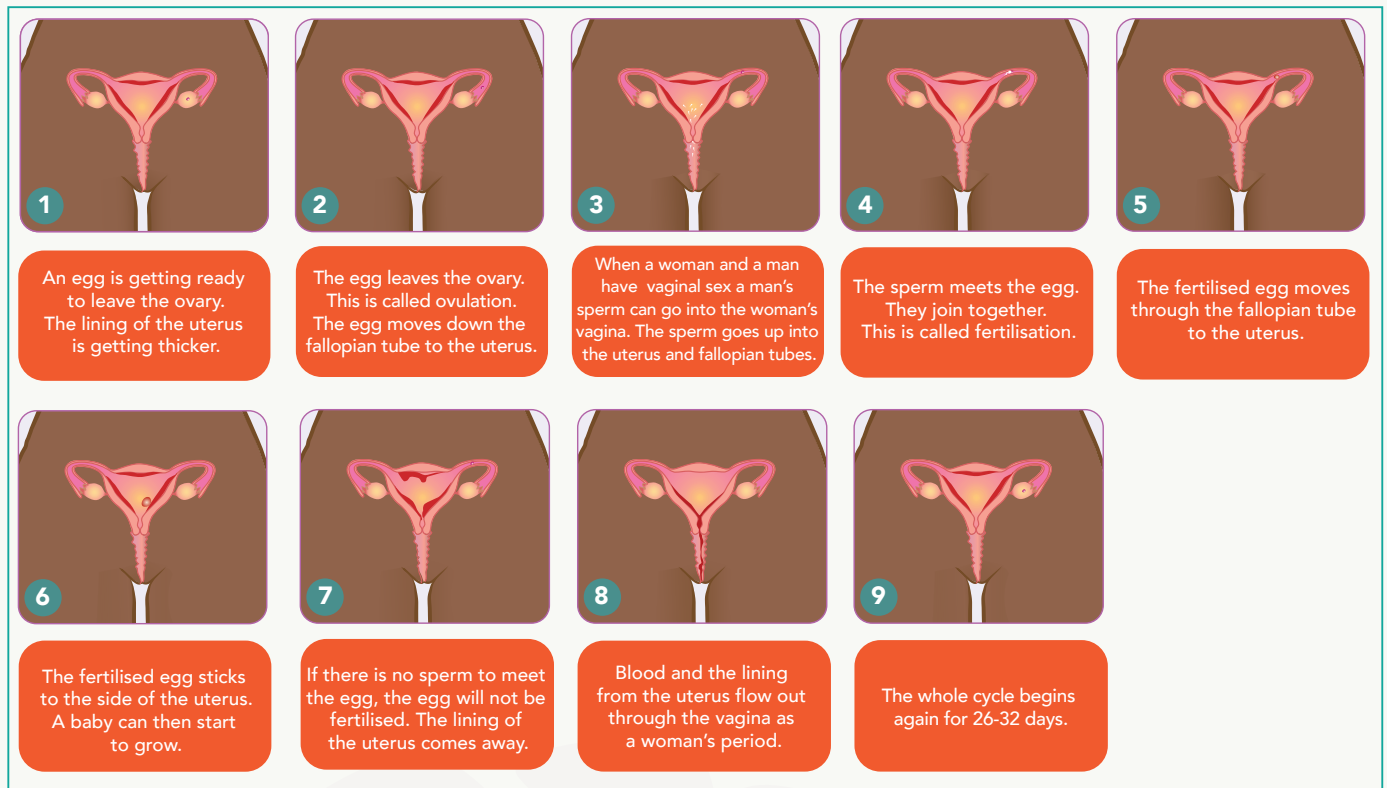
- The menstrual cycle is a monthly hormone cycle women and girls experience from puberty
- There are four phases to a menstrual cycle. The most obvious phase externally is the menstrual phase, where blood comes from the uterus through the vagina
- Your fertility (ability to conceive a baby) changes throughout the cycle
- Periods are normal and healthy, and happen to half the entire population of the world at some point
- There are simple steps you can take to relieve period pain. If pain is too strong or there is very heavy bleeding, see a healthcare professional.

28. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



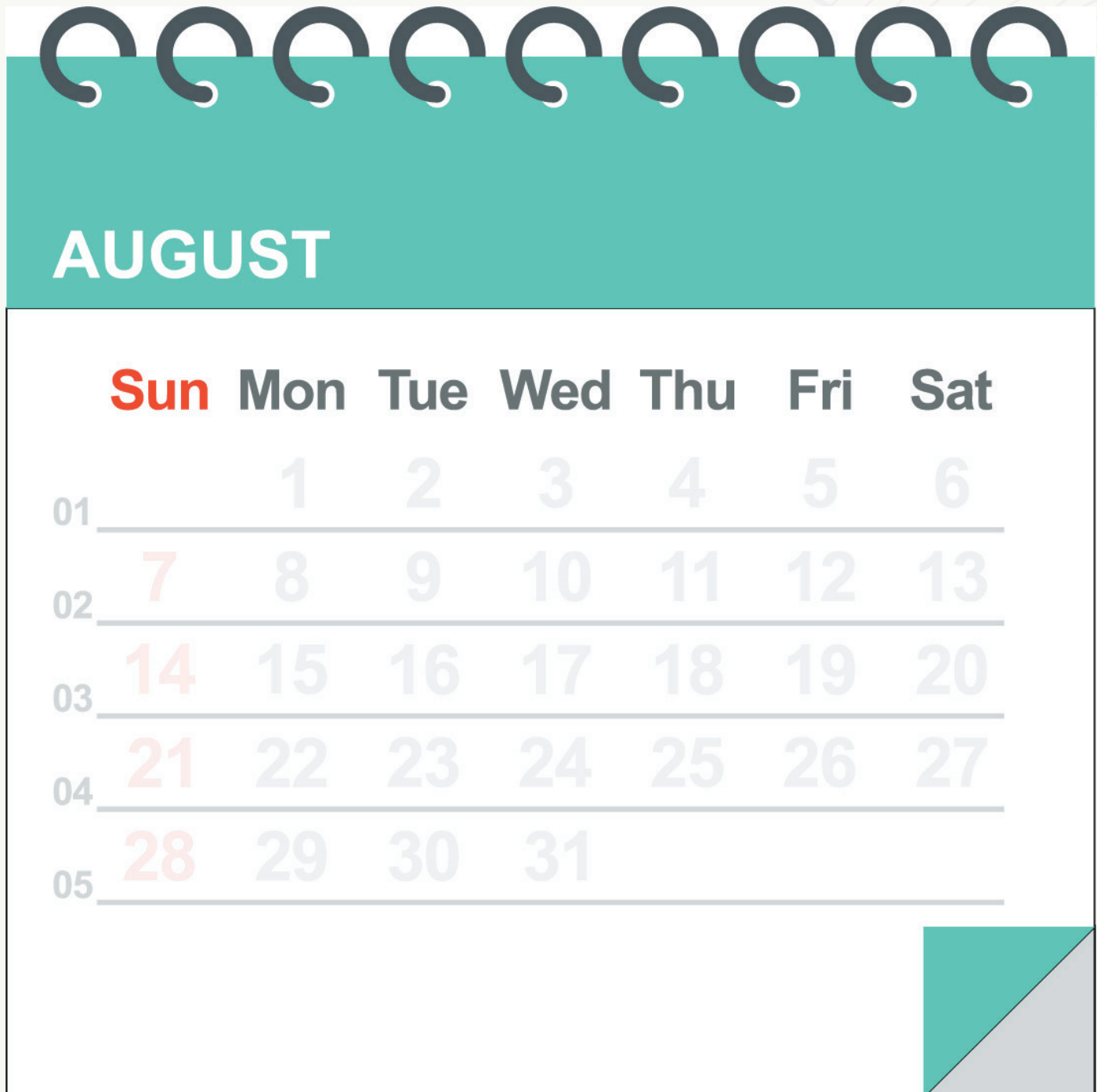


## Handout 3Aa: Menstrual cycle





## Handout 3Ab: Calendar



## 3B

## Activity: Picking your products



## Activity overview:

This activity helps participants identify different types of menstrual products, including when they might be suitable for different phases or types of periods. It is important that the facilitator brings example products to the session to show participants examples which are available in their community and give a brief demonstration as to how to open products and use them.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 60 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Describe how to access, use, wash or dispose of menstrual products available in an individual's community
- Recognise that it is important for all young people to have access to menstrual products, clean water and private toilet facilities during menstruation

## Sensitive areas:

- Sex
- Menstruation

## Resources:

- Commonly used menstrual products (disposable pad, tampons, cloth pad, reusable menstrual cup or underwear)
- Handout 3B
- Question box
- Paper
- Pens

## Preparation:

- Think about which menstrual products are common in your community and bring some in to show participants if possible. If not available, use handout 3B.
- It is important that boys are given the opportunity to participate as boys are important allies for girls and women. If facilitators think this could make female participants uncomfortable, the session can be run separately for single-gender groups.
- Ensure your venue has the capacity to play an online video; i.e. laptop, projector, internet or wifi etc.



