

# Personal Hygiene

## *Lesson Plan*

**Resource:** H&PE Elementary Resources

**Unit:** Human Development and Sexual Health

**Grade(s):** 4

**Lesson:** 1 of 4

## H&PE Curriculum Expectations

**2019 H&PE Curriculum Expectations:** A1.1, A1.2, A1.3, D1.5, D2.4

## Materials

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)
- **Teacher Resource: Checklist**

## Learning Goals

- We are learning about the physical changes that occur at puberty.
- We are learning about personal care needs and personal hygiene practices associated with the onset of puberty.
- We are learning skills which will help us to stay motivated and to persevere in order to remain optimistic and be hopeful.

## Overall Assessment

Using the Teacher Resource: Checklist, observe and provide written and verbal feedback of students' understanding of physical changes that occur during puberty and personal care needs and hygiene practices associated with the onset of puberty.

## Minds-On

Share the learning goals with the class and co-construct success criteria with students. Consider posting the success criteria in the learning space for reference throughout the lesson.

Divide students into small groups of 3-4 to create a list of ground rules/agreements for creating a safe and inclusive classroom. Invite groups to share their responses to create a class list (e.g., respect what others say, no put downs, understand others' feelings, be respectful of differences). Consider displaying the rules/agreements for reference throughout the unit.

Continue to have students work in groups to respond to the following question prompt (invite groups to share their responses):

**Teacher prompt:** "What happens at puberty and why does puberty occur?"

*Student responses:*

- "At puberty, our body begins to grow faster than at other times as we change from being a child to an adult."
- "Our bodies change but it looks different for everyone."
- "No one is exactly the same and puberty happens at different times for different people."
- "Physical changes happen like developing breasts and body hair, getting taller, changes in body size and voice."
- "We can experience body odor and changes to our skin."
- "Our feelings change too and can become more intense."
- "Puberty happens because our brain produces different hormones, and our body becomes able to reproduce if we want to when we grow up."

Highlight for students that the changes that occur during puberty may require them to use regular personal hygiene practices.

Write the words 'Hygiene Practices' on the board. Using an [Elbow Partner](#) strategy, have students generate a list of hygiene practices associated with changes at puberty and share their ideas (e.g., increased importance of regular bathing/showering and regular clothing changes, use of hygiene products, continuing importance of regular hygiene practices, including hand washing).

## Action

Create a shared document for students to view. Write the following topics related to puberty: Skin, Hair, Body odour, Oral hygiene, Genital hygiene.

Lead a large group discussion about each of the topics related to puberty using the following prompts:

- What happens during puberty with respect to this topic?
- Describe the hygienic practice for this topic during puberty.
- Describe why this hygienic practice is needed.

Record student responses on the shared document to clarify and extend student understanding of physical changes that occur at puberty and personal care needs and hygiene practices associated with the onset of puberty. (Consult the Notes to Teachers section for information about changes that occur at puberty and appropriate hygiene practices.)

Use the following prompts to continue the large group discussion.

**Teacher prompt:** "How can these hygiene practices have a positive impact on our mental health?"

*Student response:* "I am more confident, and I feel better about myself knowing that I am taking care of my body. I don't have to worry about body odour or getting sick because of germs in and on my body."

**Teacher prompt:** "It can be tough to develop and maintain new habits and routines. How can you stay motivated to continue these new routines and habits from now on?"

*Student response:* "I can make a chart of all the hygiene practices that I need to follow during the day or week in order to stay healthy. If I check off all the hygiene practices for the week, I can reward myself with something that I really like to do."

## Consolidation

Remind students of the ground rules/agreements before beginning this activity. Engage students in Hygiene Charades as a large class or in small groups. One student picks a personal hygiene habit such as brushing teeth, coughing into a sleeve or taking a shower. The student acts out the hygiene habit without using any words. The other students guess what action is being portrayed. Following each correct guess, review why that hygiene habit is important. When a student guesses correctly, they become the new actor.

Alternatively, have students complete an [Exit Card](#) to answer the following question: "What did you learn from the lesson that will help you with your personal care needs and personal hygiene practices associated during puberty?"

## Notes to Teachers

The language of "boys" and "girls" is gender interpreted, and it is more accurate to talk about anatomy rather than gender and use "bodies with" or "people with" language when referring to developments and changes in puberty. Using gender-neutral language ensures that all students are included. In addition, using the language of body parts (rather than boy/girl, male/female) allows for discussion of the common and diverse ways of people's body parts and how they experience puberty (e.g., people who are intersexed). It can be helpful to use language such as "many girls have \_\_, but not all girls" when students ask more specific questions.

Biologically speaking, not everyone is born exclusively male or female. Some people are born intersex, which means that they may have chromosomes and/or hormones and/or primary and secondary sex characteristics of both male and female in various degrees. (*Adapted from: Rainbow Health Ontario (2020).*

### **Glossary.**)

Some people do not feel that their physical body matches their gender identity, which may lead to increased stress and body image concerns as their body undergoes puberty. Those who experience these feelings may identify as transgender, transsexual, or another identity altogether.

Teachers should be aware of student disclosures and/or triggers, and know appropriate actions to take (i.e., have a social worker or child and youth worker participate in the lesson, be available to meet with students as needed, know reporting procedures to administration and children's aid society, etc.).

Teachers should be sensitive to the students in their class. Hygiene habits, norms and practices will vary from family to family. It is important to be aware of, and respect and accept these differences. Be sensitive to the fact that not everyone can afford to have their clothes laundered regularly, have multiple changes of clothes, etc. Similarly, students may not have access to regular opportunities to bathe or may not be able to afford a variety of hygiene products. Teachers need to be alert to ensure the classroom climate is positive and caring. Consider seeking out local sources of support for students to access hygiene items free of charge.

For additional information, consult your local public health unit website or refer to these websites:

- [\*\*Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights: Taking care of our bodies\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Egale Canada\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Every Body Curious\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Intersex Society of North America: What is intersex?\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Rainbow Health Ontario: Intersex health fact sheet\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Shore Centre: Inclusive Sex Ed Language Checklist\*\*](#)
- [\*\*The Canadian Center for Gender+Sexual Diversity\*\*](#)