

Catching On *Early*

Sexuality Education for
Victorian Primary Schools





This is an ultranet-ready resource. Victorian government school teachers can share the learning and teaching materials at each VELS level through their collaborative workspaces. The complete curriculum resource is available at Catching On-line's learning and teaching resources webpage: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/ltresources.htm>>.

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This is a *Catching On Partnership* resource. 'Education and Health working together.'



About the *Catching On Partnership*

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The following two publications were instrumental in informing the development of the resource:

- Department of Health, Association of Independent Schools Western Australia and Department of Education (2002), *Growing and Developing Healthy Relationships Curriculum Support Materials*
- Martinez A & Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children's Bureau (UK).

About this resource

Each *Catching On Early* Victorian Essential Learning Standards level is also available individually in the Victorian education sector's ultranet to facilitate teacher sharing through teacher-based design spaces.

This complete *Catching On Early* resource containing learning sequences at each primary school level and further information about the implementation of primary school sexuality education is available from Catching On-line at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/ltresources.htm#3>.

Suggested year levels for the complete *Catching On Early* curriculum

Prep	(5-6 years)	VELS Level 1 Learning sequences 1-5
Year 1	(6-7 years)	VELS Level 2 Learning sequences 1-3
Year 2	(7-8 years)	VELS Level 2 Learning sequences 4-6
Year 3	(8-9 years)	VELS Level 3 Learning sequences 1-2
Year 4	(9-10 years)	VELS Level 3 Learning sequences 3-6
Year 5	(10-11 years)	VELS Level 4 Learning sequences 1-3
Year 6	(11-12 years)	VELS Level 4 Learning sequences 4-6

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Introducing
Catching On Early



Introduction

With the introduction of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), sexuality education has been identified as an essential curriculum component. In support of this, the Department's Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide (DEECD 2009a) identifies it as compulsory within Health Education.



Catching On Early is an evidence-based resource founded on the latest research into sexuality education and child sexual development. Its developmentally-based program is designed to help schools teach the sexuality education components of VELS Levels 1-4 in the Health and Physical Education and Interpersonal Development domains. Taking account of VELS levels 1, 2, 3 and 4, this resource suggests a program for students from prep through to sixth grade.

The program uses active learning strategies to build on students' early learning and experiences about gender, bodies and relationships. It combines the biological, social and emotional aspects of sexuality education to assist schools in meeting students' needs as they relate to sexual growth and change.

Catching On Early will make a significant contribution to the provision of the Physical, Personal and Social Learning strand. However, it is not intended to be the definitive personal development program. Schools are already providing many of the elements of sexuality education through programs designed to promote resilience, social skills, information on puberty and the life cycle.

Many schools have utilised external providers to assist in the development and evaluation of their programs and to enhance student learning with further activities. External providers can also assist with pertinent health advice, capacity building training and the hosting of parent information events. School nurses may also play an important support role, including program input, team teaching as appropriate and building partnerships with local health agencies.

Catching On Early aims to support and enable school communities to begin education about this important topic earlier, providing a framework in which to safely discuss health, personal, social and emotional development that may not be included in existing programs.

Catching On Early identifies six important themes in primary school sexuality education and provides 24 learning sequences that explore these in an age-appropriate way. Taken together, these learning sequences address the expected sexuality education learning standards for VELS levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Catching On Early also:

- highlights why sexuality education at the primary school level is considered important and outlines relevant legislation and guidance
- describes child sexual development to ensure that education is age appropriate
- includes the teaching methods found to be essential for effective learning in this area.

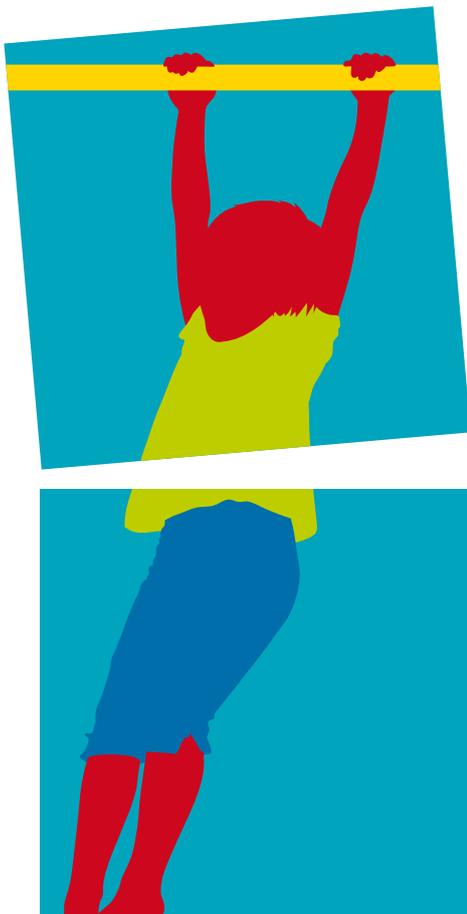
Who is this resource for?

This resource has been written for principals, senior staff, teaching staff and school councils.

Sexuality education is ‘bigger’ than biology, bearing social dimensions that can impact on students’ need and right to know how their bodies function. These social dimensions may be differing cultural perceptions of what might be considered to be appropriately taught at a certain age; they may be generally held social values specific to socio-economic groups; or they may be attitudes and beliefs perpetuated by the mass media regarding the sexual health education responsibilities of parents, health agencies and schools.

A school’s leadership team has a key role to play in the development and implementation of the sexuality education component of the Physical, Personal and Social Learning strand. International and local research advises a whole-school approach (DEECD 2008).

In Victoria, this concept has been extended to the *whole-school learning* approach, taking the perspective that a child learns the entire time they are at school. Understanding this permits seizing health learning opportunities wherever they exist at school: through teachers in the classroom and no matter the subject domain, through the way a school runs itself and through the partnerships formed with parents and local community health members. Many of the learning sequences in this resource utilise the important role parents play in their child’s sexuality education.

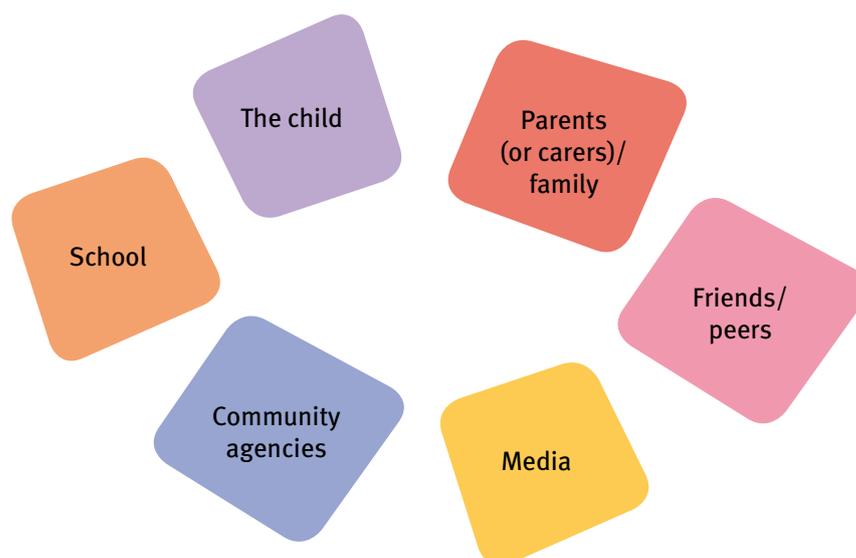


Also, rather than a lone teacher taking sole responsibility, sexuality education is more likely to be successfully implemented if it is taken on by all staff at the school. Schools that establish program development committees or working parties made up of a principal class member, senior staff, teaching staff, health and wellbeing staff, a school nurse, parents and school council members help ensure that teachers are supported in the delivery of this component of the school program. The confidence of staff and parents is gained when there is a sense of strong school community involvement and ownership.

Teachers have a central role in planning and delivering this program. They know the whole child, their age and stage of development, their family and their learning needs. Research tells us that primary teachers who are reluctant to teach this aspect of a program feel they have been inadequately trained and express discomfort discussing these topics with students.

Training, leadership support and broad school involvement makes a difference to implementing effective sexuality education programs.

Meet the team



We all play our part, even though we are not always happy to share the field with other players.

The most valuable learning about sexuality comes from the home. Families are in the best position to teach their children values and attitudes towards sexuality. Although most parents want to be the primary educators about sexuality for their children, many express concern about saying the wrong thing and doing long-lasting damage to their child's healthy sexual development. When families talk openly with children about sex and sexuality, it contributes to greater openness about sex and sexuality and improved sexual health among young people (Ingham & Van Zessen, 1998).

Schools often share the same anxieties as parents, but they also have an essential role to play. As well as facilitating this aspect of students' learning, school programs have been found to increase parent-child communication about this topic.

Research on the effectiveness of programs to increase communication about sexuality found that multi-session programs for both parents and their children, and school classes with homework assignments to encourage discussion at home, were the most effective (Kirby, 2002).

Connections with community health services can complement and support schools' work, for example, through participating in parent information sessions on child sexual development and providing health information.

Other recommendations for parent programs include:

- activities to improve skills such as listening and communicating
- booster sessions to help maintain greater communication over a longer period of time
- strategies that aim to reach larger numbers of parents and increase communication about sexuality.

What is sexuality education?

The purpose of school-based sexuality education is to address the sexual aspects of growth and development. Sexuality education promotes students' social skills, health and wellbeing and runs in close parallel to other programs that do this, such as drug education.

To make it easier for schools to define their role in teaching about sexuality, *Catching On Early* restricts itself to easily identifiable goals and outcomes, so that by Year 6, all students:

- are able to name the parts of the body and understand how they work
- have practice at talking and asking for help about feelings, relationships and their bodies
- are prepared for puberty
- understand the importance of respect in relationships
- understand how babies are conceived and born.

These goals are disarmingly simple. However, valuable lessons about bodies and puberty require canvassing the feelings and social meanings attached to sexual growth and development. Some examples of this include the following:

- When teaching fifth and sixth grade students about the changes associated with puberty, we would list 'a growing interest in boyfriend/girlfriend relationships'. The lesson becomes more powerful if we also stop to reflect on the implications of this for students' existing relationships. A discussion with the students on the pros and cons of having a boyfriend or girlfriend gives them a chance to think about what they are committing to and legitimises the position of those students who aren't interested. The students can also talk about the effects pairing up might have on their relationships with their peers, and are encouraged to consider how to treat one another.
- When we explain menstruation or wet dreams we can also discuss how some girls and boys might feel about these events, or interview parents on how they felt about approaching these milestones. This serves a most important lesson about the universal experience of uncertainty, fear, and excitement of growing up and changing.

Teaching methods that are interactive, allow students to consider their beliefs, enable them to ask questions and engage their families, and contribute to better learning outcomes.

A simple understanding of how these feelings and changes are common to all people, and the biological facts, coupled with an opportunity to discuss concerns with understanding peers and adults, is definitely helpful (Bruess & Greenberg 2004).



Why teach
sexuality education
in primary school?



Putting sexuality education in context

All of us want young people to feel able to seek help and ask questions when they feel they need to.

Any parent or teacher of a primary school-aged child knows that young people this age have questions and curiosity – sometimes concerns – that relate to their bodies, babies, friends and other relationships.

If we set students' health and wellbeing at the top of the agenda, then the decision about whether and what to teach is straightforward.

Sexuality education responds to a developmental process relevant to every age and stage of life, with corresponding information and skills related to sexual development, bodies, reproduction, respectful relationships, and gender.



Sexuality education – the first lesson

Home is the first place for learning about trust and love, touch and affection, bodies, nudity, privacy, toileting ... Day-to-day life provides plenty of opportunities to learn information, values and attitudes from our family. Ideally, students learn that they are able to talk to their parents and carers and ask questions.

School life – the second lesson

Primary school brokers the child's experience of learning the rules for getting on in the rest of the world. A surprisingly large part of school interactions can relate to sexual territory. School camps, managing periods, love affairs, swear words, calling others 'sissies' and 'tomboys', peeking under toilet doors and bashfulness in the change rooms are all examples of school activities linked to sexuality. Students will often ask questions about their bodies, babies and conception; after all, their own bodies (and their peers' bodies) are changing while still at primary school.

Life on TV – the third lesson

For all of the excellent children’s media and communications technology that are fun, entertaining and educational, students use a lot of other media that is difficult for adults to predict and control. Communication technologies make our lives easier in many ways but they have also changed how we make friends, how communication can occur between students and parents, and our access to information.

People most often express concern about young people’s exposure to pornography, and sexualised images of children in advertising. What is harder to quantify is the effect of constant messages that creep up on us and influence our idea of what is normal and acceptable – programs about plastic surgery, popularity, celebrities, body image, paedophilia scares, and how to get a girlfriend or boyfriend.

In the absence of school-based sexuality education, these informal and often misleading lessons can continue without an opportunity to provide a balanced view within the context of age-appropriate learning and teaching.

The question we should ask is not, ‘Should students learn about sexuality in their primary school years?’ Rather, it is, ‘How can schools best provide age-appropriate guidance and support?’

Child sexual development

Meet the child

When it comes to sexual development, children are not blank slates. Sexuality develops naturally in children (Richardson & Schuster, 2003). It is assembled over the years from different components which include the brain and body’s own natural development, the way individual children perceive the world, as well as the lessons we teach them.

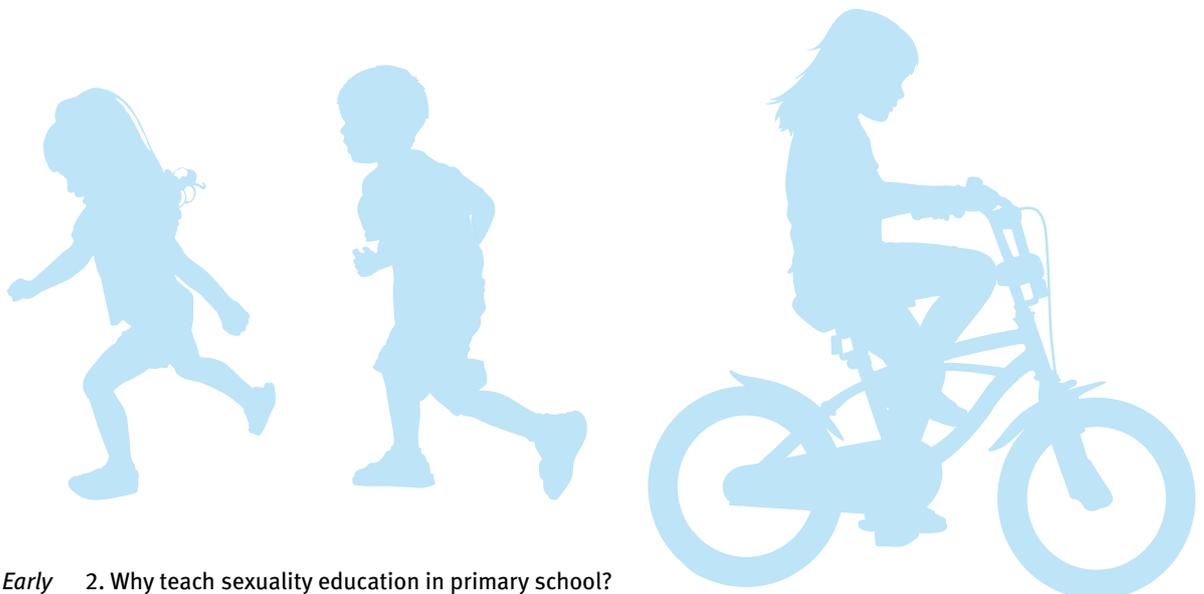
One of the most common concerns expressed by teachers is that they will either provide too much information too soon, or, too little too late. Children develop at different rates but there are general ages and stages that children go through. Bodies change and grow, feelings change, social interests and relationships change. Children have corresponding learning needs. Knowing what to expect can help to make decisions about appropriate learning objectives.

The types of information and skills children need are also influenced by the customs, beliefs and values of the time and place they live. Allowing for children’s different stages, and for a range of family beliefs and values, are two good reasons why participatory learning strategies are so important in making the education fit the age and stage of the child.

The following tables outline important aspects of child sexual development from the age of five through to 14. They have been adapted with permission from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (2008).

CHILD SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT: ages 5–8, VELS levels 1 and 2

- By the age of six, most children will have shown an interest in how babies are made.
- They will want to know how the egg and sperm get together.
- They are interested in pregnancy and birth.
- Some children in this age group will be aware of the connection between ‘making babies’ and sexual pleasure.
- They are likely to hear stories about sex in the playground.
- They will be aware of sexuality content in the media.
- They usually know that some parts of the body are private, and that masturbation is a private thing.
- Some children at age eight, particularly girls, will show the first signs of puberty. Some girls may start menstruation.
- Some children will become aware that not everyone is heterosexual.
- They have a growing awareness of sanctioned gender roles, e.g. ‘girls can’t play soccer’ or ‘boys don’t cry’.
- By age eight, children will be capable of a basic understanding of the process of human reproduction including the role of sexual intercourse.
- Children usually know that looking at each other’s bodies and touching themselves are things people do in private. They are able to understand that this is not something to be done at school.
- Sex play may include kissing games and pretending to be married (Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service 2008).



CHILD SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT: ages 9-12, VELS levels 3 and 4

- Children's bodies develop and change while at primary school. All children need to know about puberty before it happens.
- Sometimes children feel anxious about puberty. Usually some simple information about what is normal and the range of ages when puberty is experienced is enough to ease their minds.
- Children have a growing interest in sex. They may look up information in books, tell 'rude jokes' and talk with their friends about sex.
- They will become more aware of, and curious about, sexuality as it's represented in the media; including learning what is sexually attractive, how males and females relate to each other and what is a desirable or 'normal' relationship.
- Some children will have no interest in sexual matters.
- Children may begin to show an interest in 'who loves who', and some will be very interested in having boyfriends and girlfriends.
- Some children will have an interest in the social status of having a boyfriend or girlfriend and may need to consider criteria for good relationships.
- They may go into and out of gender segregation, applying harsh gender stereotypical rules and censure to each other's behaviour.
- Some children will 'know' that being gay is bad.
- Some children will have an interest in expressing their sexuality in dress.
- Friendships will be the most important concern in playgrounds at lunchtime, and children will require skills for managing relationships.



CHILD SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT: ages 12-14, VELS levels 4 and 5

- As children reach puberty, not only are their bodies changing, the way the world sees and responds to the young person changes too.
- A girl developing breasts earlier may find herself getting sexual attention she's not ready for. Mature-looking boys are able to access the adult world more readily.
- The opinion of peers becomes more important. A need for social acceptance or social safety rather than physical or sexual safety develops, which can lead to what adults would see as risk-taking.
- Having a girlfriend or boyfriend is not solely a hormone-driven enterprise. It is as likely to be about feeling loved, popular or attractive.
- Children can have a desire for space to work things out in their own way. This sometimes means they clam up to consider options privately.
- They can be intensely concerned about their own feelings, thoughts and appearance to others.
- A significant proportion will become sexually active (deep kissing, close touching) by age 14. This is an important time for young people to begin to think about the promise and consequence attached to romantic relationships and sexual intimacy. They also need practical information and skills related to sexual decision-making, and how alcohol affects those choices.
- They can be extremely conscious of their bodies as they adjust to rapid physical changes and are particularly concerned with the question: am I normal?
- They may have difficulty articulating their concerns, which can create frustration and a feeling of isolation.
- They may discover masturbation and experiment with same-sex peers for pleasure.

Twelve reasons why sexuality education is important in primary school

1 Many children want to know

Many younger children are curious about how babies grow and how they ‘started’. Children should know before they start secondary school how a baby is conceived. While some children have no interest in the subject of sex, most have some and talk with their friends about sex and body functions. Sexuality education provides the opportunity to learn the anatomically correct vocabulary, which gives them a better chance to frame questions and express themselves.

2 Sexuality education provides preparation for puberty and beyond

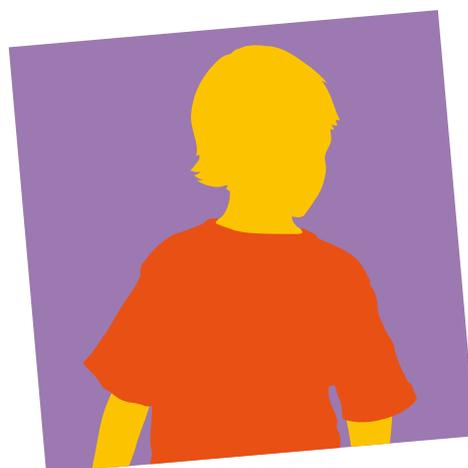
Good sexuality education plays an important part in helping children manage the physical and emotional changes that puberty brings. Children most frequently ask, ‘Am I normal?’ and, ‘When will it happen?’ A chance to hear what to expect and that physical changes and processes affect everyone can be self-affirming. Learning how to manage these changes is also part of helping children to become independent and confident.