**Group composition:** One large group

**Prior learning:**

- Module 5, Activity 1A: Name that part – Anatomy and physiology
- Module 5, Activity 2B: Understanding puberty

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Required

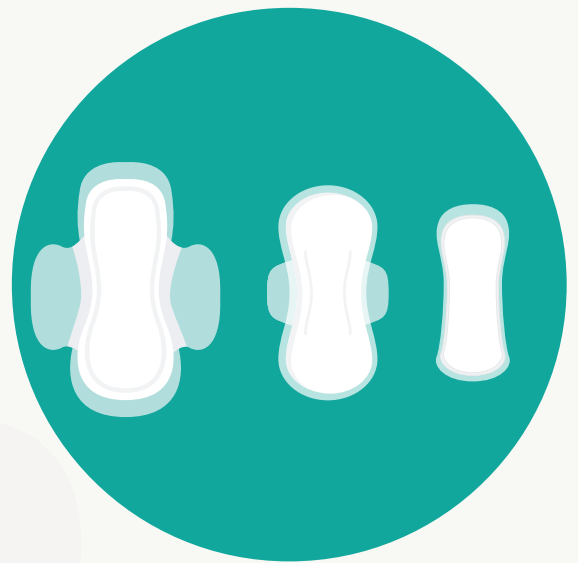
TV New Zealand and Tagata Pasifika video called 'Pacific students speak out about period poverty' (4 minutes 3 seconds) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_vWKgJES0Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_vWKgJES0Y)



## Activity 3B: Picking your products

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Today we are going to look at different products that people can use when they have their period. We will look at what they are, how they work and when they might be used.*
2. Place an anonymous question box at the front of the room. Ask participants to write down their questions about period products and put them in the box. Allow 5 minutes for this.
3. Ask participants to sit in a circle.
4. Place all products in the middle of the circle.
5. Explain that there are lots of ways to help you feel comfortable and confident during your period.
6. Ask participants if they can identify any products they have heard of that can be used to manage periods.
7. Grab the pad or package of pads from the middle of the circle.
8. Explain and demonstrate how to use pads (regular and overnight).
  - a. Explain that there are different pad options to suit different needs. Show participants how regular pads work. Open the packet and explain that these pads are common to use.
  - b. Explain that pads are made of absorbent materials which draw in fluid and keep you dry and comfortable throughout your period.
  - c. Turn the pad over, explain that most disposable pads have a sticky back which is applied to the inside of your underwear, this will help it stay in place.
  - d. Point to the wings. You can choose pads to come with or without wings, wings wrap around and stick to the underside of your underwear to hold it in place.
  - e. Show the overnight pad.
  - f. Open an overnight pad and hold up the pad next to the regular pad.
  - g. Ask participants to point out some differences.
  - h. Explain that different pad options have different functions. Pads come in different lengths, the longer they are the more they absorb. Regular pads are good for a normal flow, if your period is heavier you might like to try super pads (bigger pads which absorb more). As your period gets lighter, you can use a lighter absorbency pad.
  - i. Hold up the overnight pad, explain that this pad is even longer than super pads and is specially designed to keep you protected and comfortable while you sleep.



- j. Explain that pads should be changed every 3-4 hours, no matter how heavy or light your flow is. This will prevent an unpleasant odour developing from bacteria. Pads should be disposed of in the bin; most public female toilets even have a special sanitary bin available in each cubicle for you to use. You can wrap your used pad up before you dispose of it.

**i Facilitator note**

Mention most common ways to dispose pads in your country.

9. Explain and demonstrate how to use tampons (with and without applicator).

**i Facilitator note**

Deliver this section if tampons are available in your country.

- Discuss tampons with participants, explain that many girls are a bit anxious about using them at first, but they are very handy especially for activities such as swimming.
- Just like pads, tampons come in different sizes for different absorbency. Regular tampons for a normal period and super tampons for a heavy period.
- Show participants the regular tampons (without the applicator). Open the packet and explain that tampons are inserted into the vagina to absorb your period. Every tampon packet comes with instructions that you should read carefully before you begin. It may take a few tries before you start to feel comfortable using them. Make sure to always wash your hands with soap before inserting a tampon.
- Show participants the applicator tampons, explain that they are a great way to ensure you get used to positioning your tampon correctly.
- Instruct participants that a good way to insert a tampon is by sitting on a toilet or propping a leg up on a toilet, stool, chair, ledge etc. You have to relax and don't be scared to give it a few goes. Make sure you wash your hands before and after as well.
- It's important to change your tampon at least every 4 hours and never leave it in for more than eight hours. If a tampon is left in for too long it can cause an infection.
- Disposing of your tampon properly is very important. You can wrap it in toilet paper or packaging but always make sure it goes in a proper disposal bin.



10. Ask participants to discuss the following questions in a large group.

What period products are most common in Samoa?

**Example answer:** People in urban and rural areas may have access to different period products, such as pads or tampons. Pads may be more affordable than tampons. In some places, there may even be other options such as washable period underwear or menstrual cups. There may also be different social ideas about what is considered acceptable to use in different places. Whatever options you choose, all period products serve the same purpose, which is to help people manage their periods in a healthy way.

Some products that are common in Samoa include:

- Disposable pads (one use only)
- Kalico or cloth pads (can be washed and reused)

How do you wash a reusable pad?

**Example answer:** There may be care instructions for washing a reusable pad inside the packet. If so, follow the instructions. If not, basic steps for washing a reusable pad are:

1. Rinse the pad in running cold water
2. Soak the pad in a bucket of cold water for 30 minutes
3. Wash the pad with soap and cold water (by hand or in a washing machine)
4. Dry the pad in the sun

**Note:** You cannot wash disposable pads. Disposable pads must be thrown away after each use

Where can young people purchase menstrual products?

What are some barriers that women and girls face when accessing period products?

**Example answers:**

- Stigma
- Some women and girls might have male-only families and don't have other females in their family they can speak to
- Cost
- Accessibility issues (especially for women and girls with disabilities)
- Lack of information
- Feelings of shame or awkwardness

What is important for people to have access to during their period?

**Example answer:**

- Access to affordable sanitary products
- Menstrual hygiene education; this is important so that people with periods have the correct information and knowledge to manage their periods

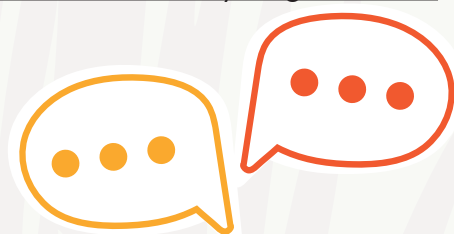


- Clean and safe toilet facilities
- Hand-washing facilities
- Proper waste management

What are some positive or helpful things that boys and men can do to support women and girls during their period?

**Example answers:**

- Not shaming women and girls for having their period
  - Buying products for women when they may need them
  - Having conversations with women and girls about their periods
  - Advocating for better facilities for girls and women including private toilets, disposal facilities
11. Explain that you are now going to watch a video about school girls in New Zealand who can't always access the period products. Ask participants as they watch the video to think about whether this might be a problem in Samoa too?
  12. Watch the video by TV New Zealand and Tagata Pasifika titled 'Pacific students speak out about period poverty' (4 minutes 3 seconds). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T\\_vWKgJES0Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_vWKgJES0Y)
  13. Have a 5 minute discussion with the group about the video. Ask if participants have any questions or want to comment on the video.
  14. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*  
  
Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.
  15. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
    - Menstrual products help people manage their periods hygienically
    - Pads are worn outside the body, in the underwear
    - Tampons are inserted into the vagina
    - Different products might be useful depending on how heavy the bleeding is
    - Never flush pads or tampons down the toilet, dispose of them in a bin
    - Not having access to menstrual products is a major challenge in achieving gender equality around the world, as not having products can force woman and girls to stay home
    - Men and boys can help women by supporting them to access and buy menstrual products
  16. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.





## Handout 3B Using menstrual products

## Changing a tampon



1

Go to a bathroom or toilet. Shut the door



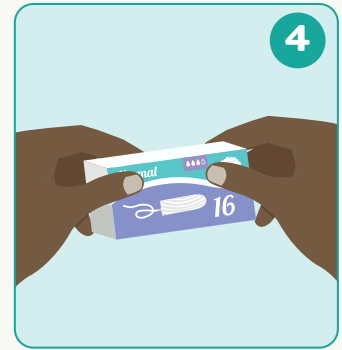
2

Wash your hands with soap and water



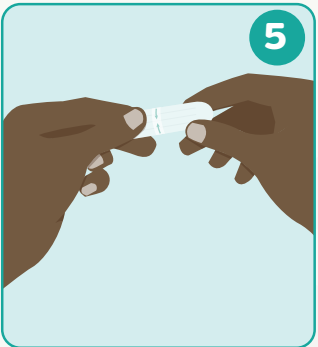
3

Pull down your underwear



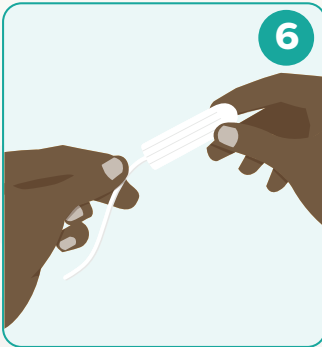
4

Take tampon out of packet



5

Pull or twist the plastic tab around the tampon. Take off the plastic and put it in the bin



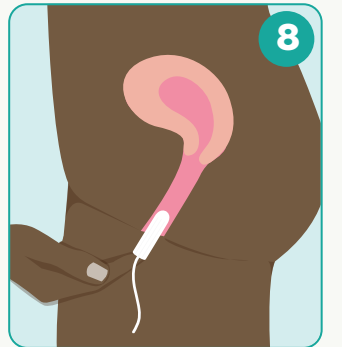
6

Pull the string so it becomes long and straight



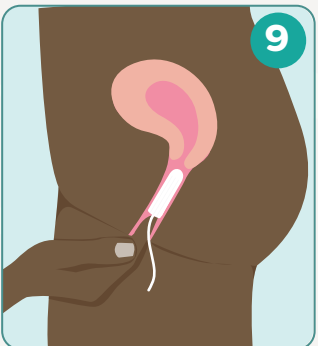
7

Stand in squat position or sit on toilet



8

Put the pointed end of the tampon into your vagina. Use your pointer or middle finger to push the tampon into the vagina



9

Push until the second knuckle of your finger reaches the outside of your vagina. Leave the string hanging outside your vagina



10

Remove your finger



11

Put underwear back on. Make sure the tampon string is inside your underwear



12

Wash your hands with soap and water

Change your tampon every 3 or 4 hours

## Changing a disposable pad



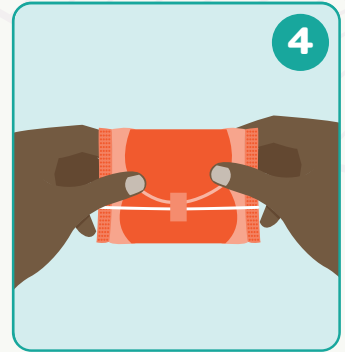
Go to a bathroom or toilet. Shut the door



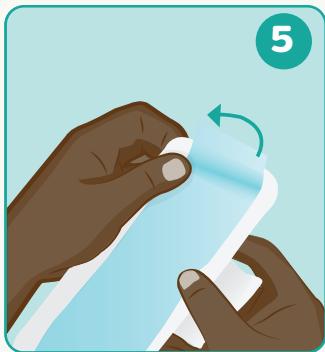
Wash your hands with soap and water



Pull down your underwear



Remove disposable pad from the packaging



Remove the paper that covers the sticky parts of the pad



Place the pad inside your underwear, sticky-side down. The wider part of the pad should be at the back



To remove, grab the clean edge between your fingers and pull it off your underwear



Roll the pad so that the sticky side faces out and the blood is on the inside



Wrap the pad in toilet paper or the wrapper of a new pad and dispose in the rubbish bin



Wash your hands with soap and water

## 3C

## Activity: Tackling period taboo



## Activity overview:

This activity is about understanding myths about periods. There is a wide range of myths covered, from how to dispose of period products through to how the shame and taboo of menstruation impact gender inequality.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Describe how to access, use, wash or dispose of menstrual products available in an individual's community
- Recognise that it is important for all young people to have access to menstrual products, clean water and private toilet facilities during menstruation
- Appreciate that menstruation is natural, normal and healthy
- Describe how gender inequality can contribute to women and girls' feelings of shame and fear during menstruation and restrict women and girls from participating in public life
- Demonstrate positive and supportive strategies for women and girls to feel comfortable during their menstruation, including the role of men and boys as allies

## Sensitive areas:

- Menstruation
- Sex
- Violence

**Resources:** None

**Preparation:** None

**Group composition:** Individual work

**Prior learning:** Module 5, Activity 3A: The menstrual cycle

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** None



## Activity 3C: Tackling period taboo

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Periods are a natural, normal and healthy part of a woman's or girl's life. There are a lot of ideas about periods that can exist in our community or across different communities. Some of these ideas are not true and are the myths about periods. It is important that we challenge myths because they can further isolate women and girls from accessing help or support during their period. It can keep girls away from school, from work and cause further discrimination.*
2. Ask all participants to stand up where they are.
3. Explain that this activity will be a 'true or false' activity. You will read out a statement about periods, and participants decide if the statement is 'true' or 'false'.
4. If participants think the statement is true, they will stay standing. If they think the statement is false, they will sit down.
5. Read through the statements below one at a time, giving time for participants to decide. After they have all decided, read out the correct answer (directly below the statement).

a. Girls should bathe and/or shower when they have their period

**True:** In some places or cultures, menstrual stigma stops people from showering and bathing during their period. However, this may not be the case in Samoa. This can have serious effects on their health and hygiene. It can cause infection. You should always maintain good hygiene by showering/bathing regularly. In some communities, woman may choose to bathe downstream from men.

b. Girls should not prepare food or cook when they have their period

**False:** This is untrue as menstruation does not affect food preparation or cooking at all.

c. Girls who have their period can still do heavy work or play sports.

**True:** While menstruation and periods have been used to exclude girls and women from doing work and activities, there is really nothing that people who menstruate can't do. Swimming, exercise, working, going to school and sex are all still possible during a period. However, not having access to appropriate menstrual products can stop people from doing these activities.

d. Menstruation and periods are only a 'girl's or woman's issue'.

**False:** While periods happen mostly to women and girls (as well as other non-binary or transgender people) menstrual health and hygiene is a human rights issue. Therefore, it is important to all of society. Men and boys can play an important role to challenge stigma and eliminate discrimination.

e. Periods are 'dirty'.

**False:** Menstrual blood is the exact same as any other blood from the body and has no qualities that make it 'dirty'.

f. It is okay for women and girls to speak about periods in public?

**True:** It is a positive thing for all people to publicly speak about periods. Silence or myths about periods can lead to further stigma and neglect. Silence can stop women from asking for, buying or accessing necessary period products.

g. When you first start menstruation, it means you are ready to be married or have sex.