3 Some children enter puberty earlier

The process of puberty can start as young as eight among some children. The different ages at which children start puberty can make it difficult for children as they observe themselves or their peers changing. All children need to know about puberty before it happens.

4 Sexuality education is an essential component of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)

In Victoria, it is compulsory for government schools to provide sexuality education within the Health and Physical Education domain, including assessment and reporting against the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (DEECD 2009).



5 Parents want sexuality education in schools

Australian research since 1984 and recent international surveys challenge the convention that parents are reluctant to have sexual health issues taught in schools. Surveys in Canada, United Kingdom, United States, Russia and Greece all found that more than 85 per cent of parents either strongly agreed or agreed with the provision of sexuality education in schools (Langille, Langille, Beazley & Doncaster 1996; McKay 1996; McKay, Pietrusiak & Holowaty 1998; Weaver, Byers, Sears, Cohen & Randall 2002).

The apparent exposure of children to adult sexual themes through popular media has increased the concern expressed by families about the sexualisation of children. Providing sexuality education gives communities the opportunity to communicate their values in contrast to more commercially oriented messages.

6 Sexuality education helps young people make healthy choices

Children whose parents discuss values and attitudes towards sexuality and who receive good sexuality education at school are more likely to start sex later and less likely to have an unplanned pregnancy or a sexually transmissible infection. Reducing these negative outcomes is not the only purpose of sexuality education but it is an important one (Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada 2008).

7 Children are saturated with sexual messages

Almost daily we hear messages about bodies, privacy, birth, menstruation, sexual feelings, shame, being a boy or a girl and friendship, just to name a few. These messages influence our capacity to manage our health and relationships as we grow older. In the absence of formal sexuality education this process continues unguided and unsupported (Collyer, 1995).

8 Boys need sexuality education too

Boys can miss out on sexuality education within the family. Mothers tend to provide more discussion on this topic and may know less about boys' development. Boys are often left to learn about sex and sexuality on their own (Ray & Jolly 2002).

9 Gender stereotypes begin to affect children's choices and options

By the age of eight, children will display a sense of the rules about gender. For example, 'girls can't play soccer' or 'boys don't cry'. Sexuality education helps children to separate fact from fiction about being a boy and being a girl. A safe space and time to question strict gender rules can help broaden their options and make it easier for the children who don't fit the stereotypes.

10 Sexuality education can be protective against sexual abuse

Many important messages and skills that contribute to children's safety are part of a comprehensive sexuality program. They include:

- teaching children about the proper names of their body parts
- giving children permission to talk and ask questions about sexual body parts
- explaining the qualities of respectful relationships and appropriate sexual relationships
- identifying a support network of teachers and parents to whom they could turn
- understanding personal safety, that is, safety for our bodies and how to keep ourselves safe.

11 Sexuality education brings diverse families to the classroom

Sexuality education goes to the heart of what family means and provides a good framework for talking about the role of family and the networks we need to sustain ourselves. Children are increasingly in diverse family structures and are more aware of relationship break-ups between parents. Talking about families, babies, caring and ways of relating helps begin the process of teaching children about having and expecting positive, respectful relationships as they grow older.

12 Breaking the ice/Setting the stage

Talking about sexuality when children are young is a lot easier than when children become adolescents, when they are deep in the territory of whirling emotions, hormones and physical change. Giving children, educators and parents practice and comfort in talking about sexual matters lays the foundation for open discussions between young people and adults about this important aspect of ourselves.





Implementing
Catching On Early

Despite many excellent programs in Victorian primary schools, concerns by school leaders about crossing strongly held family values, a lack of access to teacher training (or support for teachers who may wish to attend), fear of saying the wrong thing to students, and juggling crowded curricula have led some schools to avoid the subject (Buston, Wight, & Hart 2002). Whilst it is compulsory for government schools to include sexuality education as a part of the curriculum, a considered approach to introducing sexuality education is justified.

The Model for Whole-school Learning in Sexuality Education

A whole-school learning approach has been found to be the most successful way of implementing sexuality education programs. It encompasses learning and teaching in the classroom, in the school environment, in the way the school routinely runs itself and in the various ways the school connects with parents and the surrounding community (DEECD 2008a).

Catching On Everywhere (DEECD 2008a) is a program development resource that provides a detailed overview of the model. It is based on the findings of the Whole-school Sexuality Education Project initiated by the Department. A key finding of the project was that the teacher curriculum component in a sexuality education program must take centre stage. Emphasis should be placed on the learning, teaching, assessment and reporting for all students. Hence, while the model is an adaptation of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion's whole-school (or 'health promoting schools') approach it places great emphasis on learning and teaching in sexuality education.

Issues-based education, and targeted support and intervention programs, can complement and support learning and teaching, but should not by themselves be considered a sexuality education program.

The resource also includes a review of the research into the effective implementation of sexuality education programs and provides case studies from primary, secondary, Catholic and special schools.

It is advised that schools begin with a review of these materials to consider the broader community issues and successful strategies for implementing a whole-school learning program. *Catching On Everywhere* is available from the *Catching On-line* website's page dedicated to sexuality education program development: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/teachingprog.htm>>.

Victorian sexuality education policy

Section 3.17.2 of the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide (DEECD 2009a) provides the overarching policy advice for all Victorian government schools. The policy guide can be accessed at: <www.education.vic.gov.au/management/governance/referenceguide>. Below is an outline of the policy section.

Sexuality education is inclusive education for sexual health and respectful relationships. It should build on knowledge, skills, and behaviours, thus enabling young people to make responsible and safe choices. The sexuality education of Victorian youth is a shared responsibility between school-based programs, the local health and welfare community, and parents.

Comprehensive sexuality education is a compulsory health education curriculum component from prep to year 10. Sexuality education is supported by the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and integrated throughout the Health and Physical Education and Interpersonal Development domains. Suggested learning topics are provided at the prep to grade two levels.

The most effective sexuality education program utilises the model for Whole-school Learning in Sexuality Education. A whole-school learning approach views student learning in the context of the whole experience of being at school—in the classroom, in the school environment, in the way a school responds to critical incidents and in the kinds of partnerships a school forms with the local community. This model is available on the *Catching On-line* website (see next section).

Sexuality education should be developmentally appropriate and be present in primary, secondary and special school curricula. Primary school programs provide a necessary foundation for programs offered in secondary schools. The nature and amount of information that can be provided will depend on the age of the students concerned.

Best practice in sexuality education:

- teaches young people how to develop respectful relationships and how to minimise or eliminate the risk of potentially adverse consequences
- ensures that young people can make responsible and safe choices
- assesses and reports on student achievement
- reflects a comprehensive evidence-based approach that focuses on prevention
- provides a curriculum context that recognises the social world in which young people make decisions about their health, including sexual health
- takes a whole-school learning approach, which includes utilising learning and teaching opportunities identified through the links with relevant policies, guidelines, student welfare practices, and partnerships with parents and local health and welfare bodies
- addresses sex-related issues of social concern in its learning and teaching, for example, pornography, sexualisation of young people, gender, power, violence, discrimination, harassment and bullying
- acknowledges young people as sexual beings. This includes recognition that their sexual feelings and desires are normal and that students may already be sexually active

- provides policies and programs that acknowledge and cater for diversity of all students. Forms of diversity include gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion and disability
- addresses the professional learning and peer support needs of the teacher and other school staff members responsible for developing and delivering the sexuality education program
- provides professional learning to the school community in general.

The parental role and the parental right to withdraw a child

While sexuality education is an essential element of health education, the education about sexual health to our young will always be a responsibility shared between schools, the local health and welfare community, and parents. It is important that schools maintain an open dialogue with parents (for example, through the school council agenda, newsletters, and parent events) regarding the school's sexuality education program. Research indicates that the majority of parents support the provision of sexuality education at school.

Parental roles in sexuality education include providing the child with the family perspective, providing opportunistic education in the home, and supporting the child's level of comfort in discussing sexuality-related issues.

Comprehensive sexuality education is a compulsory part of a school's health education curriculum. School-based sexuality education programs are more effective when they are developed in consultation with parents and the local community. Research has shown that sexuality education programs result in increased parent-child communication about sexuality. A parent or caregiver may decide not to allow their child to participate in the sexuality component of the school's health education.

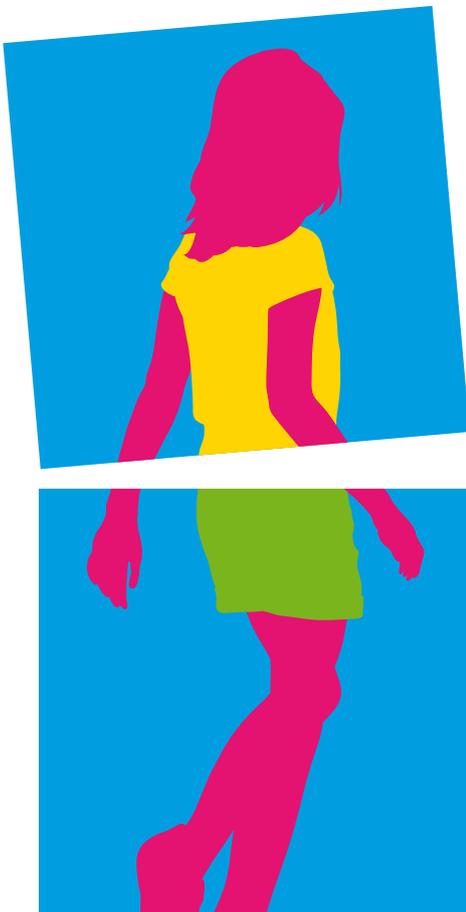
Information for parents is available from the *Catching On-line* 'For Parents' webpage at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/student-learning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/forparents.htm>.

Further policy references

Other relevant sections of the Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide include:

3.17.1.1 – Role of the school nurse in health education

3.17.5 – Student disclosures and confidentiality (including 'Teacher comment on controversial issues').



Catching On-line

Catching On-line is the Department's extensive website that provides a range of sexuality education learning and teaching resources and policy documents. The website is for principals, teachers and parents. It is accessible at: <www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality>.

Catching on-line is also readily accessible by entering the search words 'catching on sexuality education' into your Google web browser.



Sexuality education and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards

The learning sequences in this resource have been integrated with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). The intention of the VELS is to equip students with the capacity to:

- manage themselves as individuals and in relation to others
- understand the world in which they live
- act effectively in that world.

The strongest curriculum links to sexuality education are in the domains of:

- Health and Physical Education – *Health knowledge and promotion dimension*
- Interpersonal Development – *Building social relationships dimension*.

Sexuality education at earlier levels relates to knowledge areas such as protective behaviours, understanding your body and family systems.

Schools are expected to report on sexuality education student achievement as with Mathematics, English and Science, reflecting learning against the VELS framework. A curriculum audit tool for sexuality education is available in *Catching On Everywhere*.

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority's outline of sexuality education and the VELS is available at: <<http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/support/domainsupport/hpe/sexuality.html>>.

Links to student wellbeing policy

Building respectful and safe schools

The Department's *Building Respectful and Safe Schools* (DEECD 2010) underpins the respectful relationships focus in *Catching On Early*.

The policy document provides guidance to promote and support safe and respectful learning environments. It's for all members of the school community – principals, teachers and other school staff, students, families, school councils, and individuals and organisations within the community. The resource focuses on student engagement, forms of bullying and strategies for building respectful and safe schools. It also includes advice for parents and carers.

Building Respectful and Safe Schools (DEECD 2010) is available on the internet from the Respect in schools website (below).

Respect in schools website

The Department provides a website to support schools in their work to ensure *respect* is a strong and dominant value present in school environments, school-based policies, and learning and teaching activities. The website provides curriculum guidance that includes an overview of the Effective Schools Model and links to VELs.

The Respect in schools website can be accessed at: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/respect>>.

Links to health policy

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Health work in partnership to ensure the development of comprehensive sexuality education support and resources for schools.

The Department of Health is developing new strategic documents to replace Victorian strategies (on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmissible infections and hepatitis C) which recently ended. New strategic documents will continue to support sexuality education and the ongoing partnership between the two departments.

Students are to be offered education related to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and blood borne viruses (BBVs) as part of the comprehensive health education program. The issue of STIs and BBVs (including HIV/AIDS) is intrinsically bound up with sexuality-related issues and is most effectively dealt with when also included in a broad curriculum context and using the Model for Whole-school Learning in Sexuality Education.

The underlying emphasis of this curriculum approach is one of health promotion. It aims at developing responsible behaviour and attitudes in order to eliminate risks to the health and wellbeing of individual students and the communities in which they live. The ultimate aim is to provide students with the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to prevent infection from a range of STIs and BBVs.

Inclusive sexuality education

One of the questions most often asked when delivering sexuality education is how to cater for the diverse populations represented in each classroom. This is closely linked to the teacher's capacity to create a secure learning environment so that students feel safe to participate (or for some students, to just listen). An important component of inclusive teaching is about ensuring perceptive, interactive teaching strategies.

The simplest strategy to ensure the teaching is for all is to have a selection of images that accurately represent the community we live in, including the range of masculinities and femininities, ethnicities, faiths, relationships, sexual orientation, and family composition. Finding images is easier said than done. We have included a list of some children's books that are representative in the 'Resources' section at the end of this resource.

Working with culturally and linguistically diverse students and communities

All students have a right to basic information about how their bodies work and what the parts of their bodies are called, about impending puberty changes and about appropriate sexual behaviour. Nevertheless, some families and students may have concerns about the culturally sensitive nature of this information.

Some strategies for working with these families include:

- explaining the goals and content of the sessions
- addressing fears that sexuality education is all about having sex, rather than about bodies, health, respectful behaviour, relationships and looking after ourselves
- addressing any fears that health education promotes permissiveness, and is taught without reference to morals and values. Rather it is an opportunity to critically interrogate popular culture and discuss the application of different values to the issues
- teaching in single-sex groups which, regardless of the ethnicity of the students, is useful for some students and for some topics (see 'Should we provide single-sex classes?' on page 24)
- involving a community leader to be present in some sessions to support the education program.

Sexual orientation and gender diversity

Sexuality education policies and materials play a lead role in demonstrating an inclusive approach to sexual diversity and same-sex relationships in school policy and curriculum.

Research shows that many young people know that they are attracted to others of the same sex from an early age, and we know that many students have gay and lesbian people in their family. We also have gay or lesbian people who are teachers and other school staff members.

Many teachers talk about the challenge of dealing with ‘that’s so gay’ and liken it to when students once used derisive comments such as ‘wog’ or ‘spastic’. Typically, students are not conscious of sexual identity and the phrase may seem unconnected to any meaning about sexuality. Nevertheless, we need to find ways to teach students – without humiliating them – that equating ‘gay’ with ‘bad’ can be hurtful and may cause distress.

That is the easy part of dealing with sexual orientation in our schools.

The more challenging requirement is that we begin to include and represent sexual diversity and gender identity more accurately in relationships. By continuing to include only some groups of people, we are ignoring a large part of our community and unwittingly reinforcing that some children, their families and some teachers, are ‘wrong’ and that it is OK to consider them ‘suspect’, or ‘second rate’.

Further information is available in the *Supporting Sexual Diversity in Schools* policy booklet, available from the *Catching On-line* ‘For Principals’ webpage at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/forprincipals.htm>.

Disability

Students with disabilities need the same information as everyone else. Students with learning disabilities should still receive information that is relevant to their age, for example, information about puberty; however, the teaching methods may need to vary to accommodate the disability.

Students with disabilities may also in some cases need additional information relevant to their disability.

Catching On Everywhere (DEECD 2008a) includes a case example of a sexuality education program in a special school. Articles on disability and sexual issues, and sex education for students with intellectual disabilities can be found at: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au.

Family Planning Victoria offers professional learning for teachers on how to talk about puberty and sexuality issues with students with disabilities.

Should we provide single-sex classes?

Offering a ‘girls only’ and a ‘boys only’ session led by a same-gender teacher can be useful as an addition to the usual mixed sex groups. Single-sex classes can provide a chance for students to ask questions they may not otherwise raise. If in doubt, ask your students if there are any topics they would like discussed in a single-sex group.

Positive body images and the management of menstruation

While girls are likely to receive more education about their bodies, particularly about menstruation and reproduction, they may also be more likely to form a negative body image, for example, on developing breasts early and having to cope with subsequent teasing.

Another anxiety expressed by girls relates to getting a period at school. It's important to ensure there is support. Consider the following:

- Does managing periods at school remain a mystery, or are girls, particularly in fifth and sixth grades, shown where all the facilities are? Do they know where they can go? Do they know where they can dispose of pads?
- If they have a problem or worry about it, is there someone they can go to?
- Can they discreetly fetch pads from their schoolbags before they go to the toilet?

The role of sexuality education in promoting personal safety

Protective behaviours education and personal safety education programs can be a part of, but not the whole of, good sexuality education. Protective behaviours education focuses on teaching students how to identify and avoid a range of potentially unsafe situations, including child sexual abuse (Carmody & O'Sullivan 2000). However, if we only teach students negative aspects of sexual behaviour, we may increase student's embarrassment and reluctance to disclose or ask questions. It is important not to inadvertently teach students that sexuality is dangerous and harmful.

A number of activities throughout *Catching On Early* include a focus on personal safety. Further curriculum materials to support a comprehensive approach to child protection education in primary schools are available from:

- the New South Wales Department of Education and Training at: <<http://www.curriculum.support.education.nsw.gov.au/primary/pdhpe/safe/cpe.htm>>
- the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services: <<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/curric/pages/childprotection/materials/?reFlag=1>>.

Bringing it all together

By their very nature, schools will provide many of the key elements of effective sexuality education outside of VELS-based health curriculum. This may be through programs designed to provide information about puberty and the life cycle, or to promote drug awareness, resilience, social skills, and building relationships (for example, *Talking Tactics Together*).

'Part 2 – School practice' of the *Catching On Everywhere* (DEECD 2008) program development guide provides a VELS-based curriculum audit tool. This tool can help you identify what you are already doing that supports sexuality education, as well as what may not be addressed by existing programs.

Catching On Everywhere is available from the *Catching On-line* website's page dedicated to sexuality education program development: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/teachingprog.htm>>.



Applying the e⁵
Instructional Model
to *Catching On Early*

This section examines primary school sexuality education through the application of the e⁵ Instructional Model (DEECD 2010). For more information about the e⁵ Instructional Model see: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/proflearning/e5/>>.

The e⁵ Instructional Model is a learning and teaching cycle designed to promote high-level practice. Comprehensive sexuality education is present throughout the model's five phases of instruction.

The e⁵ Instructional Model is designed to provide educators with a common language for describing their teaching practice. Examples are provided in this section for each of the domains, but teachers with expertise in sexuality education will be able to identify many more. Also, while the selected examples demonstrate pertinent learning and teaching aspects of sexuality education that fit within a specific e⁵ domain, they may also be applicable across several domains.

As well as the content, central to the success of any sexuality program is the teacher and the teaching methods they use. Key features of successful programs are research-based planning, a student focus following an assessment of their needs, and attention to creating safe climates in the classroom setting (National Children's Bureau 2005).

e⁵ DOMAIN: ENGAGE

The teacher fosters positive relations with and between students and develops shared expectations for learning and interacting. They stimulate interest and curiosity, promote questioning and connect learning to real world experiences. The teacher structures tasks, elicits students' prior knowledge and supports them to make connections to past learning experiences.

They present a purpose for learning, determining challenging learning goals and making assessment and performance requirements clear. The teacher assists students to consider and identify processes that will support the achievement of the learning goals.

CAPABILITIES

- Develops shared norms.
- Determines readiness for learning.
- Establishes learning goals.
- Develops metacognitive capacity.

Example: Setting ground rules

It can be difficult for students to ask questions about their developing bodies for fear of revealing their ignorance to others, or even their interest. Setting ground rules in the classroom can help students feel more secure about participating in the learning experience and increase their engagement in learning.

Beyond creating a safer environment, setting ground rules with students provides an opportunity to identify shared feelings of embarrassment and awkwardness. It helps to establish how the learning will proceed and how we should all be respectful of one another's feelings.

Procedure

- ➔ Explain to the students the reason for the rules.
 - 'We are going to learn about the human body, and babies, and how we grow and change. Sometimes we'll talk about the private parts of our body. It can be embarrassing to ask questions or talk about private things, but it is important that we have a chance to learn. What are some rules that we can have for these activities so that we all feel safer to join in?'
- ➔ Offer the first rule. 'Here is a rule that I think is important.'
 - **RULE: *Right to pass.***
Everyone has the right to pass on a question they do not wish to answer.