**False:** While menstruation is one sign of fertility, it does not mean that a person has reached the mental, emotional, psychological or physical maturity for sex, parenthood or marriage. Some girls can reach menarche (meaning they have their first period) at 7-8 years old, and even older teenagers may not be ready. The decision to have sex or get married should always be a decision for the person or people directly involved, not anyone else.

h. When someone starts to menstruate, their period will be regular and consistent.

**False:** When a girl starts to menstruate, their period may not be the same each time. This is because the reproductive organs are still growing. A regular menstrual cycle is usually established by the age of 18. If there is a lot of variation, it might be helpful to talk to healthcare worker.

i. Periods are usually very painful.

**False:** Menstruation is usually not very painful, but for some women it can be a little painful. The pain is due to the muscles in the uterus squeezing. If you have strong pain, see a healthcare worker.

j. Heat can help with discomfort during your period.

**True:** People can take warm baths, drink hot drinks and apply a hot water bottle to their abdomen (or tummy area) to help relieve any period cramps.

k. It is okay to flush your pad or tampon down a toilet?

**False:** Never flush a pad or tampon down the toilet. This can clog the drain. You should always put a used pad or tampon in a proper garbage bin.

l. Exercise makes periods worse.

**False:** Exercise can improve your blood flow and may help relieve period pain, tension, constipation and even feeling sad.

m. The normal blood loss in one period is a couple of tablespoons worth.

**True:** This is not a huge amount, but a healthy diet can prevent anaemia (a lack of iron in the blood that makes you feel tired).

n. People with disabilities face additional barriers during their period.

**True:** For example, wheelchairs can cause discomfort when using and changing pads. People with disabilities might also not have enough money for monthly products or may need their carer or another person to purchase their products.

o. Gender inequality directly affects girls and women during their period.

**True:** Often, when girls are given information about periods, they are made to separate from men and talk about periods 'in secret'. This means that girls learn to feel shame about talking about menstruation, which prevents them from fully understanding how their bodies work. It's even more difficult for intersex, transgender and non-binary people who are rarely included in conversations about menstrual health.

Periods are also used as an excuse to treat women differently from men. Women are told they are 'too emotionally unstable' and unable to make logical decisions while on their periods. These are false ideas that partly come from the shame and stigma related to periods.

The shame attached to periods also prevents girls from going to school and keeps girls at home. They might be told to deal with their period in private including sleeping outside of the home or walking long distances to dispose of their products or use the toilet which can also make them more vulnerable to violence.

p. If you have unprotected sex during your period, you can't get pregnant.

**False:** There is always a risk of pregnancy if you have unprotected sex. This is not a reliable method of contraception or family planning. This is especially true for young people with irregular menstrual cycles. If you are interested in contraception options, speak to a healthcare worker.

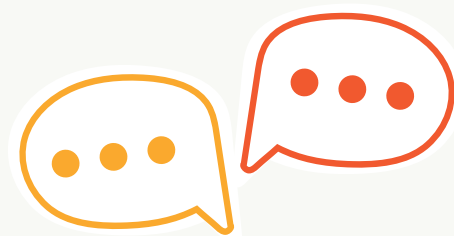
6. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

7. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- Menstrual health and hygiene are human rights issues; therefore it is important to all of society
- Men and boys can play an important role to challenge stigma and eliminate discrimination
- Do not flush any period products down the toilet
- Having your period is normal, clean and should not prevent you from playing sport, cooking, going to school or any other day-to-day activity

8. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



### 3D

## Activity: Menstrual media campaign



### Activity overview:

This activity encourages participants to use the skills and knowledge they have learnt about menstruation in a creative way to tackle taboo and stigma.

Age: 16+

Time: 45 minutes

### Learning objectives:

- Describe how to access, use, wash or dispose of menstrual products available in an individual's community
- Recognise that it is important for all young people to have access to menstrual products, clean water and private toilet facilities during menstruation
- Appreciate that menstruation is natural, normal and healthy
- Describe how gender inequality can contribute to women and girls' feelings of shame and fear during menstruation and restrict women and girls from participating in public life
- Demonstrate positive and supportive strategies for women and girls to feel comfortable during their menstruation, including the role of men and boys as allies



### Sensitive areas:

- Menstruation
- The listed video may be too 'graphic' for some audiences

### Resources:

- Large paper or butchers paper
- Craft material (paint, coloured pens or pencils markers etc.)

**Preparation:** Watch the video (listed under 'Resources') and ensure it is suitable for your group, including language and content, noting anything that might be different in your country or language that you might need to explain to participants. If the video is not appropriate, you can use any advertisement that is used in the Pacific to advertise menstrual products as inspiration for this activity.

**Group composition:** Four groups

### Prior learning:

- Module 5, Activity 3A: The menstrual cycle
- Module 5, Activity 3C: Tackling period taboo

**Literacy support:** Not required

**Technology:** Optional

Bloody Group Period video called 'Typically: #noshamehere' (2 minutes 4 seconds).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYGy6yIWBQQ>



## Activity 3D: Menstrual media campaign

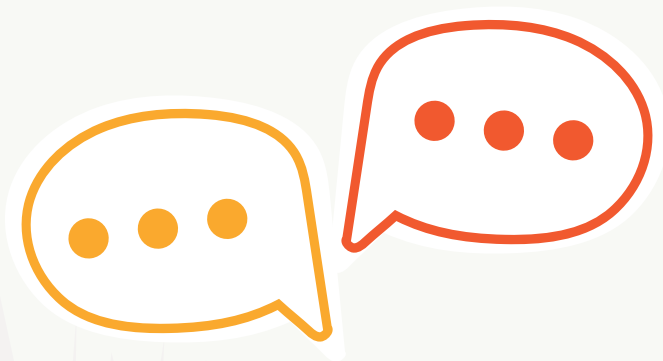
### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Today we will be doing a creative activity to help address the taboo and stigma about menstruation. You will be taking everything you have learnt about menstruation, periods and changing attitudes, to create a social media campaign.*
2. Explain the activity: *Imagine that you have been asked by a large company who sells period products to create an advertisement that they can use on social media to target young people in Samoa. Some things you could do are:*
  - Create a short skit like it will be used as a video on social media
  - Create a song or a drama performance
  - Create a poster or a radio broadcast
  - Any other ideas you have to share the message
3. The company wants to focus on four main ideas:
  - a. Tackling period stigma in the community
  - b. Improving access to disposal bins and soap in public restrooms and schools
  - c. Improving the role of boys and men as allies (improving gender equality)
  - d. Tricks and tips for managing your period including how to use certain products
4. If you choose to play the video, show the video by Bloody Group Period titled 'Typically: #noshamehere' (2 minutes 4 seconds) and follow instruction 5. If you don't want to play the video, go to instruction 6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYGy6yIWBQQ>
5. Explain that this video was created by a charity that provides menstrual products to asylum seekers, refugees and other people who cannot afford them. It is a great example of a media campaign (using song and a video) to normalise periods and break down period stigma.
6. After playing the video, **say something like:** *You can use that video as inspiration to create your own song/dance or media campaign about your topic.*
7. Break everyone into four groups and assign each group one of the topics above (under step 3). Each group will have 20 minutes to create their idea. Facilitators can walk around during this time and give support or help groups with their ideas.
8. After 20 minutes, bring all the groups together and each group will have 3-5 minutes to present their campaign to the rest of the participants.