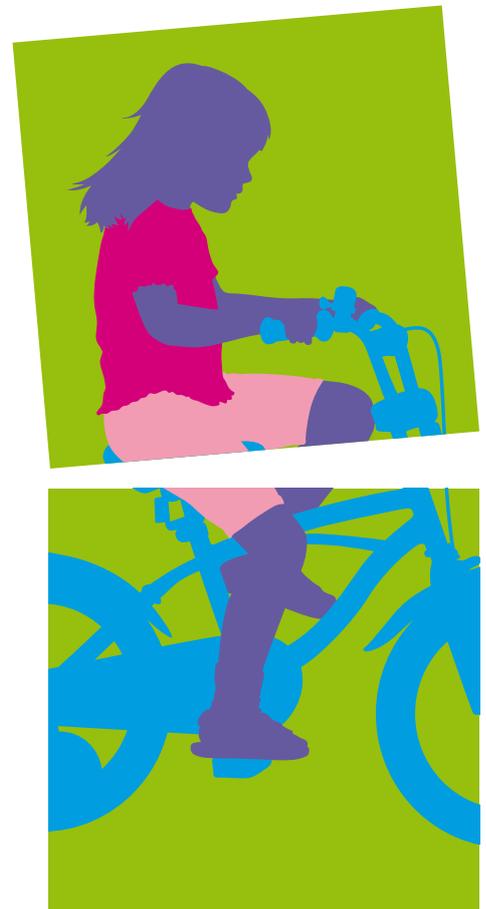
- ➔ If students find it difficult to come up with ideas for rules, offer some of the following:
- **RULE: *Someone I know.***
When we tell a story that might be embarrassing or private, we will say ‘someone I know’ rather than the person’s name.
 - **RULE: *There is no such thing as a stupid question.***
All questions are important. Nothing is silly. If you are embarrassed, you can write the question down and put it in the question box or ask me later.
 - **RULE: *No put-downs.***
We can laugh with each other but not at each other.
 - **RULE: *We listen to each other.*** When someone in class is talking, it is important to listen.
 - **RULE: *It is OK to feel embarrassed.***
We are going to be talking about some things that may embarrass you and that’s OK.
- ➔ The rules can be recorded and displayed, and referred to at the beginning of each activity or learning sequence.

Example: Ask and assess

Asking students what they would like to learn more about will help to plan your teaching content as well as assess their needs, levels of knowledge and what will promote their engagement in learning.

The following suggestions will help ensure the students have input in determining what issues are covered. This is helpful in creating a safe, respectful atmosphere where students see that their interests and feelings are taken into consideration.

Assessing the current levels of knowledge and interests of the students and young people is central to developing appropriate education. Developing strategies such as quizzes and anonymous question boxes can allow you to assess students’ levels of knowledge, attitudes and interests from the outset. Other strategies include brainstorming and using continuums, as outlined below.



Brainstorming

- ➔ Ask the class to brainstorm the good things and the challenging things about growing up.
- ➔ Ask the class to brainstorm the meanings of words such as sex, sexuality and gender. Or love, romance and friendship.

Agree/disagree continuums

- ➔ Provide the class with a statement such as:
 - It's good to have separate classes for boys and girls about this subject.
 - Discussing puberty in class is embarrassing.
 - Students our age are too young for this subject.
- ➔ Ask the students to take a position along the agree/disagree continuum.

Offer an opinion and hear a range of other opinions on the statement. Repeat with another statement if you wish.

e⁵ DOMAIN: EXPLORE

The teacher presents challenging tasks to support students to generate and investigate questions, gather relevant information and develop ideas. They provide tools and procedures for students to organise information and ideas. The teacher identifies students' conceptions and challenges misconceptions. They assist students to expand their perspectives and reflect on their learning. The teacher is mindful of the learning requirements of the task, attentive to student responses and intervenes accordingly.

CAPABILITIES

- › Prompts inquiry.
- › Structures inquiry.
- › Maintains session momentum.

Example: The question box

For senior students you might also like to include the option of an anonymous question box. Tell them that if they have questions that they would feel uncomfortable asking in front of everyone, they can do so via the question box.

Example: Small group work

Teachers need to orchestrate discussion to encourage most students to participate and to permit a range of opinions to be heard. It is often the case that small group work is the best way to facilitate this, particularly for quieter students. Strategies include:

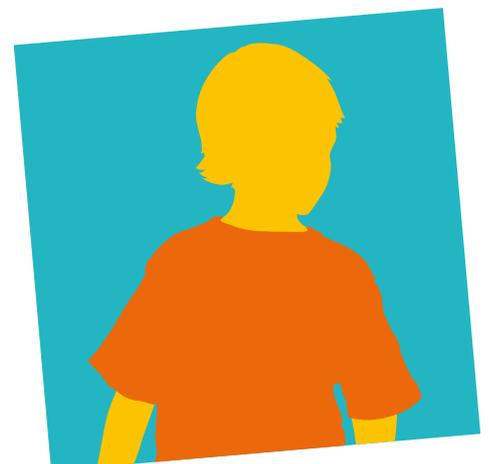
- small group work to solve problems
- paired exercises where students take turns listening to the other's opinion
- activities that mix students with each other and away from their usual cluster of friends (Cahill 2002).

Example: Discriminatory language is challenged

Students who express their views in an offensive way need to be told that their choice of words can hurt people and cause distress.

In response to a child saying that gay and lesbian people are disgusting, you can say:

- 'Men and women have always fallen in love. Sometimes they fall in love with a man, sometimes a woman. It is wrong to say that someone is disgusting. It hurts their feelings and can make them very sad.'



In response to a child criticising another child for breaking the unwritten rules about how gender should behave, you can say:

- ‘There are no rules at this school about what girls or boys are allowed to like. But we do have a rule that says both boys and girls can play soccer, play with dolls or like pink without getting a hard time.’

It is important for students to be given clear feedback about discriminatory language but care should be taken to do it in such a way as to not inhibit their engagement with learning.

Example: Beyond the classroom

Sexuality education provides an opportunity for students to reflect on how they have grown and how they will continue to grow. They will also get a chance to hear a range of personal stories and about different family lives, which will give them an insight into how other people live.

In a number of *Catching On Early* activities, students will be encouraged to collect stories from the world outside school, including their parents and families. In the activities, the students will ask about others’ experiences and perspectives on puberty, childhood and gender. This can help draw out misconceptions and culturally different perceptions, as well as prompt enquiry.

A number of activities are also designed to help students consider a range of sources of information, including technology. Opportunity is given to reflect on positive and negative uses of technology (for example, mobile phones and internet social networking) as they relate to self-image and relationships.

e⁵ DOMAIN: EXPLAIN

The teacher provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their current level of understanding through verbal and non-verbal means. They explicitly teach relevant knowledge, concepts and skills. This content is represented in multiple ways. The teacher provides strategies to enable students to connect and organise new and existing knowledge. They assist students to represent their ideas, using language and images to engage them in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. The teacher explicitly teaches the language of the discipline. They progressively assess students' understanding and structure opportunities for students to practise new skills.

CAPABILITIES

- Presents new content.
- Develops language and literacy.
- Strengthens connections.

Example: Protective interruption

In any program that focuses on issues of relationships and sexuality, there is the possibility that students may disclose personal issues. To minimise harmful disclosures teachers need to make clear to students that, although a number of the activities may explore personal values and attitudes around issues of sexuality, they do not require students to disclose people's personal information. This example also relates to the Elaborate domain, where deeper learning and refining of student's knowledge is extended.

The protective interruption strategy means interrupting students before they disclose something potentially inappropriate and *at the same time* informing them they can talk privately with the teacher after class.

Here is an example of what a teacher can say:

- 'I'm glad you want to tell me about this. It is very important and I want to hear it. Can we talk about it in a few minutes, when we can talk in private? Right now, we must finish what we are doing.'

Example: Single-sex classes

As discussed in the 'Inclusive sexuality education' section (page 21), it is appropriate at times to have single-sex groups, particularly for some cultural groups or for the examination of some specific issues. It can be useful to ask the students if there are any topics they would like to discuss and have explained as single-sex groups. This example also relates to the Engage domain, where engagement of learning is further pursued through the development of shared norms.

e⁵ DOMAIN: ELABORATE

The teacher engages students in dialogue, continuously extending and refining students' understanding. They support students to identify and define relationships between concepts and to generate principles or rules. The teacher selects contexts from familiar to unfamiliar, which progressively build the students' ability to transfer and generalise their learning. The teacher supports students to create and test hypotheses and to make and justify decisions. They monitor student understanding, providing explicit feedback, and adjusting instruction accordingly.

CAPABILITIES

- Facilitates substantive conversation.
- Cultivates higher order thinking.
- Monitors progress.

Example: Developing deep levels of thinking and application

Key concepts in sexuality education can extend over a number of teaching sessions. For example, the reading of a letter from a child who could easily be a boy or girl could follow a teaching session on the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Links could then be made to the changes identified in the first session, the gendered experience and differences because of gender. This learning can assist in making connections to the real life meaning of growing up and life beyond school.

Unresolved student questions can be collected in a question box and referred to in the next session. Students can investigate growing up by interviewing their families and deciding whom to go to for different kinds of help.

This kind of learning in sexuality education is built largely around stimulating discussion and assisting students to debate, express opinions and consider alternative points of view.



e⁵ DOMAIN: EVALUATE

The teacher supports students to continuously refine and improve their work using assessment criteria in preparation for a performance of understanding. They integrate evidence from each phase, formally recording students' progress against learning goals. The teacher provides feedback and assists students to evaluate their progress and achievements. They support students to reflect on their learning processes and the impact of effort on achievement. The teacher guides students to identify future learning goals.

CAPABILITIES

- Assesses performance against standards.
- Facilitates student self-assessment.

Example: Assessment of student achievement

Assessment of student achievement is an important element of VELs-based sexuality education and will assist with reporting to parents. The 'Suggested success criteria' sections included in each learning sequence describe a mixture of knowledge and skills to look for to establish the progress that has been made.

Integral to the lessons are assessment strategies such as open-ended questioning, checklists, project work, problem solving, quizzes and question boxes. These facilitate input from the students so that they and the teacher can review prior ideas and knowledge and compare them with current understandings.

When it comes to learning about puberty, a valuable form of summative assessment is to ask the students the following questions:

- How did you feel before the topic?
- How do you feel now?
- Do you feel more confident talking about puberty and sexual health?
- Which part of the program did you enjoy the most?
- Is there anything else you would have liked to discuss?

Encouraging student self-assessment can help students to reflect on their learning and to frame future learning goals based on their own identified strengths and areas for improvement.

Assessment of student achievement also relates to the Engage domain, where assessment can inform next practice (whether it be for the next lesson, next term or next year).



The six themes
in primary school
sexuality education

This section sets out six themes that provide the basis of an effective and comprehensive sexuality education and respectful relationships education program. These themes build on the learning outcomes of levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the Health and Physical Education and Interpersonal Development domains.

The themes are:

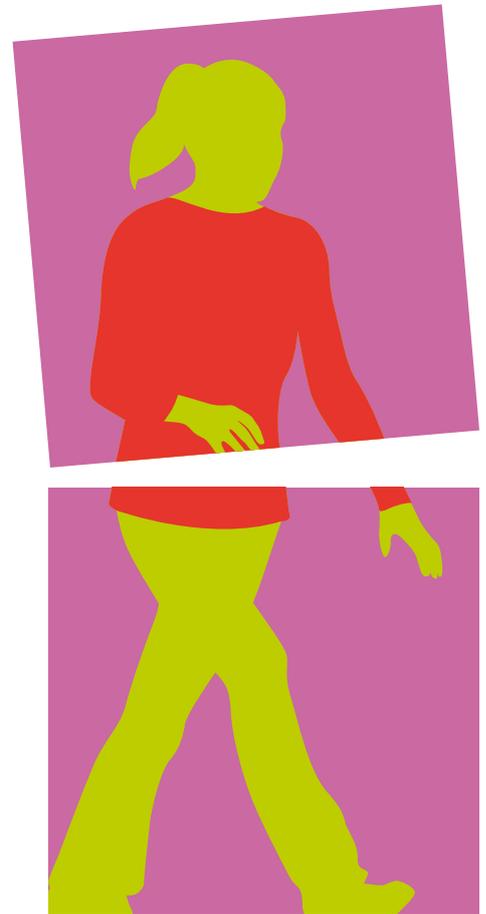
- 1 Knowing me, knowing you
- 2 Growing and changing
- 3 My body
- 4 Belonging
- 5 Someone to talk to
- 6 Where did I come from?

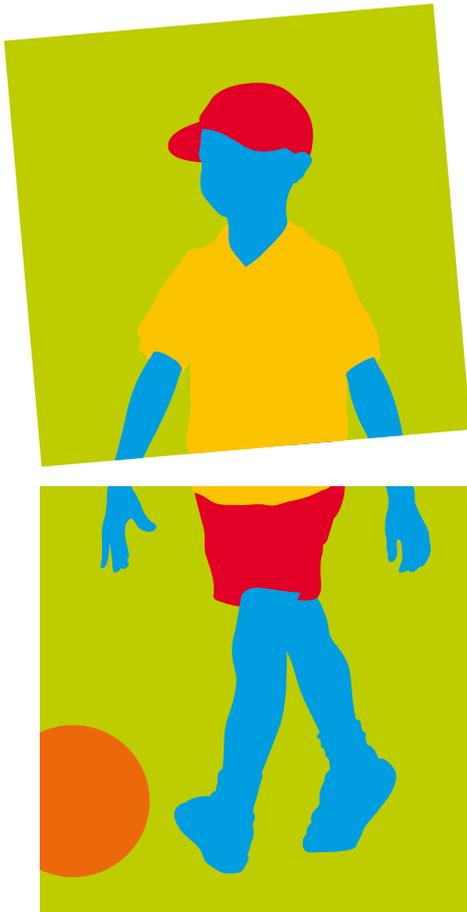
1. Knowing me, knowing you

Many students, particularly by the time they reach grade three, begin to compare and assess themselves against others. As students learn more about themselves, they note how they are different and the same, including differences in their bodies, abilities and interests. This new awareness often leads to new friendship groups based on shared interests, which leaves other students to find someone else to play with.

This theme has particular relevance to the topic of gender and what girls are ‘allowed’ to do, how boys are ‘allowed’ to be, and who people are ‘allowed’ to love. It is important, therefore that we take this moment to teach students a positive attitude towards being different. To find those things we have in common with each other, as well as to be curious and enjoy what is different in all of us. Understanding how we are the same and how we are different is an important building block to respecting others.

Feeling comfortable about difference also helps us feel better about ourselves. While we may not necessarily think of these lessons as about sexuality, they lay the foundations for how to interact, how to feel good about ourselves and how to respect others.





2. Growing and changing

The most common questions students ask during sexuality education classes are often not about sex but about their changing bodies. Even though our bodies are changing all the time, puberty is the time when a child's body begins to acquire characteristics that define it sexually. It is also the time when students begin adolescence, the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood.

Students appreciate knowing the range of ages when changes may occur. If they can privately place themselves somewhere on the continuum of growth and development, they feel reassured and less anxious about the stage they are currently at. This contributes to greater empathy and respect for peers. It is comforting for students to learn that almost every other human has the same feelings about these experiences.

3. My body

Knowing the proper terms for the sexual parts of the body and body functions is a first step in achieving communication that is clearer, more direct and consequently (in time) less embarrassing. Taking this discussion out of the realm of the

forbidden and into the classroom is a lesson in itself, and teaches students how to ask questions and get good information about their bodies. It is particularly important that students feel able to talk with adults about the sexual parts of their body in a socially sanctioned way so that they can ask questions and seek help.

The other important aspect of having an agreed language is that it gives students a positive and respectful way to talk about their sexuality-related issues, rather than only having swear words which have a meaning that at best can be irreverent and funny and at worst offensive and derogatory. For example:

- Do we need to say 'vulva'? Yes. Girls need to know there is a name for that bundle of external genitalia and 'vagina' is incorrect.

4. Belonging

Talking about our families and friends and support networks helps students to know where they fit, whom they can turn to and the importance of respect when relating to others. Identifying the people who love and care for them helps reinforce student's sense of belonging and security. As it relates more directly to a child's sexual development, reflecting on our family life and hearing about others' lives highlights who we are and how we came to be. As students approach adolescence, it pays to reinforce the ties that will strengthen them when so many other changes are occurring.

Good sexuality education supports family members as students' primary sexuality educators. When it comes to talking about families, it is essential to remember the broad range of families that our students belong to. An increasing number of families do not live together. Family units extend to aunts, uncles, grandparents and communities of friends. Education that excludes some kinds of families can have a corrosive effect on their efforts to raise their students. Teachers are often challenged by the lack of resources to ensure proper respect of the diverse backgrounds of students in their classrooms. The activities in this resource provide a way for capturing the lives of the students in our classrooms, acknowledging and including all the ways that students are growing up.

5. Someone to talk to

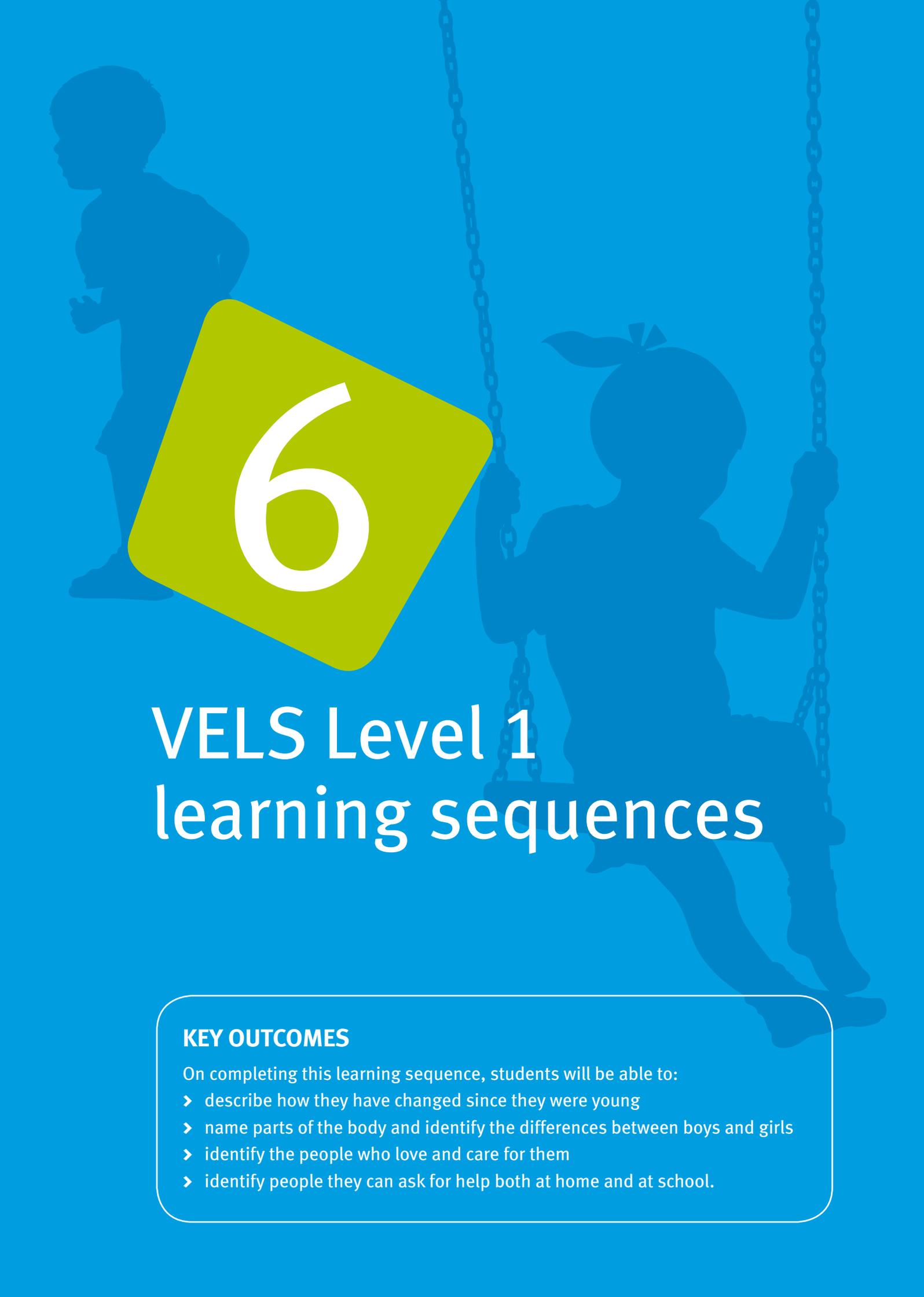
Older students often want to know who they can talk to when feeling upset or worried, and who they can talk to if they don't want to talk to their parents. They often have lots of questions about getting on with each other and their changing bodies. Knowing what to do and who to go to in response to a question or a feeling is an important life skill. It contributes to a set of skills that are essential in coping with growing up and changing. It is also elemental to protective behaviours with students.