9. After each group performs or presents their campaign, other groups can ask questions or mention what they liked about the media campaign.
10. Make sure to film or take any pictures where you can! Make sure you ask for consent also.
11. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

12. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - Taboo and stigma surrounding menstruation is harmful for all women, and so it is harmful for all of society
  - Removing taboo will help women access the period products they need, and help them do things outside the home such as attend school, work and other social activities
  - By talking openly about periods and menstruation, we can help challenge stigma and taboos
  - Older people might find it odd or shocking when younger people are talking about periods and menstruation, but if this happens, younger people can be role models and advocates for gender equality
13. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Topic 3: Menstruation

### Key messages of this topic

- There are four main phases of the menstrual cycle
- The five days before ovulation and the day of ovulation are called the 'fertile window' and is when a person is most likely to fall pregnant
- Menstruation is natural, normal and healthy
- If you are worried about something to do with menstruation, see a healthcare worker
- Menstrual products should be changed every few hours; see the instructions on the packet for more information
- All menstruating people must have access to appropriate products (pads etc), menstrual hygiene education, toilets, hand-washing and bins
- Gender inequality adds to women's and girls' feelings of shame and fear during menstruation, and prevents women and girls from doing many activities outside the home
- Boys and men can help by challenging stigma and supporting people to manage their periods in a healthy way



# 4

## MODULE 5

### TOPIC 4

#### BODY IMAGE

# 4

## Topic overview

Body image is a combination of all the thoughts and feelings that a person has about their body. It includes:

- What someone believes about their appearance (how they look)
- How someone feels about their body including height, shape, weight, hair, skin, and other things
- The unique physical experience someone has of living in their body

Ideas about body image vary a lot between different cultures but can always have an impact on a person's behaviour, emotional wellbeing, health, self-esteem and social interactions.

Certain 'body types' and other visual features including skin colour and hair textures are deemed by some societies and cultures as 'more valuable' and these are often used a lot in the media to sell us products, movies and ideas. These unrealistic ideas about physical beauty can be harmful and lead to unhealthy behaviours. Social media can also contribute to people thinking and worrying a lot about their appearance, how many 'likes' a photo gets, how many followers they have, and so on. It is important that young people learn to challenge these 'ideals', critically analyse the media and advocate for greater inclusivity.

## Topic learning objectives

Facilitator version	Participant version
Define 'body image'	Define 'body image'
Reflect on their own body image and how it can affect self-esteem, sexual decision-making and also sexual behaviours	Think about how body image can affect self-esteem, and the decisions we make about sex
Discuss the benefits of feeling good about their bodies	Discuss the benefits of feeling good about their bodies
Recognise that unrealistic standards about bodily appearance can be harmful	Identify how unrealistic ideas about physical beauty and looks can be harmful
Analyse particular cultural and gender stereotypes and how they can affect people's body image and relationships	Consider how ideas about how men and women should look can affect body image
Demonstrate skills to critically consume media and its messaging on body image	Think critically about what the media says about physical beauty and looks, and what impact it might have
Demonstrate ways to challenge unrealistic standards about physical appearance	Show how to challenge ideas about physical beauty and looks
Acknowledge that all young people have the right to feel confident and proud of their bodies, including the diversity of body shapes, sizes, colours and diverse abilities, among other characteristics	Understand that all young people should feel confident in their bodies, no matter how they look

## Activities

Activity		Time	Page	Handout
4A: Body image in the Pacific	!	40 minutes (with video) 15 minutes (without video)	104	No
4B: Selling stereotypes		60 minutes	107	No
4C: Body image, self-esteem and relationships	!	30 minutes	113	Yes
4D: What you see in me		45 minutes	118	No

### 4A

#### Activity: Body image in the Pacific



#### Activity overview:

Ideas about body image change across history and cultures. It is important that young people are able to identify what kind of unrealistic expectations might exist in their country, culture or region. These expectations might be noticed online, in advertisements or in movies.

Age: All ages

Time:

- 40 minutes (with video)
- 15 minutes (without video)

Learning objectives:

- Define 'body image'

Sensitive areas: Disordered eating

Resources:

- Butchers paper
- Markers

Preparation: This activity requires playing a video using the internet. If this is not an option, follow all the other steps.

Group composition: Two groups



Prior learning: None

Literacy support: Not required

Technology: Optional

Video from TVNZ and Tagata Pasifika called 'TP+EP ep9: Pacific body image' (22 minutes 55 seconds)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKJv7RpNt5Q>



## Activity 4A: Body image in the Pacific

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the topic by **saying something like:** *This activity will introduce us to the idea of 'body image' and how body image impacts the way people think and feel about themselves.*

2. Ask: What does "body image" mean? Write their ideas on a piece of butchers paper.

**Example answer:** "Body image" is how you think and feel about your physical self.<sup>(11)</sup>

3. Explain that there is a difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' body image.<sup>(11)</sup>

#### Healthy body image:

- When you feel relaxed in your body
- Having healthy attitudes about food and exercise
- Comfortable in your own skin
- Being in tune with your body's needs
- Valuing yourself on who you are, not by what you look like
- Less likely to be impacted by unrealistic images or social pressure

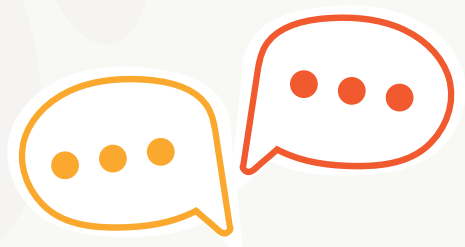
#### Unhealthy body image:

- When you think about your body in a negative way frequently
- Feeling like your body is not good enough
- Believing that your looks determine your value as a person
- Fixating on trying to change your body shape
- Developing unhealthy eating habits
- Over-exercising or exercising to "punish" yourself

4. Play the online video (starting at 1:51 until 7:15) from TVNZ and Tagata Pasifika called 'TP+EP ep9: Pacific body image' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKJv7RpNt5Q>



5. **Ask participants:** *The panel discuss ideas about body image, health and how it affects women and men. Do you think any of these ideas apply to young people in Samoa?*
6. After the video, ask participants what they learnt from the video.
7. Split participants into two groups:
  - Group 1: Represent unrealistic body standards in the Pacific
  - Group 2: Represent unrealistic body standards in the West
8. Tell Group 1 to think about all the different beauty standards for men and women in the Pacific. You can ask some prompting questions to get them thinking like the following:
  - What types of bodies are seen in advertising, Pacific movies, newspapers?
  - What type of body is seen as more ideal for women in the Pacific?
  - What type of body is seen as more ideal for men in the Pacific?
  - Is there a body type that is associated with health, wealth and status?
9. Tell Group 2 to represent unrealistic body standards in the West. You can ask some prompting questions to get them thinking like the following:
  - What types of bodies do we see promoted as ideal or healthy in Western movies, TV shows, advertising etc.?
  - How are these ideas different for men and women?
  - Do they have different ideals than the Pacific in terms of hair colour, skin colour, body weight etc.?
10. Ask both teams to draw or write their ideas about unrealistic body standards on a large sheet of butchers paper. They will have 10 minutes to do this.
11. After 10 minutes, teams can present their ideas to the entire group.
12. Thank the groups for sharing their ideas.
13. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*  
 Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.
14. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - Body image is about how someone thinks and feels about their physical self
  - Body image can be positive, negative and complicated
  - Unrealistic ideas about bodies can change across history and cultures
15. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## 4B

Activity: Selling stereotypes<sup>(12)</sup>

## Activity overview:

The aim is to enable participants to recognise and describe the role that media plays in creating and sharing unrealistic stereotypes to strengthen critical thinking skills. Participants make a collage of female and male images from advertisements, movie posters, magazines and other forms of media to analyse messages about bodies and physical appearances.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 60 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Recognise that unrealistic standards about bodily appearance can be harmful
- Analyse particular cultural and gender stereotypes and how they can affect people's body image and relationships
- Demonstrate skills to critically consume media and its messaging on body image
- Demonstrate ways to challenge unrealistic standards about physical appearance
- Acknowledge that all young people have the right to feel confident and proud of their bodies, including the diversity of body shapes, sizes, colours and diverse abilities, among other characteristics

**Sensitive areas:** Body image

## Resources:

- Newspapers/advertisements/magazines/pamphlets (anything that displays images of people and may show unrealistic body images for both men and women)
- Pieces of paper
- Glue
- Scissors

**Preparation:** Watch the videos (listed under technology) and ensure it is suitable for your group, including language and content, noting anything that might be different in your country or language that you might need to explain to participants. If you choose to play the video, ensure there is internet, laptop or projector.

**Group composition:** Individual and pair work

**Prior learning:**

- Module 4, Activity 2A: Real news BINGO
- Module 5, Activity 4A: Body image in the Pacific

**Literacy support:** Required. Involves basic writing

**Technology:** Optional

- Dove video called 'Dove evolution' (1 minute 14 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U>
- The Coconut TV video called 'Pacific women hair stories' (10 minutes 32 seconds)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1jDq-HJWUE>



## Activity 4B: Selling stereotypes

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Today we will be doing an activity to help us reflect on body image and how it can make people feel. We will be watching some videos and looking at images of men and women in the media.*
2. Check participants' understanding of key terms, as these will be important to do the activity.
3. Ask: Can anyone explain the terms **"body image"** and **"stereotype"** by using them in a sentence?  
Write participants' ideas on a piece of butchers paper.  
**"Body image":** How you think and feel about your physical self.  
**Example:** 'Some people argue that social media can have a negative impact on young people's body image.'  
**"Stereotype":** A common idea about someone that is often untrue or only partly true (the idea that "people with glasses are smart" is a stereotype)  
**Example:** 'Always using women in advertisements about cleaning or cooking is a gender stereotype.'
4. Remind participants that there is a difference between 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' body image. Remind participants that this was covered in activity 4A: Body image in the Pacific.
5. If facilitators choose to show both videos, continue with the steps. If facilitators are only showing one video, 'Dove evolution' is in steps 6-8. The 'Pacific women hair stories' video is from steps 9-11.
6. Introduce the first video **by saying:** *This video shows the effort that goes behind an image you might see in advertising. It shows how not even the model looks like the final picture. There has been hours of makeup, hair and photoshop that goes into looking that way. The advertisement is selling makeup – trying to convince girls to buy their makeup to look like the model (which we realise is impossible!).*
7. Watch the video by Dove called 'Dove evolution' (1 minute 14 seconds).  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U>
8. Ask participants to get into pairs and discuss their thoughts on the video. Allow 5 minutes for this.
9. Introduce the second video **by saying:** *This video is all about women in the Pacific comparing their hair texture to other girls (especially in other countries or in the fashion/music industry). The women later spoke about embracing their diverse hair textures as being beautiful. All young people have the right to feel confident and proud of their bodies, including the diversity of body shapes, sizes, colours and diverse abilities among other characteristics.*
10. Play the video by 'The Coconut TV' called 'Pacific Women Hair Stories' (10 minutes 32 seconds).  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1jDq-HJWUE>
11. Ask participants to get into pairs and discuss their thoughts on the video. Allow 5 minutes for this.

12. Distribute the newspapers, advertisements, magazines, pamphlets or anything else that displays images of people.
13. **Explain:** *Thinking about these messages we have learnt about body image; we will make collages. Collages are artwork made from pictures that you cut out of newspapers, advertisements, magazines or pamphlets and glue or tape onto a sheet of paper. You will each create two collages. One will show images of women and the other images of men.*
14. Allow 20 minutes for participants to finish both collages.
15. Describe the rest of the project by **saying something like:** *Starting with the collage of images of men, make a list on a piece of paper of what you notice about the men in the images. Do the same for the images of women.*
16. On the board draw two large overlapping circles and label one 'men,' the other one 'women' and the overlapping section 'both'.
17. Spend 10 minutes on a group discussion.

What ideas do the advertisements promote about men? [List these in the 'men' circle.]

**Example answers:**

- Portrayed as leaders, smart or ambitious
- They look strong and dominant
- They look athletic and have muscles
- Adventurous or being active
- Used in advertisements for education, sports or politics

What ideas do the advertisements promote about women? (List these in the 'women' circle.)

**Example answers:**

- Portrayed as soft, delicate or submissive
- Involved in domestic roles like cooking or cleaning
- Used in advertising for cleaning products, clothing or makeup

What ideas do the advertisements promote about both men and women? What are the common themes? (List these in the overlapping part of the two circles.)

**Example answers:**

- Could be a focus on their body
- Could be portrayed as having lighter skin
- Able-bodied. There may be very limited images of any person with a disability

What kind of products are shown in the advertisements for men versus the advertisements for women?

Example answers:

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports equipment or events</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Protein powder</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Cars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beauty products</li> <li>• Cleaning products</li> <li>• Perfume</li> <li>• Baking or cooking goods</li> <li>• Products or toys for children</li> </ul>

Do you think young people are influenced by images portrayed in the media (think about social media as well)?

Example answer: This could depend on many different things including the age of the young person, their self-esteem, their confidence, the support network etc.

How do you think these advertisements can affect the self-esteem of young people?

Example answers:

- Young people might compare themselves to these unrealistic images
- Young people might begin to think they aren't good enough
- Young people begin focusing on what they look like rather than who they are
- They might start thinking their value is attached to how they look
- They might worry about other people 'finding them attractive'

Are there cultural or gender stereotypes in Samoa that affect body image?

What can people do if they think an advertisement is sexist or hurtful to young people?

Example answers:

- Report it (if the advertisement is online)
- Contact the advertising agency
- Speak about it with your friends
- Talk to a trusted adult about it
- Write a letter to the editor (newspaper)
- Call the local radio station
- Unfollow any accounts or pages on social media that make you feel bad about yourself

Is there much diversity in these advertisements? (think about cultural diversity, hair texture, racial diversity, people with disabilities?)

Imagine you are a person living in a wheelchair and you never see advertisements or movies or tv shows that use people in wheelchairs. How might this affect your body image?

Example answers:

- This might make you feel excluded or that your body is 'not normal', when it is normal
- You might feel like you are not being represented
- If there was an advertisement or movie that used a person in a wheelchair as the main character, you would feel included, represented, seen and understood

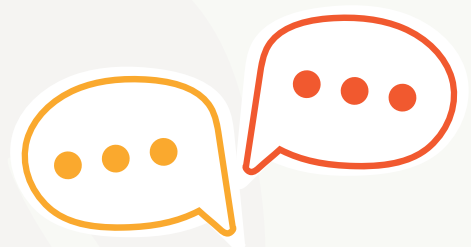
18. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

19. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:

- There is no such thing as a 'perfect' or 'ideal body'
- Unrealistic images of people in the media can impact our self-esteem
- Unrealistic ideas about beauty and looks can be harmful
- It is important to be critical about the media we see
- All young people have the right to feel confident and proud of their bodies, no matter how they look

20. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.





## 4C

## Activity: Body image, self-esteem and relationships



## Activity overview:

This activity gives participants a chance to reflect on how having positive and negative body image can influence people's self-esteem and relationships in different ways.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 30 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Reflect on their own body image and how it can affect self-esteem, sexual decision-making and also sexual behaviours

## Sensitive areas:

- Violence
- Image-based abuse

**Resources:** Handout 4C

**Preparation:** Copy handout 4C so there is enough for one copy for each group

**Group composition:** Four groups

## Prior learning:

- Module 2, Activity 3C: Is it love?
- Module 2, Activity 3E: Relationship warning signs
- Module 5, Activity 4B: Selling stereotypes

**Literacy support:** Required - involves reading. If the group has a lower literacy support, the case studies can be read out by the facilitator.

**Technology:** None



## Activity 4C: Body image, self-esteem and relationships

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *This activity will show how unhealthy body image and poor self-esteem can impact relationships.*
2. Break participants up in to four groups and assign each group one case study (Ena, Esi, loata and Tavita) from handout 4C. They can either read the case study together or the facilitator can read it to them.
3. Each group needs to think about their character and discuss the following questions in their group. (The questions can be read out by the facilitator as well). Allow 20 minutes for this discussion.

Did your character have good or poor self-esteem?

#### Answer:

- Ena and loata had poor self-esteem
- Esi and Tavita had good self-esteem

How did body image affect their self-esteem?

#### Example answers:

- **Ena:** Ena's poor body image made her feel bad about herself and that her physical looks are the only important thing about herself.
- **loata:** loata's poor body image affects his self-esteem by making him feel insecure and inadequate compared to others. He isn't confident in his own skin and is always comparing himself to others.
- **Esi:** Esi's body image creates positive self-esteem. She doesn't compare herself to others and knows her own strengths.
- **Tavita:** Tavita's body image is positive and this creates positive self-esteem as well. Tavita is focused on his strengths and is confident with who he is. Tavita knows his strengths and is happy with who he is.