Teachers can create safe learning environments where students can talk about their feelings and problems. Clear statements to the students that it is appropriate to approach a staff member if they have concerns can help to sustain this safe environment.

If you are approached by a child, that child has selected you as someone they can entrust with their worries. It is important to give the child time, allowing them to express their feelings until their message becomes clear.

6. Where did I come from?

Many students will have asked this question by the time they reach school. By grade three, they will have a keen interest and will have formulated some kind of theory. Many students will also have made the link between reproduction and sexual pleasure, and will be entering into schoolyard speculation and curiosity. Consequently, it is appropriate that we teach students about how babies are conceived, as well as the role of sexual intercourse in reproduction by providing accurate information.



6

VELS Level 1 learning sequences

KEY OUTCOMES

On completing this learning sequence, students will be able to:

- › describe how they have changed since they were young
- › name parts of the body and identify the differences between boys and girls
- › identify the people who love and care for them
- › identify people they can ask for help both at home and at school.

LEARNING
SEQUENCE

1

When I was a baby

THEME: Knowing me, knowing you**Core concepts**

Talking about the baby years allows students to understand how much they have grown and changed. Many schools begin students' primary school years with units of work that help them to investigate personal identity.

In this learning sequence, the students bring in pictures or mementos from when they were very young. Students love talking about their baby lives, so you may like to spread this over a few sessions.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 1, students can:

- discuss physical changes as people grow and develop, and describe how their own bodies have changed over time
- begin to learn about the development of personal identity.

Suggested success criteria

- I have grown and learnt a lot since I was very young.
- I will keep on growing, learning and changing.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- students' baby photos. If students don't have a photo, they could bring in a memento (for example, a toy, blanket or spoon)
- baby paraphernalia for a 'baby corner'
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – Tell me about when I was little' (available at the end of this learning sequence).



ACTIVITIES

A letter home – Tell me about when I was little

- ➔ Send a letter home (a sample letter is provided at the end of this learning sequence) to parents and carers. The letter provides an overview of the learning sequence and asks them to provide a photo or memento. The letter also includes questions about when the students were little.

This activity provides an opportunity to involve families. It can also reassure parents and carers about the content of your sexuality education program.

Introducing me – When I was a baby

- ➔ Using the student's baby photos and mementos, play "Who was this as a baby?" You may like to ask:
 - What helped you to guess who is in the photo or who owns this memento? (For example, Frank still has curly hair.)
 - What tricked you when you tried to guess who is in the photo or who owns this memento? (For example, Cathy doesn't like yoghurt but she's eating some in the photo.)
- ➔ Comment:
 - Some things about us change as we grow and some things stay the same.
- ➔ Perhaps you could bring in a photo or memento too. It's good for students to remember we were all babies once, even the teacher.
- ➔ Ask the students to tell everyone something about their baby years and report on stories they learnt about themselves from their letter home. For example, you can ask:
 - Where did you like to sleep?
 - Did you have a special toy or favourite game (like peek-a-boo or banging pots)?
 - What is different about you now compared to when you were a baby?

Welcome baby

- ➔ Ask the students to set up a baby corner of things babies might like to play with or need for comfort such as spoons, teddies, and a blanket to lie on.
- ➔ As the students judge what would be suitable for a baby, it reinforces their understanding of the baby's stage of development. Ask them: Do we need a pillow to help it sit up? Are there any tiny things the baby could choke on?
- ➔ Reflect on how the baby corner would look for different students in the class. For example, James used to love soft toys when he was a baby, so let's include soft toys; Ally used to love her dummy, so we'll make sure there is a dummy!
- ➔ Compare a baby corner to the students' classroom. You can highlight that, because the students have grown, changed and learnt so much, they need a different environment.
- ➔ Maybe there is a willing baby sister or brother who could give the baby corner a test run!

Additional activities

We were all babies once

- ➔ The teacher and aides could also bring photos of themselves as a baby and at different stages through their life to share with the class.

Guess who's coming to class?

- ➔ Ask a parent to bring a young baby into the classroom.

Baby school

- ➔ To help students appreciate their own growth and learning, ask students to imagine what the classroom would be like if they were all still babies.
- ➔ Ask students to complete the sentence: If we were all babies, we couldn't ... (sit at desks, write, play chasey etc.).



Some ideas for READING

The Red Woollen Blanket (2008) by Bob Graham.

Since she was born, Julia has loved her blanket. She carries it for years until it is nothing but a small rag. She eventually grows out of the stage when she begins a new period of her life by starting school.

Brand New Baby (2008) by Bob Graham.

This story follows the final days of pregnancy and the arrival of a new baby brother, as seen through the eyes of two small children.

Dr Xargle's Book of Earthlets (2002) by Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross.

This is a story of an alien professor teaching his class about 'earthlets'. The aliens start by learning about babies and how they come in four colours, pink, brown, black and yellow. Dr Xargle also explains that these earthlets have only two eyes instead of the normal five.

Teacher advice

If you have students from diverse backgrounds this is a particularly good opportunity to teach students to enjoy their curiosity in each other's difference, as well as to find what we share.

Looking back may not be such a good experience for some of the students in your class. If you have students in your group with traumatic backgrounds, then focusing on recent growth spurts or other measurements of learning and changing can be as effective in establishing that we grow, learn and change.



Tell me about when I was little

Date _____

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Our class will be undertaking a unit of sexuality education. Students will be learning:

- how much they have grown and changed since we were babies
- what babies need
- that all parts of the body have a name, including the genitals
- about the people who care for them and are a part of their family
- about who they can ask for help.

To assist activities in this unit of work, could your child bring to school a baby photo and a photo of some (or all) of your family members? (Don't forget to put a name on the back.) The photos will be looked after and returned as soon as possible.

If you do not have a baby photo, a memento of something they liked when they were very little would be good too.

We would also like to discuss the children's very young lives. Could you tell your child more about themselves as a baby? Here are some questions your child could ask you:

- What is the story of my name?
- Where was I born?
- Where did I like to sleep?
- Did I have a favourite food? Was there something that I wouldn't eat?
- Did I have a special toy or favourite game (like peek-a-boo or banging pots) when I was little?
- Did I ever make you laugh? What did I do?

Thank you for your help.

Regards



THEME: Growing and changing

Core concepts

In this learning sequence we have fun with a 'Baby Olympics' to learn further about the ways humans develop in the short time between babyhood and starting school. A focus on physical change is one way to enhance students' sense of achievement and self-awareness.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 1, students can:

- › discuss physical changes as people grow and develop, and describe how their own bodies have changed over time
- › identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these.

Suggested success criteria

- My body has grown and changed since I was a baby.
- We need food, exercise, rest and love to grow and develop.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper for body outlines (baby, child, adult)
- baby and children's wear catalogues.



ACTIVITIES

Baby Olympics

- ➔ Conduct a version of the Olympics that focuses on developmental milestones.
- ➔ Have fun coming up with competitions for babies, toddlers and preps.
- ➔ Use butcher's paper and pictures from baby wear/children's wear catalogues to represent competitions for each stage, or make a list such as in the table below.

Babies	Toddlers	Preps
Thumb sucking	Crawling	Running
Smiling/laughing	Feeding themselves	Singing
Cuddling	Making loud noises	Jumping
Burping	Clapping	Dancing

- ➔ A 'Prep Olympics' could focus on all the things the students can do now. This is a great chance to reinforce how much they have grown and changed.
- ➔ Discussion starters:
 - Can babies roller skate, high jump or run? What can babies do?
 - What can toddlers do?
 - How did you move when you were a baby, a toddler and now? (For example, carried, pushed in a pram, crawled etc.)
 - What games could you play then?
 - What games can you play now?



Look at me now

- ➔ On one half of a folded piece of paper, ask the students to draw a picture of themselves as babies doing a baby activity.
- ➔ On the other half, ask them to draw a picture of themselves as students doing a prep activity.
- ➔ In pairs or small groups, ask them to discuss titles for their pictures, for example, 'I like different things now that I am older' or 'Look how I have changed' etc.
- ➔ Ask the students to title their pictures.
- ➔ Now ask them to discuss who they think has helped them to grow and change, and to complete the sentence:
_____ and _____ help me to grow and change.
- ➔ Ask the students to paste their sentences onto their pictures.
- ➔ Display the students' pictures.

Additional activity

Display table

- ➔ Create a display showing students' shoes as the students grow; family photos showing how the whole family has grown and changed; and students' clothing in different sizes and designs.





Some ideas for READING

You'll Soon Grow into Them, Titch (1992) by Pat Hutchins

As the youngest in the family, Titch is always getting hand-me-downs, until the day a new baby arrives in the house. Now it's his turn to say, 'You'll soon grow into them'.

It's Hard to Be Five: Learning How to Work My Control Panel (2007) by Jamie Lee Curtis.

A fun story about all the hard lessons to learn at five, such as waiting your turn and sitting still. Self-control for five year olds!

When I'm Big (2004) by Debi Gliori

Sometimes it's no fun being little. If you were big, you could stay up late toasting marshmallows or ride a real motorbike. There are times, though, when being little is an advantage!

Zoom! (2003) by Robert Munsch

This is a great story to show that children with disabilities are just like other kids. Lauretta is wilful and temperamental as she speeds around town in her new wheelchair. But she also shows she loves her family and steps in to save the day when her brother gets sick.



THEME: My body

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, the students learn about body parts and the names for genitals. Students learn there are common names and family names for body parts.

Generally speaking, it is appropriate to use the correct terminology right from the start. Some schools will decide to leave talking about the genitals until VELS Level 2. It is appropriate for students to know and name the main external parts of the body and the agreed names for the external sexual parts, for example, penis, vulva, breast and buttocks (or bottom).

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 1, students can:

- explore basic health needs that must be met to maintain or promote their health and to help them grow and develop
- identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these.

Interpersonal Development (not organised by dimension at this level)

In Level 1, students can:

- contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts
- use appropriate language and actions when dealing with conflict.

Suggested success criteria

- All parts of the body have a name.
- Though there are some parts we keep private, there is nothing bad about them, they are just private.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper/body outlines (baby, child)
- labels with names of body parts (optional)
- RESOURCE: 'Activity sheet – What are the parts of the body called?' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

Teacher advice

Many teachers describe moments of finding students playing ‘peek under the toilet door’ or showing parts of their body to each other. Students need to learn this is not appropriate behaviour at school and that it is against the rules to play these games at school. By giving this direction, we are reinforcing respect for one another’s privacy.

What do I say if ...?

Students giggle. There is no need to reprimand students for giggling. This is actually an expected response and demonstrates the child understands there is something different and private about these parts.

It’s to be expected that students will have family names and slang names for their sexual body parts. Some teachers are comfortable enough to encourage students to brainstorm family and schoolyard names for genitals so that the teacher can be sure the students understand which parts of the body are being discussed.



ACTIVITIES

Look how much we’ve grown

- ➔ Ask the students to remember when we talked about how much we’ve grown and changed.
- ➔ Comment:
 - Now let us compare.
- ➔ Draw an outline of a baby.
- ➔ Draw an outline of a volunteer prep child’s body in a similar position to the baby outline.
- ➔ Ask the students to identify the ways they have grown and changed. Note the differences in length of body, arms, legs, size of hands and feet. Ask them to identify five different ways they have grown.

My body – naming the genitals

- ➔ Focus on the baby outline (to avoid embarrassing the prep child who volunteered for the body outline).
- ➔ Ask the students to name as many parts of the body as they can.
- ➔ If the students giggle or say that it's rude, do not reprimand them. This is an expected response and demonstrates the child understands there is something different and private about these parts.
- ➔ Comment:
 - Sometimes we giggle when we feel embarrassed especially when we are talking about parts that are private. We are going to learn the proper names for these parts so we can find out about our whole body (not just the bits outside our clothes).
- ➔ Some teachers like to prepare labels beforehand so that students can attach the label to the body. This can take some of the pressure off the teacher when it comes to getting used to naming genitals in class.
- ➔ First, label the body parts that both boys and girls have (for example, legs, arms, nipples).
- ➔ Now ask the students to name some body parts that only a boy has: penis, scrotum and testicles.
- ➔ Now students can identify some girl parts: vulva, vagina and womb.
- ➔ Reinforce that boys and girls have most parts the same and some that are different.

What are the parts of the body called?

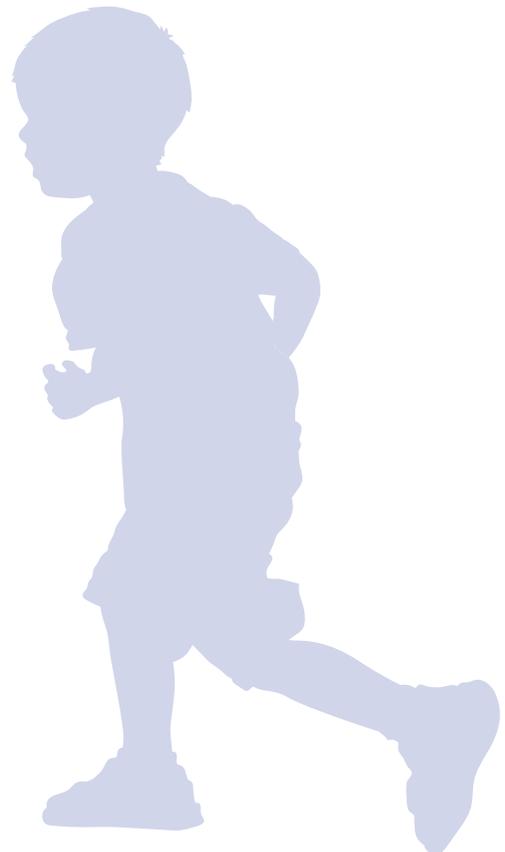
- ➔ Using the activity sheet 'What are the parts of the body called', located at the end of this learning sequence, ask the students to draw lines from the labels to the correct part of the body.
- ➔ Ask them to note how many parts are the same between boys and girls, and how many are different.



Some ideas for READING

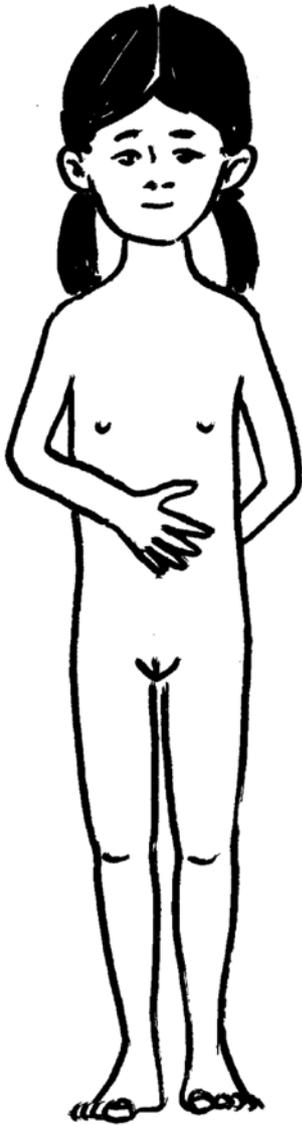
Everyone's Got a Bottom (2007) by Tess Rowley, illustrated by Jodi Edwards.

Family Planning Queensland's *Everyone's Got a Bottom* is a story about Ben and his brother and sister learning and talking about bodies. It is a story about students keeping safe, written in a style that is fun and positive. It is a tool for parents and carers to start a conversation with students about self-protection.



What are the parts of the body called?

Draw a line from each word to the body part on the boy and girl below.



Head

Arm

Nipple

Hand

Hair

Leg

Foot

Vulva

(inside and outside the body)

Vagina

(inside the body)

Penis

Testicles

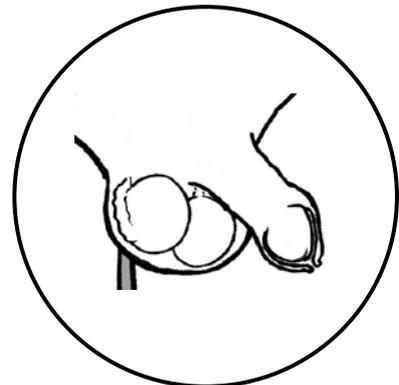
(inside the body)

Uterus (Womb)

(inside the body)

Scrotum

Buttocks (bottom)



THEME: Belonging

Core concepts

Building on previous learning, this learning sequence continues to develop the understanding about personal identity, growth and change, and the things we need to sustain us (in this case adults and family). Identifying the people who love and care for them helps reinforce students' sense of belonging and security.

An increasing number of families do not live together. Family units extend to aunts, uncles, grandparents and communities of friends. Teachers are often challenged by the lack of resources to represent the diverse backgrounds of students in their classrooms. The following activities draw on the lives of the students in our classrooms, acknowledging and including all the ways that students are growing up.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 1, students can:

- explore basic health needs that must be met to maintain or promote their health and to help them grow and develop
- identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these
- begin to learn about the development of personal identity.

Interpersonal Development (not organised by dimension at this level)

In Level 1, students can:

- contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts
- describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups.

Suggested success criteria

- When I was a baby, I needed someone to care for me.
- Now that I am older, there are a lot more things I can do for myself but I also need someone who cares for me.
- Everybody needs someone that cares for them, whatever age they are.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- the students to bring in family photos (make sure the photos have names on the back)
- felt cutouts or paper cutouts of human shapes (adult size and child size)
- a felt or cloth backing board.

ACTIVITIES

Simon says

This is a game designed to create awareness of similarities and differences between students.

- ➔ Ask everyone to stand.
- ➔ Say to the students: Simon says if you ...
 - have a dog as a pet, put a hand on your head
 - have a cat as a pet, touch your nose
 - have a sister, hop on one leg
 - have two kids living at your house, take two steps forward
 - walk to school, jump up and down
 - come to school by car, sit down
 - travel to school by bus, wave an arm in the air
 - share a bedroom with someone, turn in a circle
 - have a baby living with you, cover your ears
 - and so on.
- ➔ Point out ways in which the students are the same and ways in which they are different.

The Simon Says activity was developed from the Northern Ireland Curriculum 'Living, Learning, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: Foundation stage, Unit 6: You and me'. These lesson plans are available for download at: <www.nicurriculum.org.uk/>. The website contains many teaching ideas and is worth a visit.

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Family circles – the people in my family

- ➔ Create your own felt or paper cutouts so that students can assemble any number of children, adults and pets to describe their family.
- ➔ The students assemble their family on a cloth backboard or by pasting onto a cardboard display.

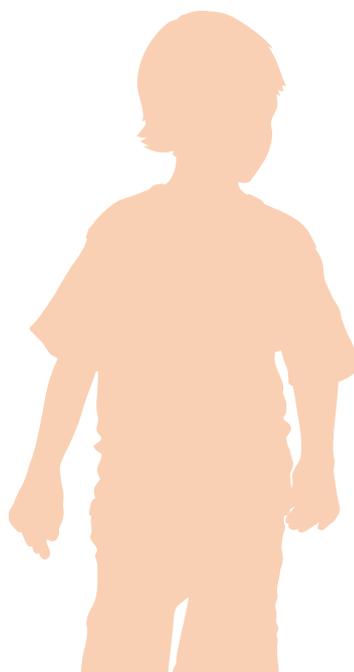
By having multiple adult figures available you will ensure the students can represent all kinds of families, including single-parent families and same-sex parents.

- ➔ You might also like to draw a large chalk circle on the carpet so students can show their families' spread around the globe, across the country, or in different streets.

This allows students to include family members who may not live under the one roof. This can be for reasons such as sheer size (cousins, aunts and so on) or immigration or divorce. A family is not defined by a single address. A family constitutes qualities such as care, love and looking after one another.

- ➔ Ask the students to tell their family story to the class. Alternatively, they can work in pairs. Ask them to:
 - name the figures and describe their relationship
 - talk about things they like to do together, such as family gatherings and celebrations.
- ➔ Key message: Our families often look different but they are usually the people who look after, care for and love each other. We all need someone to care for us, especially when we are babies and children.

This activity has been reproduced with the permission of Jan Whitman, teacher, Spensley Street Primary School, Melbourne, Australia.





Some ideas for READING

You and Me: Our Place (2007) by Leonie Norrington and Dee Huxley.