How did their self-esteem affect their relationship and sexual health?

#### Example answers:

- **Ena:** Ena's poor body image and self-esteem meant that she agreed to send her boyfriend naked images and have unprotected sex because she was worried that her boyfriend would leave her. She was worried that she would never find anyone who would love her again.
- **loata:** loata's poor self-esteem meant that he got jealous very easily and became abusive towards his girlfriend. He had trust issues because he was always comparing himself to other men.
- **Esi:** Esi's healthy body image and positive self-esteem meant that she valued herself for her smarts and strength. She was sure of herself and never let someone pressure her in to doing anything. She focused on herself first before caring about what other people think.

- **Tavita:** Tavita's positive self-esteem was based on his personality. He values himself for being funny, nice and caring so he feels confident within himself. He never questions his girlfriend and they have built a good amount of trust between them.

What can the characters do to improve their self-esteem? (Ena and Ioata)

#### Example answers

- Be mindful of how they use social media. Using social media to compare yourself to others and constantly view unrealistic standards of beauty can be unhealthy
- Surround themselves with friends and family who support them and like them for who they are
- Focus on their inner strengths rather than physical appearance
- Know their rights and build their confidence to stand up to people who aren't kind to them

What would be some other benefits to feeling good about our bodies?

#### Example answers:

- Feeling confident
  - Better able to express yourself
  - Not feeling shy
  - Getting involved in more activities like swimming, playing sport etc.
  - Happier and more willing to try new things
  - Feeling more motivated
4. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

5. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
- Having low self-esteem and confidence can have a negative impact on relationships
  - Having low self-esteem and confidence can also make it harder to make healthy decisions, for example choosing to use a condom
  - Having stronger self-esteem and confidence means we can stand up for ourselves, and make sure our partner respects our decisions
6. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Handout 4C: Case studies

**Instructions:** Make enough copies of this handout so there is one per group

### Ena

Ena is the youngest girl in her house. She gets bullied all the time by her older brothers. They tell her she is ugly, fat and disgusting.

In all the movies she watches, she thinks about how the girls look so beautiful, they have straight hair and a slim body. They are the girls that the boys always fall in love with.

When a boy from Ena's youth group, Pesa, starts flirting with her, she thinks it's part of a joke or a prank. Her brothers tell her that Pesa must just feel sorry for her.

Things get serious between Ena and Pesa but Pesa makes her feel like she would be lost without him. He tells her that no one else would love her the way he does.

Pesa wants Ena to send him a naked photo so he can see how beautiful she is. He tells her that if she doesn't, he will have to break up with her. He says the same thing when he wants to stop using a condom.

### Esi

Esi is the youngest girl in her house. She is close with her brothers and cousins and they always play soccer together on the weekends. They always tell Esi how strong and good at soccer she is.

Esi only follows social media accounts that make her feel good. She follows accounts that focus on being smart and strong, rather than looking beautiful. She knows that a lot of advertising isn't real and uses a lot of editing.

When a boy from Esi's youth group, Pesa, starts flirting with her, Esi isn't sure she wants a relationship. He seems nice but Esi wants to focus on herself.

When Pesa asks Esi for a naked photo, she laughs at him and tells him how stupid that would be.

She isn't interested in boys that only care about her looks.

### loata

loata has a big group of mates. They like to play soccer on the weekends and sometimes go to the gym. loata isn't very sporty and his friends always make fun of him. They say he's 'too skinny' and that girls will 'never like a guy like him'.

loata always compares himself to men in the movies. He wants to be big and strong.

When loata gets a girlfriend named Nia, he is always jealous of other men. He doesn't trust Nia even though she is very loyal. He always thinks she will leave him for another stronger, bigger guy. He gets mad at Nia if she ever speaks to another man and it's making her upset.

### Tavita

Tavita has a big group of mates and they always tell him that he's the funny one. They all meet up on the weekends to play soccer and go to the gym, but Tavita goes to have fun and spend time with mates. His mates always laugh at his jokes. This makes him feel good.

When Tavita gets a girlfriend, he loves making her laugh. He thinks he has a great personality, he's super nice, caring and he never gets jealous of his girlfriend speaking to other guys! He knows he is a good guy and that she loves him, even if he isn't as big and strong as everyone else.

## 4D

Activity: What you see in me<sup>(12)</sup>

## Activity overview:

In this activity, participants discuss social and cultural pressures related to physical appearance and think of something they like about their own appearance. In small groups, participants share qualities unrelated to appearance that the others admire in him/her.

**Age:** All ages

**Time:** 45 minutes

## Learning objectives:

- Reflect on their own body image and how it can affect self-esteem, sexual decision-making and also sexual behaviours
- Discuss the benefits of feeling good about their bodies
- Recognise that unrealistic standards about bodily appearance can be harmful
- Analyse particular cultural and gender stereotypes and how they can affect people's body image and relationships
- Acknowledge that all young people have the right to feel confident and proud of their bodies, including the diversity of body shapes, sizes, colours and diverse abilities, among other characteristics

**Sensitive areas:** Body image

## Resources:

- Board/butchers paper
- Markers/chalk
- One blank sheet of paper per participant

**Preparation:** This may work better among young people who have spent a little bit of time together or might know each other prior to this activity. If you are aware of participants who do not get along, do not put them in the same group.

**Group composition:** Individual work

## Prior learning:

- Module 1, Activity 1D: Character strength bingo
- Module 5, Activity 4B: Selling stereotypes
- Module 5, Activity 4C: Body image, self-esteem and relationships

**Literacy support:** Required - writing can be replaced with drawing if needed

**Technology:** None



## Activity 4D: What you see in me

### Instructions:

1. Introduce the activity by **saying something like:** *Many different things influence how we feel about our bodies. Is our body strong and healthy? Does society and the media show all kinds of body types as attractive? How do you feel if your body changes? Is there too much emphasis placed on looks and not enough on how we act, think and feel? We will explore some of these questions today.*
2. **Say something like:** *Think about when you were nine years old. How do most nine-year-olds feel about their bodies and how they look? Do most children worry a lot about their looks? Or are they thinking more about other things?*
3. Wait for responses and have a brief discussion (2 minutes).
4. **Say something like:** *What happens when young people reach adolescence (around age 10–19)? Do most young people feel carefree and comfortable about their appearance, or do they worry about how they look?*
5. Ask the following questions and have a group discussion about the answers:
 

What kinds of messages or images do young people see in the media or online about how they should look? Is this pressure stronger for girls or for boys?

Are young people often judged by their appearance?

Do most people want to be judged on their appearance?

What other positive qualities can people have? (Call on girls as well as boys.)

**Probe for:** Intelligent, honest, good sense of humour, hardworking, courageous, kind, artistic, musical, athletic, generous, fair, good listener, loyal, and other such qualities of character.

Ask participants to list at least eight qualities and write them on the board. Point out that girls as well as boys want to be appreciated for these qualities.
6. Ask participants to take out pen and paper.
7. **Say something like:** *Now we are going to individually reflect on something positive about ourselves. Think of something about your own appearance or body that you feel good about. It could be your smile, your eyes, the way you walk, run, dance, or climb, your muscles, your hair, or your height. Or it could be something else.*

*Write it down (you don't have to share it with anyone). Write a positive sentence about that characteristic, such as 'My smile brightens up a whole room.' Or 'My eyes are deep like the ocean.' You can think of something that someone else has told you if that is easier. You can also draw your answers rather than writing them down.*

*You have 10 minutes. When you finish, put your writing away in a private place.*
8. After participants put away their writing, divide them into smaller groups.
9. Pass out five blank sheets of paper and one marker to each group.



10. **Say something like:** *Remember that everyone wants to be valued for more than how they look. In this next activity, we will be sharing some positive thoughts about all the people around us – that aren't related to their appearance.*
11. Starting with one person, write the person's name at the top of a blank sheet. Then one at a time, each of the participants in the group will say something that they admire about them. It must not be related to the person's physical appearance. It could be any of the qualities that the group listed earlier (refer to the board) or another positive trait.
12. Remind participants that when they start, there are some rules that we should follow in this activity. You can ask participants what these are.  
  