Every morning Uncle Tobias goes fishing. Sometimes he is joined by two little boys. Together they spend the day moving from the beach to the bridge and the mangroves on the outskirts of the city. The story is set in Darwin but it could be in any regional coastal town in the north of Australia where Indigenous people live.

We Belong Together: a Book about Adoption and Families (2007) and *The Family Book* (2003) by Todd Parr.

Todd Parr's books make an effort to represent all sorts of families in a fun, simple, colourful way. His books include adopted families, stepfamilies, one-parent families and families with two parents of the same sex, as well as the traditional nuclear family.

A Day with Dad (2008) by Bo R. Holmberg.

Tim's dad lives in another town and Tim lives with his mum. This book is a positive, happy story of the day Tim's dad comes to visit.

My Two Grannies (2007) by Floella Benjamin.

Alvina has two grannies, one from Trinidad, the other from England. When Alvina's parents go away on holiday, both the grannies move in to Alvina's house to look after her, but have different ways of doing things. This story looks at the different traditions that Alvina inherits from her two grannies.

LEARNING
SEQUENCE

5

Whom can we ask for help
at school?

Theme: Someone to talk to

Core concept

In this learning sequence the students make their own list of people they can ask for help. It is often taken for granted that students will come to us for help but they can express fear about approaching ‘big people’. To make this learning sequence more applicable to their current lives, we have suggested day-to-day problems and questions that students might have at school. Responsible adults and peers can be ‘officially identified’ by the students.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 1, students can:

- explore basic health needs that must be met to maintain or promote their health and to help them grow and develop
- explore their emotions and identify the different ways in which people express and respond to emotions
- identify new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these.

Interpersonal Development (not organised by dimension at this level)

In Level 1, students can:

- contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts
- use appropriate language and actions when dealing with conflict.

Suggested success criteria

- I can ask for help when I need it.
- I can identify the people at school I can ask for help (for big problems and little problems).

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- a puppet (or soft toy)
- a box or bag of prepared ‘worries’ written on paper (optional)
- coloured paper, pens/crayons and scissors
- staff photos
- RESOURCE: ‘Homework sheet/Letter for parents/carers – Whom can we ask for help outside of school?’ (available at the end of this learning sequence).



ACTIVITIES

A bag of worries

- ➔ Use a puppet or soft toy as a prop.
- ➔ Tell the students that your puppet or soft toy wants to tell them one of their worries but they are scared and do not quite know how to say it.
- ➔ Ask the students to pull out of the puppet's bag of worries some prep-type problems. For example:
 - I forgot to bring my lunch
 - My sister/brother is being mean to me
 - I have no one to play with at lunchtime
 - I've lost my Reader.
- ➔ Ask the students to think about what advice they would give the puppet.

Map making – who can we ask for help at school?

- ➔ Draw a large map of the school.
- ➔ Paste the map with photos or drawings of likely people that students could go to while at school if they needed help. For example:
 - another class teacher
 - canteen manager
 - teacher's aide
 - librarian
 - teacher in the playground
 - principal
 - older students in mentor/buddy roles.
- ➔ Name the people, and show where they are located at school so that students could talk to them if they need help or have a problem.
- ➔ Comment:
 - We are going to use the map to help us visit the people in our school who you can turn to for help and who can look after you.

Go on an expedition

- ➔ Take the map and choose some students to lead an expedition to meet the people you have located on the map (pick a time and day so the 'target' will be waiting). If you do this activity over a number of days, there is a chance for different students to take the lead and practise knocking on the door and saying 'hello'.
- ➔ The students can practise in class how they would introduce themselves. Another child can take the role of thanking the person for their time.
- ➔ Introduce the person by asking the students if they know the person's name.
- ➔ Ask the students:
 - Do you already know the job this person does in the school?
 - How do you know?
 - What sort of things does this person do in this job?
 - How does this help us in the classroom?
- ➔ Ask the staff member to explain their job.



Some ideas for READING

The Huge Bag of Worries (1996) by Virginia Ironside.

The girl in this story is dogged by a big bag of worries, wherever she goes. She decides that she will have to get rid of the bag of worries. But who can help her?

Not Now Bernard (1984) by David McKee.

The young boy in this story is trying to tell his parents that there is a monster in the house, but they won't listen.

Whom can we ask for help at school?

Date _____

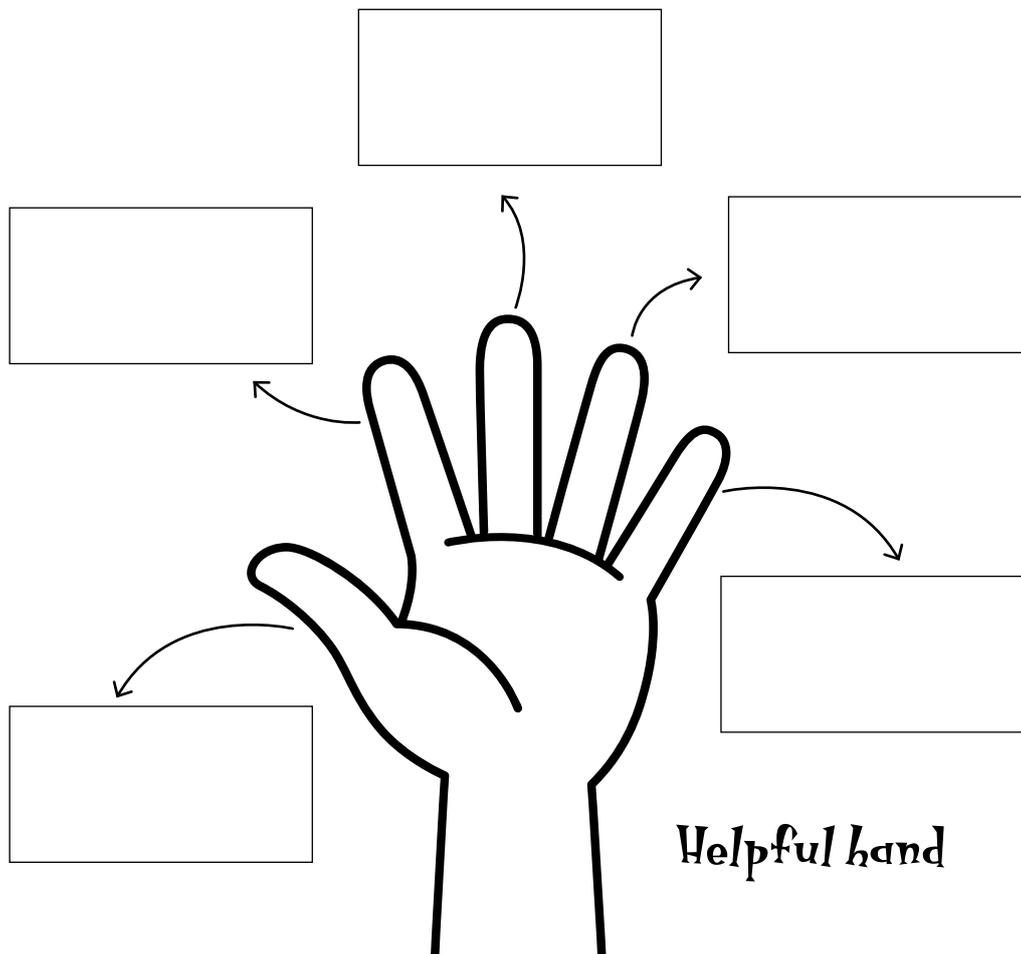
Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

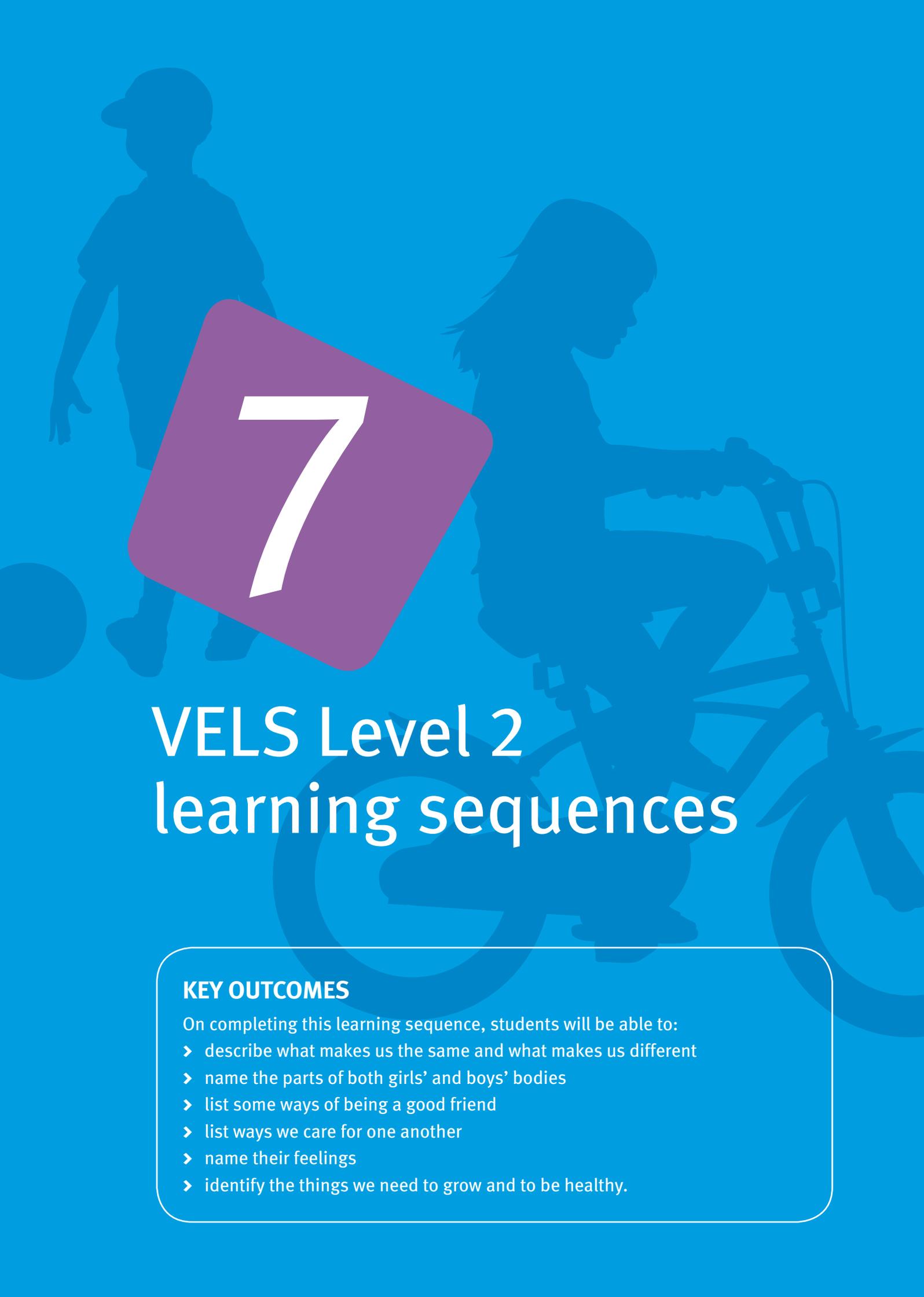
In class, the students have been learning about the people who they feel they can turn to at school for help.

Using the Helpful Hand below, could you please help your child to write above each finger the name of people they feel they can go to outside of school, if they need some help?

Thank you for your help.

Regards





7

VELS Level 2 learning sequences

KEY OUTCOMES

On completing this learning sequence, students will be able to:

- › describe what makes us the same and what makes us different
- › name the parts of both girls' and boys' bodies
- › list some ways of being a good friend
- › list ways we care for one another
- › name their feelings
- › identify the things we need to grow and to be healthy.

LEARNING
SEQUENCE

1

Robot Buddy

Theme: Knowing me, knowing you

Core concept

This learning sequence is an introduction to the structure of the body. It also highlights the brain as the container of our dreams, hopes and personalities which makes us *us*! This learning sequence is fun and excites the students to imagine some of the components of being human – both body and mind. The robot helps the students to develop self-awareness by identifying aspects of the robot's needs and personality, and comparing these with their own.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › begin learning about how they develop
- › describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique.

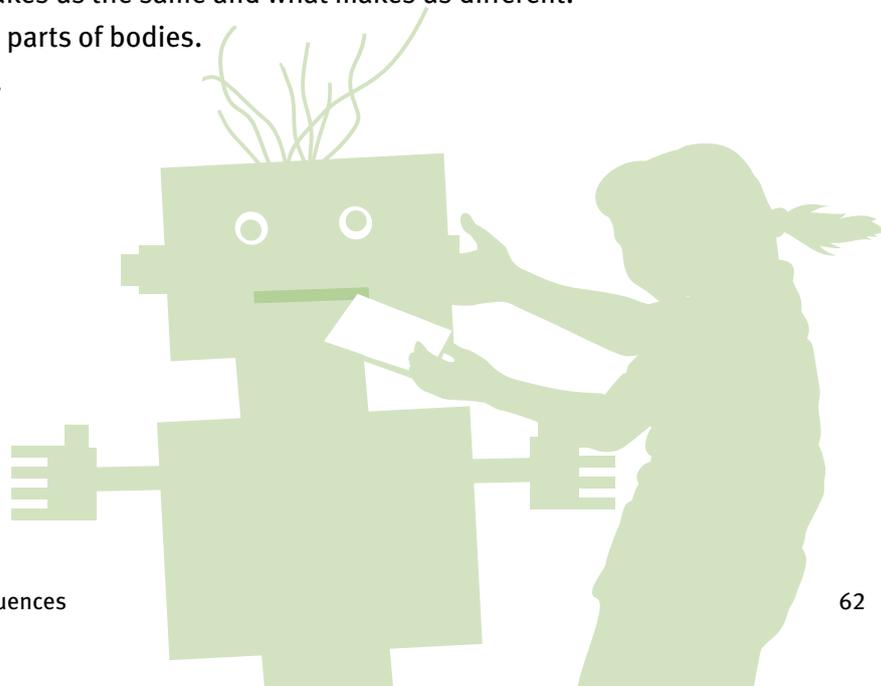
Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › identify the feelings and needs of other people.

Suggested success criteria

- I can talk about what makes us the same and what makes us different.
- I know the names of the parts of bodies.
- I know that I am unique.



Preparation and materials

For 'Robot Buddy', you will need:

- aluminium or tin cans (or paper rolls, milk cartons, cereal boxes)
- string
- a nail (to make holes in the cans so you can connect them)
- recycled materials (for example, broom, sticks wool etc. for the body, arms and hair)
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – Robot Buddy' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

Alternatively, for 'Sticky Robot Buddy', you will need:

- contact paper in a variety of colours, cut into squares/rectangles
- stiff paper for backing
- stickers and cut-out shapes for decorating the robots
- paste/glue stick
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – Robot Buddy' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

For 'Head full of dreams', you will need:

- either Robot Buddy or Sticky Robot Buddy
- magazines for cutting out representational images of thoughts and dreams
- paper
- paste/glue stick.

ACTIVITIES

Robot Buddy

- ➔ Make a demonstration model beforehand. The head must be a container (to fill later with thoughts and dreams).
- ➔ Depending on how many adult helpers you have and how much material there is for building, the students can make their own.
- ➔ Ask the students to consider:
 - what body parts do we need?
 - which parts of recycled rubbish/brooms/sticks etc. could we use to make the body? legs? arms? head?

Sticky Robot Buddy

This is a simple alternative to the 'Robot Buddy' activity.

- ➔ Prepare paper shapes or sticky contact paper shapes for the students to make robots.
- ➔ Ensure you leave enough space around the robot's head for the students to draw (or stick magazine cutouts of) their thoughts, names of people they love and so on.

Head full of dreams

- ➔ Ask the students to decorate Robot Buddy's tin can head or Sticky Robot Buddy's drawn head (for example, eyes, hair etc.).
- ➔ Tell the students:
 - There's more to being human than just having a body. There are things we like to do, people we love, and thoughts and dreams that make us who we are.
 - We're going to write those things down on bits of paper or cut out pictures from magazines that represent them. For Robot Buddy, we will fold them up as small as we can and put them in the head. For Sticky Robot Buddy, we will paste the pictures around Sticky Robot Buddy's head.
- ➔ Here are some prompts:
 - Two people that I love.
 - A favourite thing I like to do.
 - What I'd like to be when I grow up.
 - A special place I like to visit.
- ➔ Over the week, the students can take turns at sharing some of the things that are in their head, including their special family story or memory from 'Letter for parents/carers – Robot Buddy' (available at the end of this learning sequence).



Some ideas for READING

Baby Brains and the RoboMum (2007) by Simon James.

Baby Brains is clever enough to see how tired his Mum and Dad seem to be at the end of the day. Then Baby Brains has an idea: a robot that can cook, clean and do the laundry. RoboMum!

The Sprog Owner's Manual: (Or How Kids Work) (2005) by Babette Cole.

A fun description of various body systems and what 'sprogs' need to keep functioning.

A Walk in the Rain with a Brain (2004) by Edward M. Hallowell.

A little girl named Lucy is making her way down a rainy footpath when she sees a brain called Fred sitting alone in a puddle. Fred asks Lucy for help getting home. As they walk, she worries that she's not smart enough. 'Everyone's smart!' explains Fred. He reassures her that each child learns and thinks differently and that every child has special talents. A discussion guide is included.

Teacher advice

If you have a child with a disability in your class, you can ask the parents and the child if you could explain the child's disability in the context of understanding the human body. There may also be specialist equipment that could be explained. Students in class can learn that while the child just wants to fit in, there may be some things they can do to communicate better with the person.

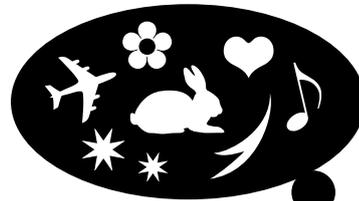
Robot Buddy

Date _____

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Our class will be undertaking a unit of sexuality education. Students will be learning about:

- what makes us *us*!
- what makes us the same and what makes us different
- the parts of both girls' and boys' bodies
- ways of being a good friend
- ways we care for one another
- our feelings
- the things we need to grow and be healthy



We know that we have a body but there is more to us than a body. Our brain holds our dreams, hopes, personalities, and memories.

We are making Robot Buddies (tin can heads) at school and filling them with our own thoughts. To assist with this activity, could you discuss and write down a special family story or memory that involves your child? Your child will place this special memory in their robot's head.

Maybe you could write something about the first place you lived in. Or recount a special pet story. Or note down something funny your child used to say when they were little. Or describe a special family time of the week. You can write in the space below.

SPECIAL FAMILY STORY OR MEMORY

Thank you for your help.

Regards

Theme: Knowing me, knowing you

Core concepts

This learning sequence helps students to further develop self-awareness through identifying their personal likes and dislikes. It helps students to identify what they have in common with one another, and perhaps with students they may not have yet connected. It is also a chance for the teacher to reinforce that the existence of difference among them is not bad or inferior, just different.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique
- › discuss the way various situations and behaviours affect the way they feel, and develop personal responses to such behaviours and situations.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › behave appropriately in a range of social situations
- › identify the feelings and needs of other people.

Suggested success criteria

- I know some things that make me different.
- I know some things about me that I have in common with my classmates.
- There is no one quite like me.
- Life can be more interesting because we are different.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- two sheets of coloured cardboard, one blue, one yellow
- an inkpad.

ACTIVITIES

Pair share

- ➔ Invite the students to form pairs.
- ➔ Ask them to find out two things they have in common and two things that are different and tell the rest of the group about them. For example, we both have blue eyes but I am right-handed and you are left handed.
- ➔ Mix pairs up so that boys and girls have turns at being together and identifying that they have things in common as well as things that are different.

The 'Pair share' activity was taken from Martinez A and Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children's Bureau.

Two ends

- ➔ Using an open space, place a large blue sheet of paper at one end of the room and a yellow piece of paper at the opposite end. Explain to the students you want to get to know them better and that there is no right answer to what you will ask them.
- ➔ Ask them to listen carefully and then say:
 - All those who like peas, please go to the blue end of the room and all those who like carrots please to go to the yellow end of the room. Those who aren't sure or prefer neither can remain in the middle.
- ➔ Allow time for the different groups to talk about why they chose to go where they did.
- ➔ Ask the students from each end why they prefer one to the other. When a reason has been given, say to the others:
 - Now that you have heard (Rachel's) reason, is there anyone who would like to change their mind?
- ➔ Reassure the students that it is all right to change your mind.
- ➔ When the students have settled on their groups, draw a quick sketch on the whiteboard or a poster to represent the groups.



- ➔ You can repeat the ‘Two ends’ activity and draw sketches to represent the groups for:
 - apples and strawberries
 - chicken and fish
 - painting and jigsaws
 - playing outside and playing inside.
- ➔ You may wish to use other criteria more relevant to your classroom or for information you would like to gain. Praise students who change their mind or make up their own minds (that is, being different to their friends/the other boys or girls).
- ➔ After three or four choice activities, use the sketches to support discussion about the similarities and differences you have noticed in the students’ choices and in the composition of the groups. In some ways, the students are different and in some ways, they are the same! This discussion provides opportunities for the teacher to gather evidence related to the success criteria.
- ➔ Use the sketches to develop statements. For example, ‘Twelve people like playing outside, ten people like playing inside and five people are unsure where they like to play’. It is important to make concrete statements such as ‘life is more interesting because we’re different’, to assist the students to value diversity.

The ‘Two ends’ activity was developed from the Northern Ireland Curriculum ‘Living, Learning, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding: Foundation stage, Unit 6: You and me’. These lesson plans are available for download at: <www.nicurriculum.org.uk/>. The website contains many teaching ideas and is worth a visit.

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Make your mark – put your fingerprint on Robot Buddy

- ➔ Comment on how there are many ways that we are the same but lots of ways that we are special and different from each other.
- ➔ Tell the students that there is no one else exactly like them in the world. The combination of body, feelings, thoughts and dreams make each of us unique.
- ➔ Ask them to put their fingerprint on their Robot Buddy to show it is unique.
 - There is one thing about us – even between identical twins – that is different from every other person in the world. Our fingerprint!

Additional activity

Favourites

- ➔ Collate statistics on the numbers of students who had favourite teddies versus favourite balls/books etc.
- ➔ Read a story (such as *Elmer* by David McKee) or work with the students to make up a scenario about a puppet that is different because of the way he or she looks (for example, because they have glasses, freckles or are small or tall).
- ➔ Talk about how the character feels when people are nasty to them because they're different.



Some ideas for READING

Elmer (1989) by David McKee

Elmer's unusual multicoloured hide is the wonder of all the other elephants. But then Elmer begins to worry that the others are laughing at him because he is different.

Leo the Late Bloomer (2002) by Robert Kraus, illustrated by Jose Aruego.

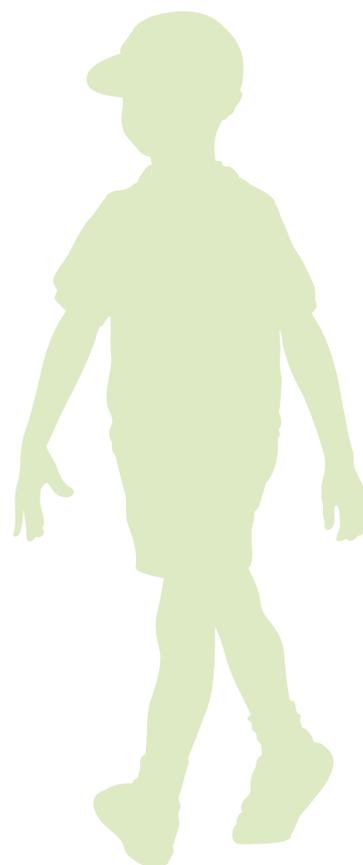
Leo the lion has not started reading, writing, drawing or talking and his father is worried. But his mother is sure that he will start when it's time.

The Sneetches and Other Stories (Classic Seuss, 1961) by Dr Seuss.

'This collection of four stories begins with the Sneetches, who fight a losing battle trying to outdo each other. There's also a fun story called *Too Many Daves*, about Mrs McCave who realises that some variety in the names of her sons (all 23 are called Dave) would have been useful.

This Is Our House (Paperback with animated DVD, 2005) by Michael Rosen, illustrated by Bob Graham.

George says the cardboard house is his alone and isn't for girls, twins or people with glasses. But then he comes back to find that there are people inside who don't think it is for people who have red hair, like George.



Theme: Someone to talk to

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, students learn that there are explicit skills that contribute to making and keeping friends. Opportunities to talk about friendships in class help students to develop these important skills. This learning sequence focuses on the important skill of saying 'hello'.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique
- › discuss the way various situations and behaviours affect the way they feel, and develop personal responses to such behaviours and situations.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › behave appropriately in a range of social situations
- › identify the feelings and needs of other people
- › identify and accept that there are consequences for their actions
- › take appropriate steps to resolve simple conflicts.

Suggested success criteria

- I know some ways of being a friend.
- I know that acting in a friendly way helps people feel good, and I feel good too.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- coloured pencils
- RESOURCE: 'Activity sheet – Scenarios: What makes a good friend?'
- RESOURCE: 'Homework sheet/Letter for parents/carers – Say "hello"'.

These resources are available at the end of this learning sequence.

ACTIVITY

Say 'hello'

Try to make sure you greet every child by name when they arrive in class each morning. It helps students feel welcomed and safe. You could use the roll call as an opportunity to greet each child by name each day.

- ➔ Ask the students, in turn, to greet the person on their left, then their right, using their name.
- ➔ Ask the students to role-play scenarios related to saying 'hello'. Some suggested scenarios have been provided at the end of the learning sequence. However, you may wish to develop your own scenarios that could be more appropriate to your class.
- ➔ Discuss each role-play after it has finished. Questions have been included with each scenario at the end of this learning sequence.
- ➔ Key message: It feels good to be greeted and to make other people feel good too.





Some ideas for READING

Brand New Kid (2000) by Katie Couric.

Two little girls show compassion to a not-so-ordinary boy who joins their class.

How to Be a Friend: A guide to making friends and keeping them (2001) by Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown.

This guide to friendship covers who can be your friend, how to show someone you would like to be friends, how to handle bosses and bullies, best ways to be a friend and not to be a friend, and ways to settle an argument with a friend.

My Friend Isabelle (2003) by Eliza Woloson.

The true story of two friends: Isabelle, who has Down syndrome, and Charlie, who does not. They like to do many of the same things, but like most friends they are also different from each other. This book celebrates friendship and explores how similarities and differences make friendships special.

Tobin Learns to Make Friends (2001) by Diane Murrell.

Readers follow Tobin, a train, as he learns to make friends and engage in proper social activities. This book is suitable for teaching social skills to students with autism, Asperger's syndrome and other developmental disorders.

Say Hello (2007) by Jack and Michael Foreman.

This is the story of a boy who is left out and all alone, while other students play happily together. The message is, when someone's feeling left out and low, it doesn't take much to say 'Hello!'

Scenarios: What makes a good friend?



You are with a group of students in the playground.
There is another child by themselves near your group.
You call out 'Hello!'
What happens next?
How do you feel now?
How does the other child feel now?



You have come to school feeling sad.
When you walk into class, the teacher looks up and says 'Hello!'
What happens next?
How do you feel now?
How does the teacher feel now?



You feel worried about coming to school today.
When you walk in the schoolyard, another child comes up to you and says 'Hello!'
What happens next?
How do you feel now?
How does the child who said 'hello' feel now?



Say 'hello'

Date _____

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

We are learning about how to make friends. One of the things we can do to act in a friendly way to other people is to say 'hello'. In the space below, can you help your child identify ways of showing someone that they would like to play with them? Perhaps you can suggest ways that worked for you when you were a child.

Thank you for your help.

Regards



Theme: Belonging

Core concepts

This learning sequence is a first step in identifying students' support networks. Students learn more about who they are by identifying the people close to them. It also begins the work of identifying the elements of positive, respectful relationships.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › explore people's needs at various stages of development and recognise that some needs apply to all stages of life
- › describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › behave appropriately in a range of social situations
- › identify the feelings and needs of other people
- › identify and accept that there are consequences for their actions
- › take appropriate steps to resolve simple conflicts.

Suggested success criteria

- I can name some people who love and care for me.
- I can name some helpful things I can do at home.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- large yellow paper circle and paper petals
- collage materials
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – A thank you message' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

ACTIVITIES

Sunflower – ways we care for one another

- ➔ Prepare a large cutout yellow circle and separate paper petals. You can make one large one for the whole class or students can make individual ones.
- ➔ Ask the students:
 - Who are the people in our family and the people who love and care for us?

The students must identify real people that they have a close relationship with, and not, for example, TV characters.
- ➔ Record all the students' answers in the centre of the sunflower.
- ➔ Ask the students:
 - How do our special people show they love and care for us? (For example, 'Nana cooks me a nice dinner' or 'My little brother hugs me'.)
- ➔ Write the responses on separate petals and stick them around the yellow circle.
- ➔ Alternatively, you could use pictures and magazine cutouts that students can select and stick around the yellow circle.

I can help

- ➔ List the kinds of jobs students can do at home to help. For example, set the table, make the bed, tidy their bedroom and get the mail.
- ➔ Comments:
 - Sharing work at home is one way we can show we care.
 - Is there one job you could do at home to help? What would that be?



A thank you message home

- ➔ Ask the students to write a thank you message (maybe even with a promise to help with a particular job at home).
- ➔ The message can be written, or pasted onto the resource letter included at the end of this learning sequence.
- ➔ As an alternative, the students could make their own special cards with a thank you message.



Some ideas for READING

Annie to the Rescue (2007) by Deborah Niland.

This is a story of a little girl who is very proud of all the growing up she has done, but when she gets stuck up a tree, her mum is there to help her.

Jack's Little Party (2007) by Bob Graham.

This is a story about family life and a boy's birthday treat. It's Jack's birthday and his friend Sam is coming around after school for a party. It's just Sam, Jack and Jack's mum in a small flat. His party is not a huge occasion but Jack comes to realise he is a very lucky boy.

Ways we care for one another – A thank you message

Date _____

Dear _____

Today we have been talking about our families, the people who are special to us and the things they do to care for us. We all chose some special people that we would like to give a thank you message to. Your child chose you.

You can ask your child if they would like to share with you some of the other special people in their life they identified.

Thank you for your help.

Regards



LEARNING
SEQUENCE

5

There's a name for that

Theme: My body

Core concepts

It is important students know that every part of our body has a name. The purpose of helping students to use the correct names for their bodies is to give them greater comfort in discussing their growth and development. It is appropriate for them to know and name the main external parts of the body and the agreed names for the external sexual parts, the penis, vulva, breast and buttocks (bottom).

This learning sequence also takes the opportunity to help the students identify feelings when talking about the body. It helps to establish school as a safe place to acquire information and ask questions.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › explore people's needs at various stages of development and recognise that some needs apply to all stages of life
- › describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- › behave appropriately in a range of social situations
- › identify the feelings and needs of other people.

Suggested success criteria

- I can name my feelings.
- I know that others can have similar feelings to me.
- I know that all the parts of my body have a name.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper to trace body outlines (or you can use the sample body outlines provided as a resource at the end of this learning sequence and enlarge them to A3 size)
- ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY RESOURCE: Sample pictures of male and female sexual organs (available at the end of this learning sequence).

ACTIVITIES

Feelings – Talking about the body

- ➔ Tell the students you are going to talk about bodies today.
- ➔ You can sing a song about the body, for example, 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' or 'Hokey Pokey'.
- ➔ Comments:
 - When we constructed Robot Buddies, we talked about some body parts that we needed to build a robot.
 - What were some of the parts we included? For example, legs, tummy, head etc.
- ➔ Write the responses on the board and call this 'List 1'.
- ➔ Comments:
 - We didn't talk about some parts.
 - Can anyone name some parts that only girls have and some parts that only boys have? For example, vagina, penis, 'boobs' etc.
- ➔ Write the responses on the board and call this 'List 2'.
- ➔ Praise students who were brave enough to volunteer the names of sexual body parts, whether they were the proper, scientific or 'science-type' names, or informal, home names. If the students volunteer their home names for the sexual body part, provide them with the proper name too.

If you judge a child's choice of word to be inappropriate, you might like to reframe it. For example, 'Well done. The science-type word for 'dick' is penis.'

Remember students may not be trying to be rude. Rather it is likely to be the only word they know for the sexual body part. Discussion about the choice of language for the classroom will come in the next activity, so do not spend too long on that here. ➔➔

- ➔ Debrief the students using the following questions:
 - How did it feel to say and hear the names (List 1) of body parts that girls and boys have?
 - Comfortable?
 - Easy?
- ➔ How did it feel to say and hear the names (List 2) of boys and girls sexual body parts?
 - Embarrassed?
 - Comfortable?
 - Did you feel they were private?
 - Were you afraid someone would laugh?
- ➔ Comments:
 - Some of us might have felt a bit embarrassed to talk about these parts because they are private. Some of us might have felt fine.
 - We are not trying to be rude but we think it is important that you know what the proper names are for all of your body parts, so we can learn about the whole body and so you know how to ask questions.

Boys' bodies and girls' bodies

Building on the previous activity ('Feelings – Talking about the body'), the point of this activity is to reinforce the correct names for sexual body parts and to highlight that both girls and boys have many body parts the same.

- ➔ Draw two child-sized body outlines (or use the sample pictures provided at the end of this learning sequence):
 - one to represent a girl
 - one to represent a boy.
- ➔ Stick the outlines up on the whiteboard leaving enough space between them for writing down parts of the body that both boys and girls have in common.
- ➔ Ask the students to name all the parts of the body they can think of that both boys and girls have. >>

- ➔ As they call them out, label the body parts that both boys and girls have (for example, legs, arms, nipples). Write them on the whiteboard between the girl and boy outlines.
- ➔ Ask the students to name the body parts that only a boy has: penis, scrotum and testicles. As they call them out write these on the whiteboard beside the boy.
- ➔ Now ask the students to identify some girl body parts: vulva, uterus and vagina. As they call them out write these on the whiteboard beside the girl.
- ➔ Reinforce that boys and girls have most parts the same and some that are different.

Students may name the uterus and ovaries. While we are not reaching for that level of knowledge at this stage, it is fine to explain what they are if students are interested.

Additional activities

What's inside?

As an extension to the above activity, you may wish to display the sample pictures of male and female sexual organs provided at the end of this learning sequence.

- ➔ Include internal sexual organs in the body outlines:
 - females – vagina, uterus (womb), ovaries, labia (inner lips)
 - males – testicles.
- ➔ Ask the students to name the internal parts.

Home names

- ➔ Collect students' home names for their sexual body parts.
- ➔ Ask them to match them up with the proper names to check their level of understanding.



Some ideas for READING

Amazing You: Getting Smart about Your Private Parts (2005) by Gail Saltz.

This book introduces kids to basic reproductive physiology. Saltz offers simple, accessible definitions of terms, accompanied by pictures of unclothed kids and labelled diagrams of internal organs. Subsequent drawings show three stages of body development from baby to young adult.

It's So Amazing! A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies and Families (2004) by Robie H. Harris, illustrated by Michael Emberley.

This book includes fun descriptions of the journey of the adventurous egg travelling along the fallopian tube and meeting a sperm. It is also inclusive of adult relationships between people of the same sex. Anything by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley is a good source of child-friendly explanations of growing up, sex and reproduction.

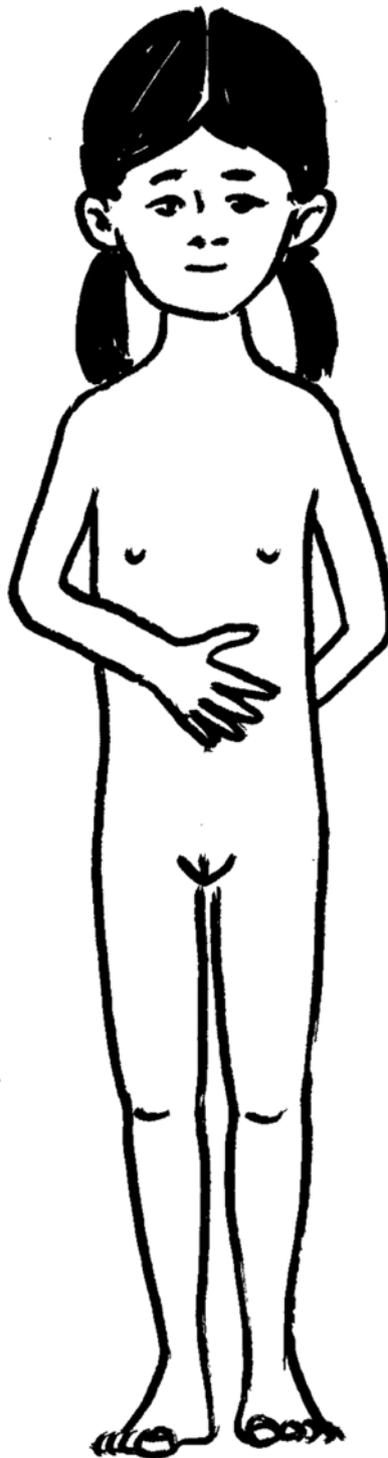
Teacher advice

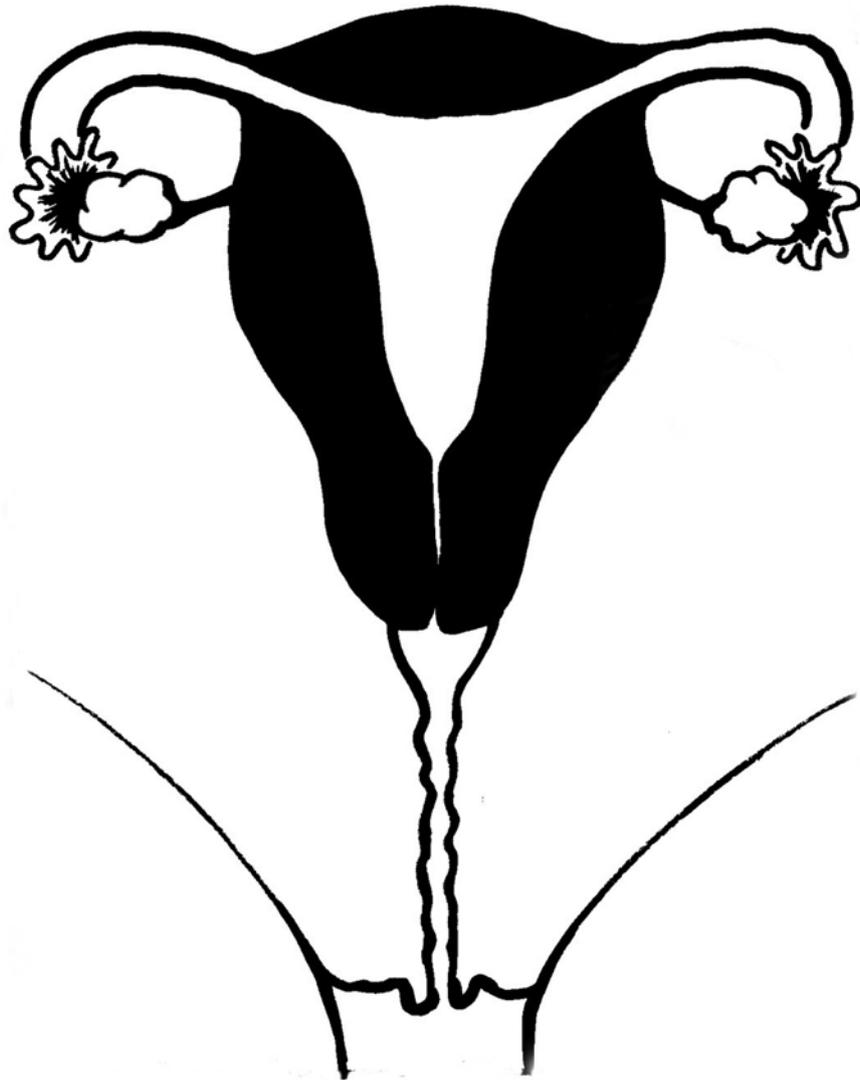
What do I say if ...?