(**Probe for:** Be respectful; think of new comments rather than repeating what others have said; do not skip your turn. Even if you have someone in your group whom you do not like much, remember that everyone has good qualities. Treat others the way you would like to be treated.)
13. When you name this quality, write it on the sheet with the person's name.
14. After participants write down their word, they will pass the sheet to another person in their group. Continue until the sheet has gone around the circle.
15. Then repeat this process for each of the remaining group members.
16. Be sure participants offer their praise both verbally and in writing.
17. Take just a couple of minutes to go around the circle for each person.

**i Facilitator note**

18. Be sure to divide the remaining time into five equal segments. Circulate to keep the groups progressing in a timely and respectful fashion.

19. When you are done, participants may keep their 'page of praise.' They earned it!
20. To close the activity and encourage reflection **say to participants:** *To reflect on today's activities, let's all share one thing we learnt that was new or helpful for us.*

Facilitators can encourage participants to share, going round in a circle, or "popcorn style" with whoever feels to speak next. Remind participants they have the right to pass also.

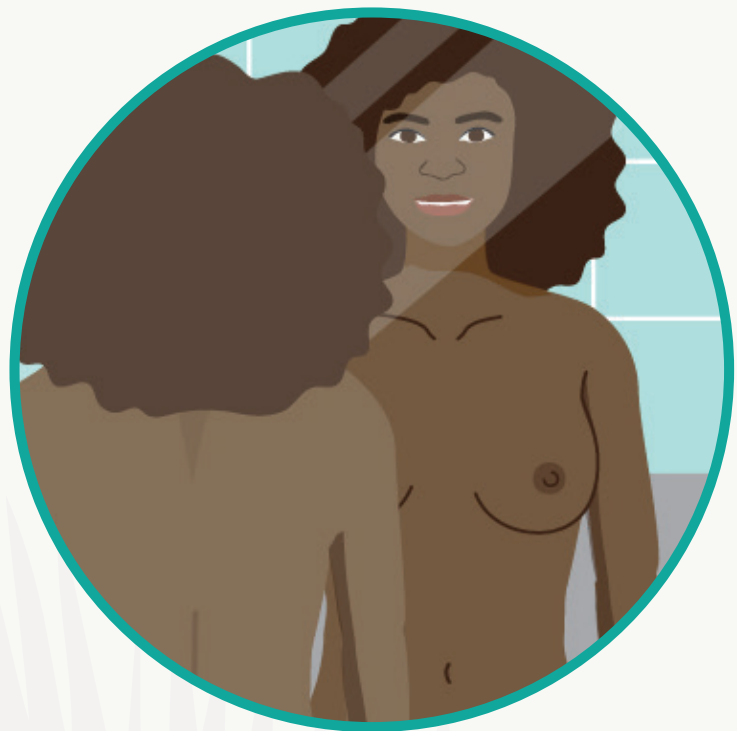
21. Conclude the activity by reading out the key messages:
  - Young people are often worried about how they look and fit in
  - Everyone's appearance has positive and unique qualities
  - It's also important to value people for more than how they look
  - We can help boost other's self-esteem by pointing out or reminding them of their good qualities
22. Invite participants to ask any questions: Does anyone have any questions about anything we learnt today? You can also come ask after the session in private too.



## Topic 4: Body Image

### Key messages of this topic

- 'Body image' is how we think and feel about our self
- If we have bad feelings about our body or low body image, it is okay to ask for help or support from a professional counselling service
- Our body image can impact our self-esteem, and decisions we make about sex and relationships
- Feeling good about our bodies can make us more confident, willing to try new things, stand up for ourselves, be motivated and make healthier decisions
- Unrealistic ideas about looks and beauty can hurt people's self-esteem
- It's important to question messages the media gives about looks and beauty, for people of all genders
- All young people have the right to feel confident about their bodies





## GLOSSARY

**Bladder:** The sac where urine is stored.

**Body image:** How you think and feel about your physical self.

**Cervix:** This is the lower opening of the uterus at the top of the vagina. During childbirth the cervix stretches to allow the baby to come out.

**Clitoris:** The small, sexually sensitive organ that is located in the centre at the top of the inner lips above the urethral opening.

**Erection:** A hardening of the penis that occurs when sponge-like tissue inside the penis fills up with blood. Usually, an erection causes the penis to enlarge and stand away from the body.

**Fallopian tubes:** These two hollow tubes on either side of the uterus. They provide a passage-way for the eggs (ova) from the ovaries to the uterus. They are the place where a sperm may fertilise an egg. If fertilisation occurs, pregnancy begins.

**Foreskin or prepuce:** This is the fold of skin which covers the head of the penis. The foreskin is sometimes removed for cultural, religious or medical reasons. This is called circumcision.

**Hymen:** This is a thin tissue that can partly cover the opening of the vagina. It often breaks before puberty.

**Labia majora:** The outer parts of the vulva (like fleshy lips) which protect the opening of the vagina and the urethra.

**Labia minora:** The thinner lips surrounding the vaginal opening.

**Masturbation:** When someone touches themselves in a sexual way because it feels good. Masturbation may be done alone or with someone else. Masturbation is a safe and healthy way for everyone (not just boys) to express themselves sexually.

**Menstruation:** Also known as a 'period'. It's when a girl, woman, trans man or non-binary person experiences normal bleeding from the vagina once every month.

**Orgasm:** The peak of sexual tension when it's all released. In men, this usually comes with ejaculation; with women, muscles of the uterus and inside the vagina and elsewhere squeeze in different ways. For some girls and women, ejaculation can happen.

**Ovaries:** The two ovaries are the main female reproductive organs. Thousands of eggs are stored in the ovaries from before birth. These eggs begin to mature at puberty. They produce the female hormones called oestrogen and progesterone, which cause the changes of puberty.

**Ovum:** A single cell released from the ovaries, which is capable of developing into a new organism when fertilised (united) with a sperm cell.

**Penis:** The male sex organ through which urine and semen pass. When a man is sexually aroused, his penis becomes stiff (erection) and ejaculation of semen may occur. Penises are of different shapes, sizes and colours. The size of the penis has nothing to do with sexual pleasure.

**Period poverty:** The lack of access to sanitary products, menstrual hygiene education, toilets, hand-washing facilities and waste management.

**Puberty:** When a child's body begins to change and develop as they start becoming an adult. Puberty is the process of physical changes that makes a body capable of sexual reproduction.

**Pubic hair:** Hair that protects the skin and body around genitals.

**Scrotum:** The external sack of skin behind the penis that holds both testes. It helps keep the testes at the correct temperature, which is below that of the rest of the body.

**Sexual stimulation:** Other words include feeling sexy, feeling horny, being turned on.

**Testicles (or testes):** The two male reproductive glands located in the scrotum. They produce sperm and the male sex hormone, testosterone. This hormone causes the changes of puberty. The testes are very sensitive, so boys should wear well-fitting underwear, especially during sports.

**Transgender:** An umbrella term that is used for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from social norms based on the sex they were assigned at birth. This term may not be used a lot in Samoa.

**Urethra:** The external end of the tube which connects the bladder to the outside. It is the opening through which urine and semen pass.

**Uterus (womb):** The place where a fetus grows and develops during pregnancy.

**Vagina:** The passageway from the uterus to the outside of the body. This is where sperm is deposited during sexual intercourse, where babies travel from the uterus during birth, and where menstrual blood passes from the uterus to outside the body.

**Vaginal opening:** The entrance to the vagina, through which babies are born and menstrual bloods flows.

**Vulva:** This is the external female genitals. It consists of two pairs of fleshy folds (labia), the opening of the vagina, the urethral opening and the clitoris.

**Wet dream:** When a boy releases semen from his penis while sleeping. Sometimes in his sleep a boy may dream about sex. On waking he may find that he has ejaculated in his sleep. Wet dreams are the natural way for the body to release the build-up of sperm in the testes and sexual urges in males.



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