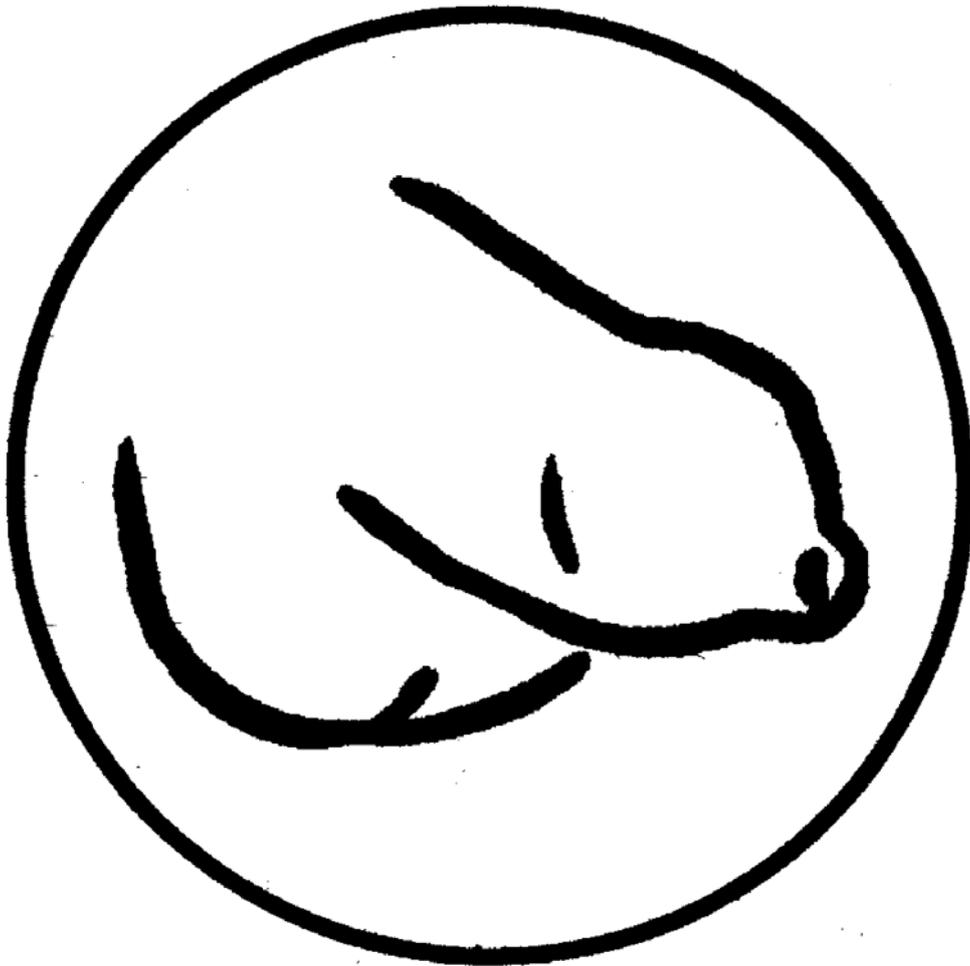
Children giggle. There is no need to reprimand students for giggling. This is actually an expected response and demonstrates the child understands there is something different and private about these parts.

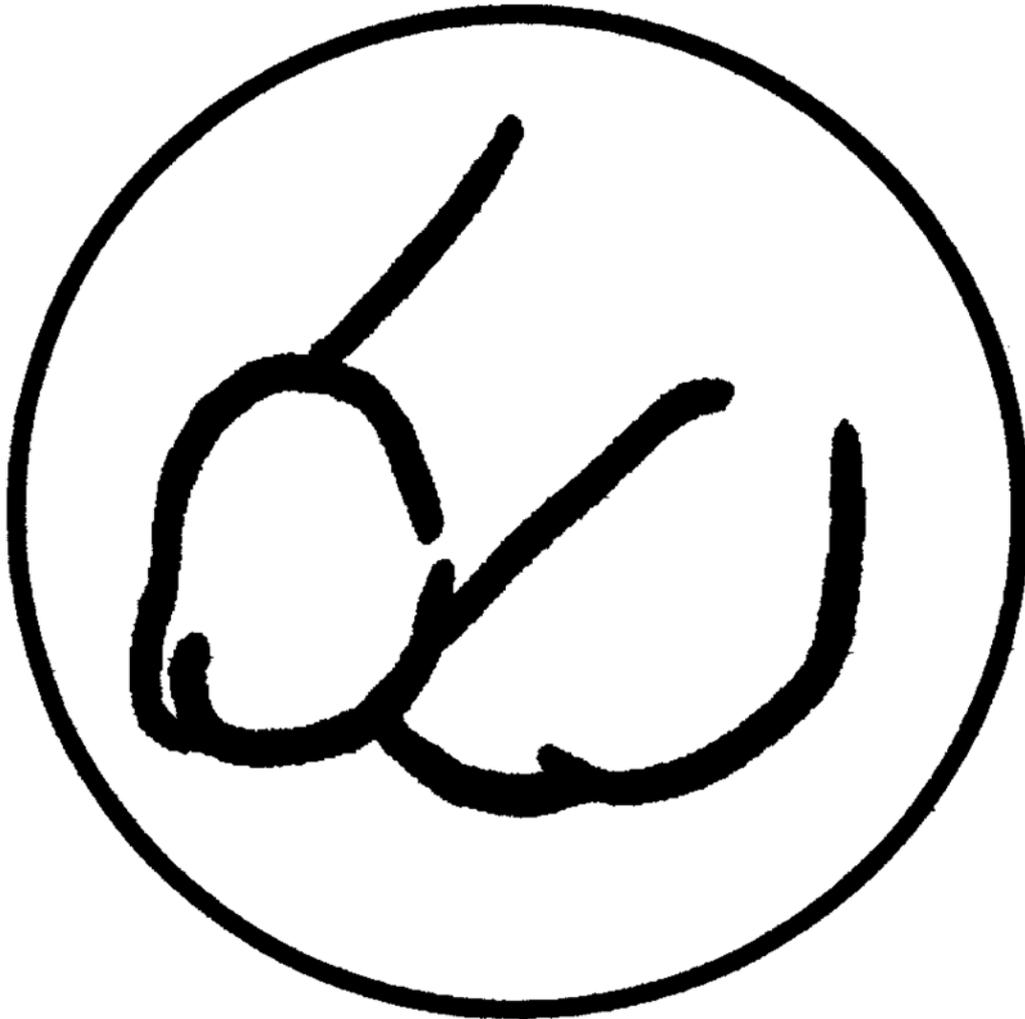
It's to be expected that students will have family names and slang names for their sexual body parts. Some teachers are comfortable enough to encourage students to brainstorm family and schoolyard names for genitals so that the teacher can be sure the students understand which parts of the body are being discussed.











Theme: Growing and changing

Core concept

In this learning sequence, students play a game to promote thinking about caring for themselves and to promote discussion about what is good for their health.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 2, students can:

- explore people's needs at various stages of development and recognise that some needs apply to all stages of life.

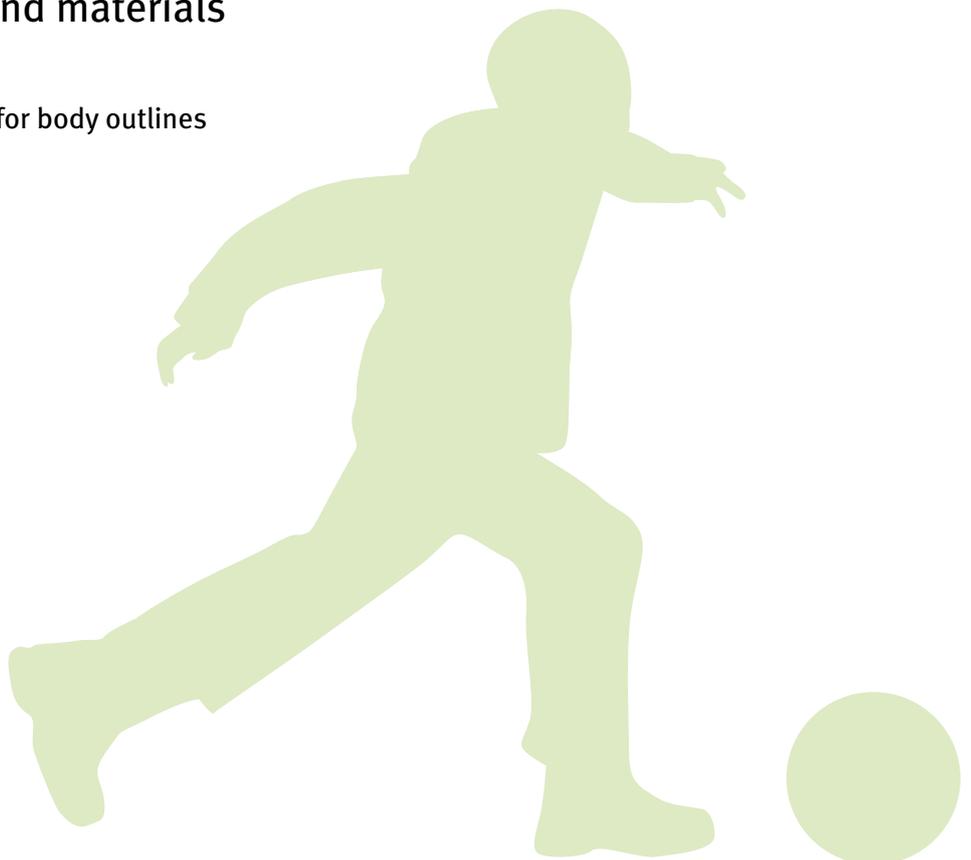
Suggested success criteria

- I can identify the main things my body needs to grow.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper for body outlines
- magazines.





ACTIVITIES

Ways I've grown and changed

- ➔ Ask the students to brainstorm a top ten list of how they've grown and changed. For example, height, weight, size of feet.

Things we need to grow

- ➔ Comment:
 - Our bodies have grown and changed a lot.
- ➔ Ask the students to name things we need to grow, learn and move.
- ➔ Talk about, record and display all of the things that are necessary for people to grow and develop.
- ➔ Ask the students to make charts that list the types of food, rest, exercise and people they receive love from, and so on. The chart below is an example.

Food	Fun (including things I like to do)	Someone to talk to	Rest	Exercise	Love	Keeping clean
						Brushing teeth Washing hands

- ➔ Talk about how, when we are very young, adults care for us and make all the decisions. But as we grow older, we can decide things too.
- ➔ Make a class list of decisions they can make to keep themselves healthy, clean and safe.

In the body

- ➔ Make full-sized body outlines of each student using the butcher's paper.
- ➔ Fill up each body outline with all the things they need to be happy and healthy.
- ➔ Encourage the students to write, draw or find magazine pictures that suit their responses. Place these inside the outline of their body.



Some ideas for READING

The Very Hungry Caterpillar (1995) by Eric Carle.

This is a classic story of a caterpillar's transformation into a beautiful butterfly.

Baby Goz – When I Grow Up (2003) by Steve Weatherill.

In this story, Baby Goz meets a tadpole that will become a frog, a caterpillar that one day will be a butterfly and six more animals. You can lift the flaps to see how they change.



VELS Level 3 learning sequences

KEY OUTCOMES

On completing this learning sequence, students will be able to:

- › name parts of the body that belong to both boys and girls
- › name parts of the body that belong to only boys and only girls
- › identify changes that occur during puberty
- › describe how babies are conceived, develop and are born as part of the human lifecycle
- › describe the qualities of friendship
- › explore and question rules about gender.

LEARNING
SEQUENCE

1

About bodies

Theme: Someone to talk to

Core concepts

This learning sequence sets the scene for discussing physical development in detail. It provides an opportunity to identify and express feelings about discussing sexual development. This helps students learn that they are not alone in feeling curious, uncomfortable and excited. Establishing group rules teaches students how to take care of one another's feelings. Finally, and most significantly, it enables them to talk and ask questions about this aspect of themselves.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- explain basic concepts of identity and use simple strategies to maintain and support self-worth
- identify basic safety skills and strategies at home, school and in the community, and describe methods for recognising and avoiding harmful situations.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people
- work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.

Interpersonal development – Working in teams dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- cooperate with others in teams for agreed purposes, taking roles and following guidelines established within the task.

Suggested success criteria

- I can ask questions about all parts of my body.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers: About bodies – Whom could you talk to?' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

This letter is designed to let families know what students are discussing at school and to encourage students and families to have similar discussions at home. As the teacher, you can decide if students are to bring their letters back.

ACTIVITIES

Let's talk

- ➔ Tell the students you are going to talk about the bodies of boys and girls. You will also discuss the changes that happen to them as they grow from a child into an adult.
- ➔ Draw two intersecting circles on the board. Label one circle *Boys* and the other *Girls*.
- ➔ Ask the students to name a few body parts that both boys and girls have. Write those answers in the overlapping section.
- ➔ Now, ask the students to name one body part that only boys have. Then, one body part that only girls have.
- ➔ Discussion starters:
 - How did it feel to name the parts that both boys and girls have?
 - How did it feel to name the parts that only boys or girls have?
 - Why is it difficult to talk about these things sometimes?
- ➔ Acknowledge the students' responses. You might even want to tell them that you feel a little embarrassed too.
- ➔ Reinforce with the students that:
 - it is natural to feel embarrassed because these are parts that are private
 - it's OK if you feel a bit uncomfortable
 - many of us find it difficult, even embarrassing, to talk about our bodies.

Comfort rules

- ➔ Tell the students we are having this session for three reasons. So that they will:
 - have the correct information about their bodies and growth
 - feel good about growing up
 - feel more comfortable when asking questions.
- ➔ Ask them for some rules:
 - So that we can feel safe and comfortable when we talk about this, and so that you can ask questions, what are some good rules for us all to follow?
- ➔ Here are some example rules:
 - We don't have to say anything if we do not want to.
 - We can laugh with each other but not at each other.
 - When we tell a story that might be embarrassing or private, we will say 'someone I know' rather than the person's name.
 - We take turns at talking.
 - We can always talk to the teacher in private.
- ➔ Remind them that at school they can come to you or another safe person if they have a question, or have something they are left wondering or worrying about.

Getting information from the right places

- ➔ Write the words *Girls' bodies* and *Boys' bodies* in the centre of the board and draw a circle around them.
- ➔ Ask the students to think of some of the places where young people learn about bodies. For example, from parents, brothers and sisters, other family members, TV, books, internet, religious institutions.
- ➔ Ask which ones might be good sources of correct information? Why?
- ➔ Ask for two or three students to visit the school library to see what books there are on this topic. Have them report back.
- ➔ Discuss why it is important for a student to talk to a person they trust whenever they encounter information that is confusing to them, or which they don't understand.



Some ideas for READING

First Human Body Encyclopedia (DK First Reference Series, 2005) by DK Publishing.

Showing what's inside the human body and how things fit and work together, the Human Body Encyclopedia is packed with fascinating facts and spectacular close-up photographs that make the subject accessible and fun. Covering every part of the body from major body systems to individual cells.

Amazing You: Getting Smart about Your Private Parts (2005) by Gail Saltz and Lynne Avril Cravath.

This book introduces younger students to reproductive organs. Starting from the difference between body parts everyone can see, such as arms and legs, and parts that no one else gets to see, the author goes on to define private parts and discuss different nicknames for them (pee-pee and weenie are two examples), and share the proper names.

This learning sequence was in part sourced, with permission, from the Calgary Health Region website: www.teachingsexualhealth.ca.

This website provides many teaching ideas and lesson plans on puberty, conception and menstruation.

About bodies: Whom could you talk to?

Date _____

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Our class is undertaking a unit of sexuality education. Students will be learning about:

- the parts of the body
- the names of the reproductive systems and their functions
- how babies are conceived, develop and are born as part of the human lifecycle
- the qualities of good friends
- gender stereotyping.

It helps children to know that everyone who has been through puberty has probably felt curious, uncomfortable or excited. We also want them to know who they can go to if they have questions or want to talk about how they are feeling. For that reason, this letter provides some questions that you might like to discuss with your child. They are about having trusted people to talk to about puberty.

Questions for discussion at home:

- When you were a child, did you ever have any questions about your body or growing up?
- If you did, did you have someone you were able to talk to?
- Ask your child whom they think they could talk to if they had any questions.
- Ask them if they have any questions now.

Thank you for your help.

Regards



Theme: My body

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, the students label a life-sized diagram with the names of external and internal sexual body parts. They learn to identify parts of the reproductive system in males and females and their functions. They also talk about the long list of slang names for sexual body parts, consider the reasons for this and decide on what kind of language to use in different places.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › describe the stages of human development across the human lifespan.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people
- › support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences.

Suggested success criteria

- I know the names of the reproductive system and their functions.
- I know the right words to use in different situations.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper for tracing a body outline
- pens/textas
- RESOURCE: Girl and boy x-ray vision diagrams, labelled and unlabelled (available at the end of this learning sequence).

ACTIVITIES

Inside and outside

This activity helps students to understand the body as a whole.

- ➔ Either as a single group or in smaller groups, ask the students to draw a life-sized body outline.
- ➔ External body parts: Using the life-sized body outlines, give students approximately five minutes to label as many external body parts (for example, legs, arms, nose) as they can that both males and females have.
- ➔ Internal organs: Using the life-sized body outlines, ask the students to label and draw as many internal organs as they can think of (for example, lungs, heart, liver, kidneys) that both males and females have. This will need more time.
- ➔ When they are finished, they can display their diagrams to each other.

Female and male bodies

- ➔ Discuss with students:
 - We have some body parts we can see on the outside. Other parts of our body are inside and cannot be seen. This is the same with our reproductive organs. Some parts can be seen on the outside, such as a boy's penis. Other parts are inside the body, such as a girl's vagina and parts of the vulva.
- ➔ Display the x-ray diagrams – these are an accurate representation of male and female bodies including reproductive organs.
- ➔ Male sexual body parts: Using their body outlines and by drawing or labelling, ask the students to add as many external and internal parts that only males have, for example, penis, testicles and scrotum.
- ➔ Female sexual body parts: Ask the students to make a second body outline to draw or label female sexual body parts, for example, vagina, uterus (womb), ovaries, fallopian tubes, vulva, labia (inner and outer lips) and clitoris.

Agreed words for sexual body parts

Students may be using family names and schoolyard terms to describe many different body parts.

- ➔ Ask the students to think of the real words for body parts related to sexuality.
- ➔ Acknowledge that there are slang words but that for this activity, we are learning the correct terms.
- ➔ Reflect on the different sets of words that students used to describe the sexual body parts.
- ➔ Ask the students:
 - How many other words have we for *leg*? (Not many.)
 - Why don't we refer to knees as 'down below'? Example answers:
 - Not ashamed of knees.
 - Not worried about offending anyone by talking about knees.
 - What are the benefits of using scientific (or real) words?
- ➔ Talk about how we need to use different words in different situations and with different people — at home, in public places, at school, with health staff.
- ➔ Comments:
 - Sometimes we use other words to save people's feelings or slang words to help people feel less embarrassed. Sometimes people use other words to insult people.
 - We will try to use the scientific words in class so that we can be more certain we are talking about the same thing.

Quiz

- ➔ Give students an unlabelled x-ray diagram of the reproductive organs and ask them to label the parts.
- ➔ You could do this as a quiz and then pass it to another group to mark.

Teacher advice

Some students may find it difficult to understand the concept of what is inside our bodies, so you might want to work with small groups of students to explain this more fully.

Try making brown paper or fabric aprons with child-sized organs on them and in the pockets. This will help students to see how things fit together and understand that internal body organs are layered.

Take-apart body models with internal organs could be used here as well (although they do not always include reproductive organs).



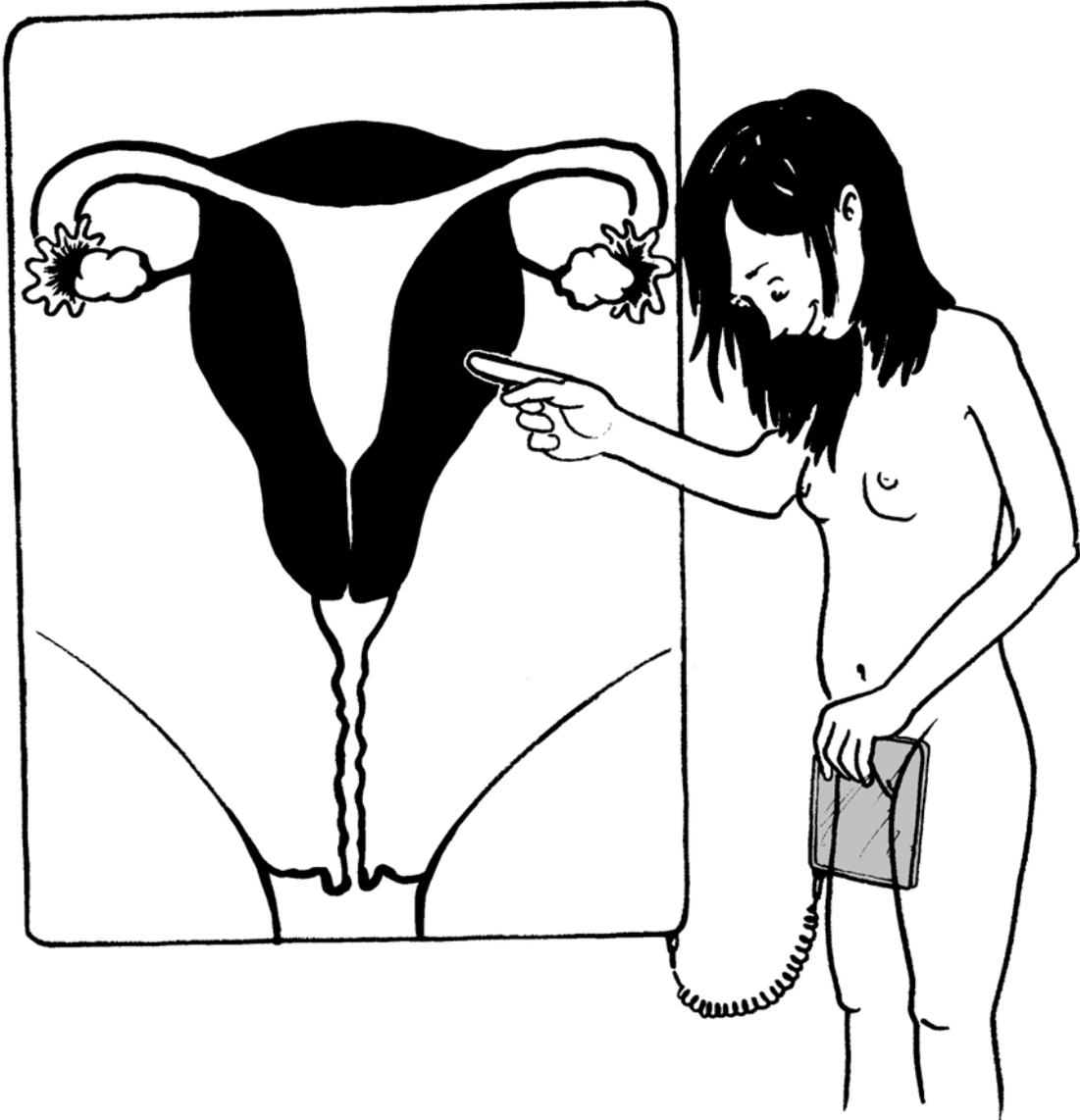
Some ideas for READING

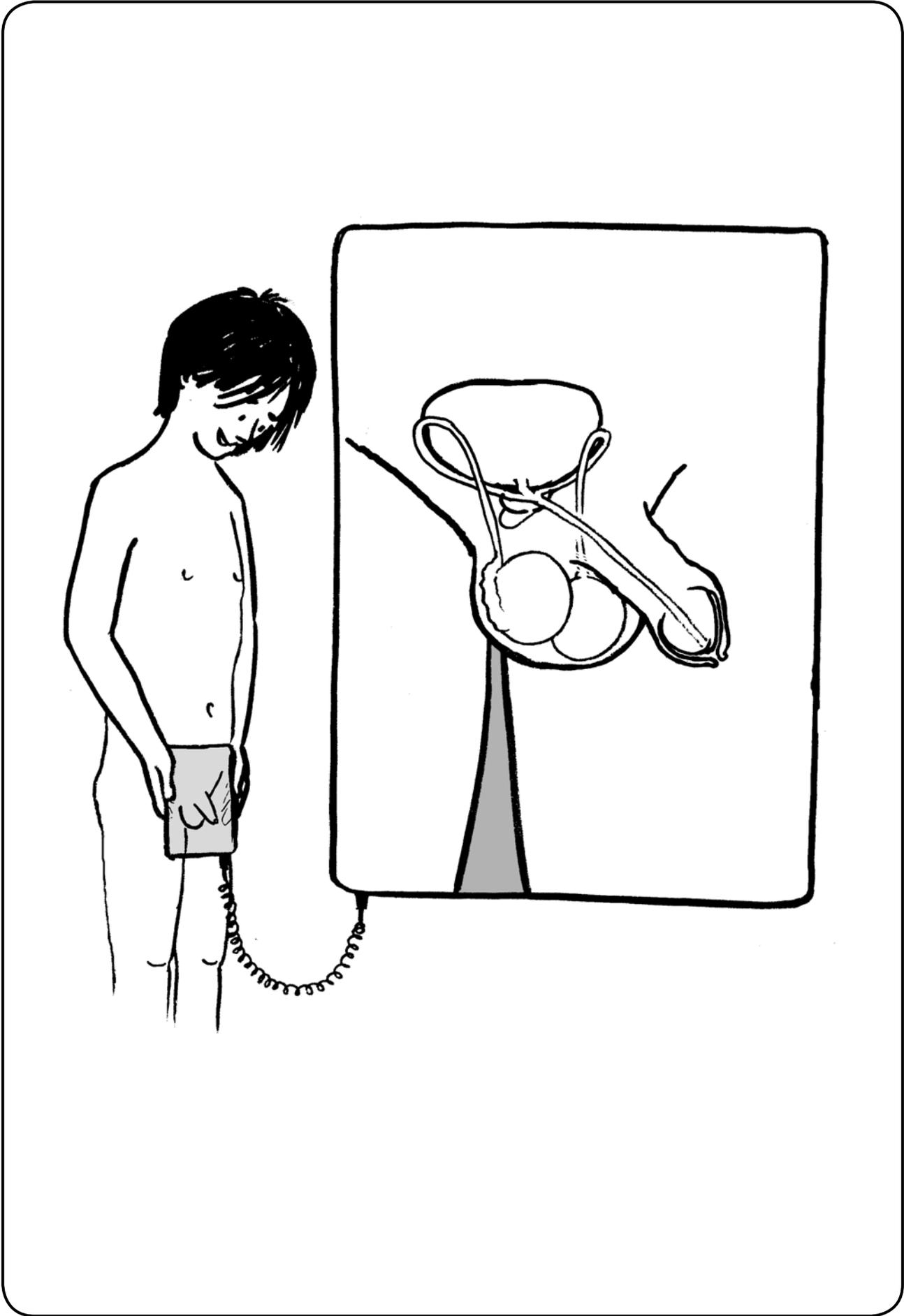
What's The Big Secret? Talking About Sex with Boys and Girls (2000) by Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown.

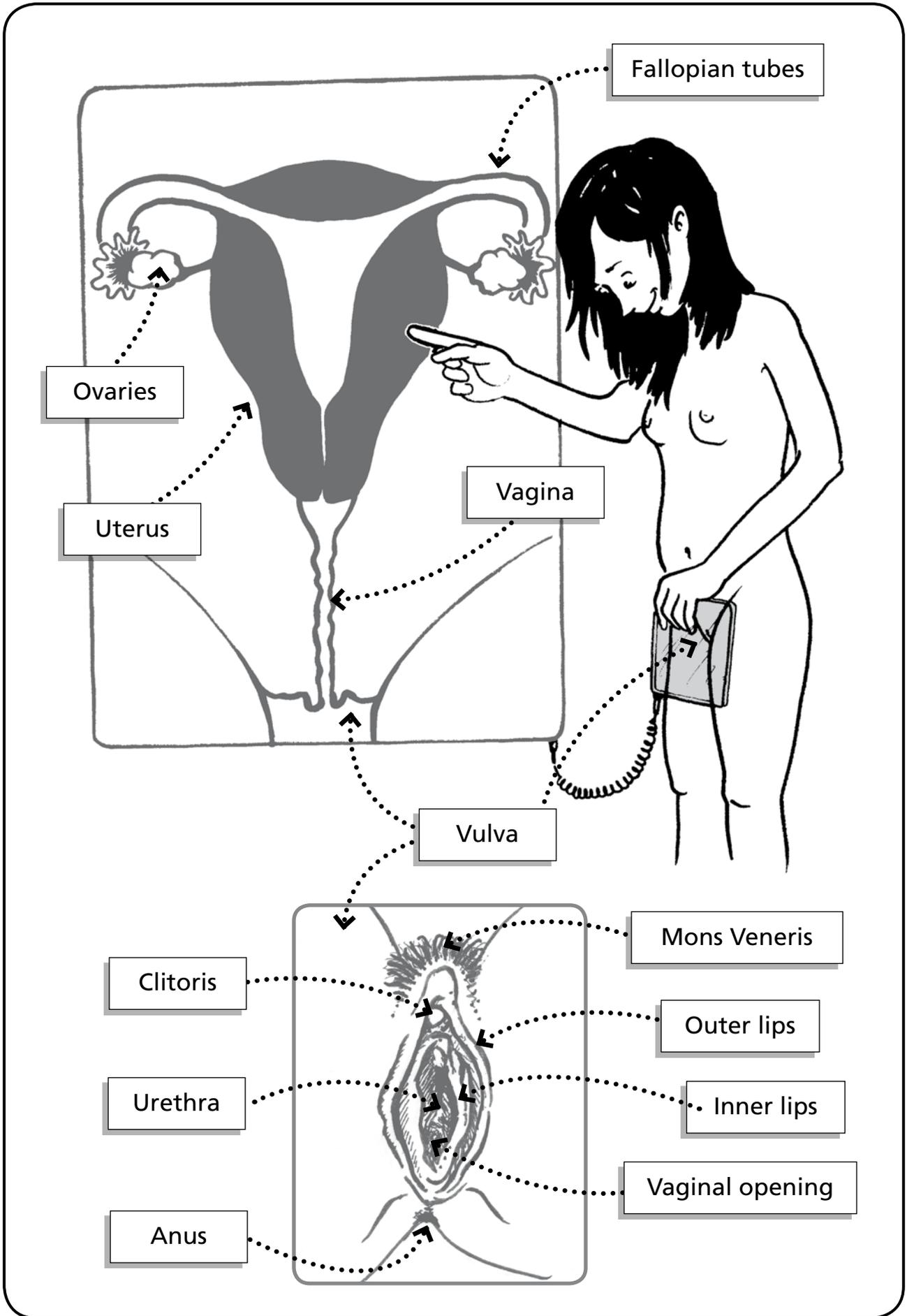
Are boys and girls different on the inside? How do you tell girls and boys apart? Do girls and boys have the same feelings? Is *sex* a dirty word? What does being pregnant mean? How do you get a belly button? This well-presented book has a natural flow of information and illustrations that will appeal to young readers.

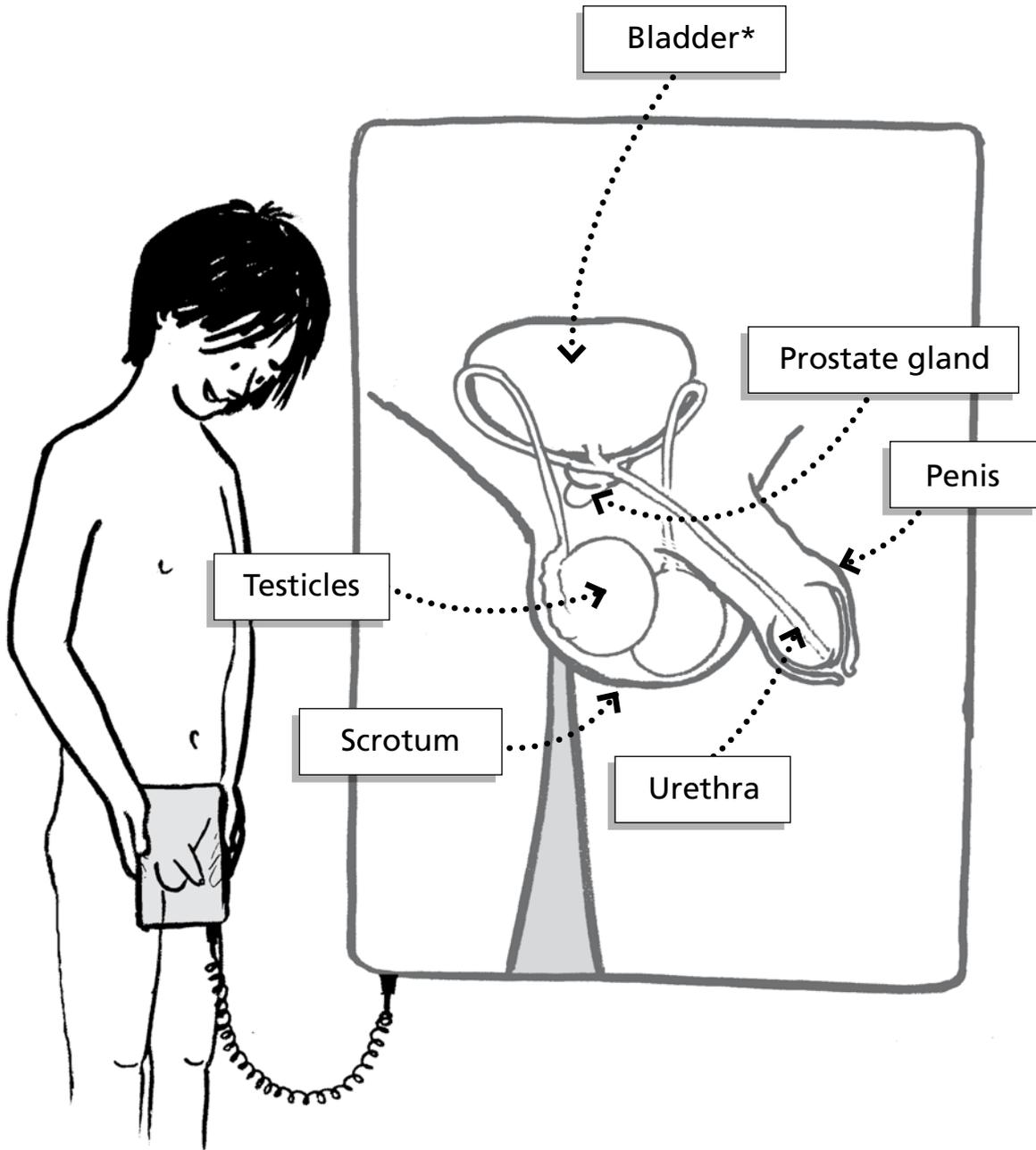
Rosy and Jack (2004) written and illustrated by Nicole Reading

Rosy and Jack are a sister and brother who have had bad things done to them. They were touched in ways they didn't like and told to keep it a secret. They decided this was a bad secret. Who would they tell and what would happen? This is a story about sexual abuse and what can be done to stop it.









*Not a sexual organ

Theme: Growing and changing

Core concepts

This learning sequence introduces students to physical and emotional changes that take place at puberty. Remind the students that everyone – boys and girls – reaches puberty at a different age. This is normal. Some students, especially girls, will begin puberty at this level. For some students, puberty will be a more distant concept. This learning sequence will make it easier for students to understand how their bodies or their peers' bodies have started to change.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › describe the stages of human development across the human lifespan
- › explain basic concepts of identity and use simple strategies to maintain and support self-worth
- › identify basic safety skills and strategies at home, school and in the community, and describe methods for recognising and avoiding harmful situations.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences.

Suggested success criteria

- I can describe and talk about similarities and differences in the way people grow.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- paper for a timeline
- the book: *Hair in Funny Places* (2001) by Babette Cole
- RESOURCE: 'Background information for the teacher'
- RESOURCE: Sample body outlines.

These resources are available at the end of this learning sequence.

ACTIVITIES

Time machine

- ➔ Initially in pairs or small groups, ask the students to make a list of the ways they will change as they grow older. For example, will they become more like their parents? In what ways?
- ➔ Now ask the students to make collages. Ask them to first divide a page into two.
- ➔ On one half, they should draw a picture of themselves as they are now, or make a collage representing their current interests and bodies.
- ➔ On the other half, they should draw a picture of how they imagine they might look 10 years into the future.

Teacher advice

Single-sex classes or mixed?

Teachers often ask if it is appropriate to separate boys and girls when learning about these topics. If timetables allow, it can be a good idea to plan for a single-sex lesson led by a same-gender teacher. Mixed groups are also important, so the students learn about each other's bodies. See also the 'Inclusive sexuality education' section (page 22).

Body changes (group activity)

- ➔ Tell the students that we are going to talk about how our bodies grow and change as we grow older.
- ➔ Using the body outlines, ask the students to draw how they will change as they grow older. Alternatively, they can call out main changes for you to list.
- ➔ Tell them that their bodies are preparing for the time when they become adults. >>

- ➔ Question:
 - Does anyone know the word starting with *p* that describes this part of a person's life?
- ➔ Ask students to look up the word *puberty* in the dictionary.
- ➔ Describe the main physical changes at puberty for boys and girls. A summary of changes during puberty is provided at the end of this learning sequence.
- ➔ Points for discussion:
 - The changes in puberty happen to different people at different times, and can begin as early as eight, often at 10 or 11, and continue until 18. Asking parents and older siblings can give you a clue as to when it might start for you.
 - Girls usually experience puberty earlier than boys.
 - Each person has a body clock that is right for them. You can't decide when you want to go through puberty and you can't stop it happening. Everyone is different.

Hair in funny places

Babette Cole's story is a good conversation starter and can ease the way into more detailed discussions about puberty.

- ➔ Read *Hair in Funny Places* (2001) by Babette Cole to the students.
- ➔ Ask for comments and promote discussion.

Teacher advice

If students are singled out because they are not very physically developed or are quite developed, the group rules of the class should be referred to. (See page 26 for information about ground rules.)

Quiz time

- ➔ You may like to end the session with a quiz, possibly with the girls setting questions for the boys on the changes that happen to girls, and vice versa.



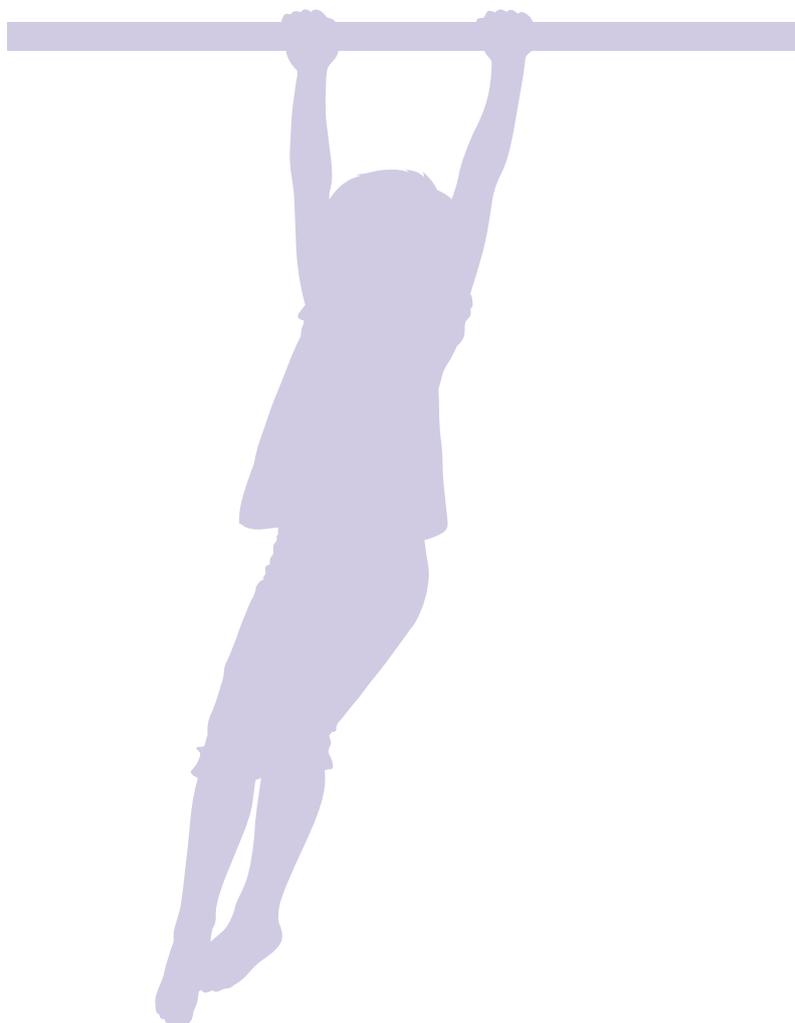
Some ideas for READING

Hair in Funny Places (2001) by Babette Cole.

This is a picture storybook about puberty for middle to late primary school boys and girls. Mr and Mrs Hormone, two hairy monsters, mix potions that turn children into adults. We see some of the changes that result from these potions.

It's So Amazing! A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies, and Families (2004) by Robie H. Harris, illustrated by Michael Emberley.

Anything by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley is a good source of child-friendly explanations of growing up, sex and reproduction. This book also includes fun descriptions of the journey of the adventurous egg travelling along the fallopian tube and meeting a sperm. It is also inclusive of adult relationships between people of the same sex.





Background INFORMATION for the teacher

Introduction to puberty: A brief summary of changes during puberty

At this age, students only need an overview of some of the changes. Some students, particularly girls, will begin breast development at this stage. (Nearly one in two boys experiences temporary enlargement of the breasts during puberty.)

Remind the students everyone – boys and girls – reaches puberty at a different age. This is normal. One of the functions of puberty is that the body is preparing for the ability to reproduce and create a new baby. Not only will they experience physical changes, they may also experience new feelings and emotions.

Boys and girls

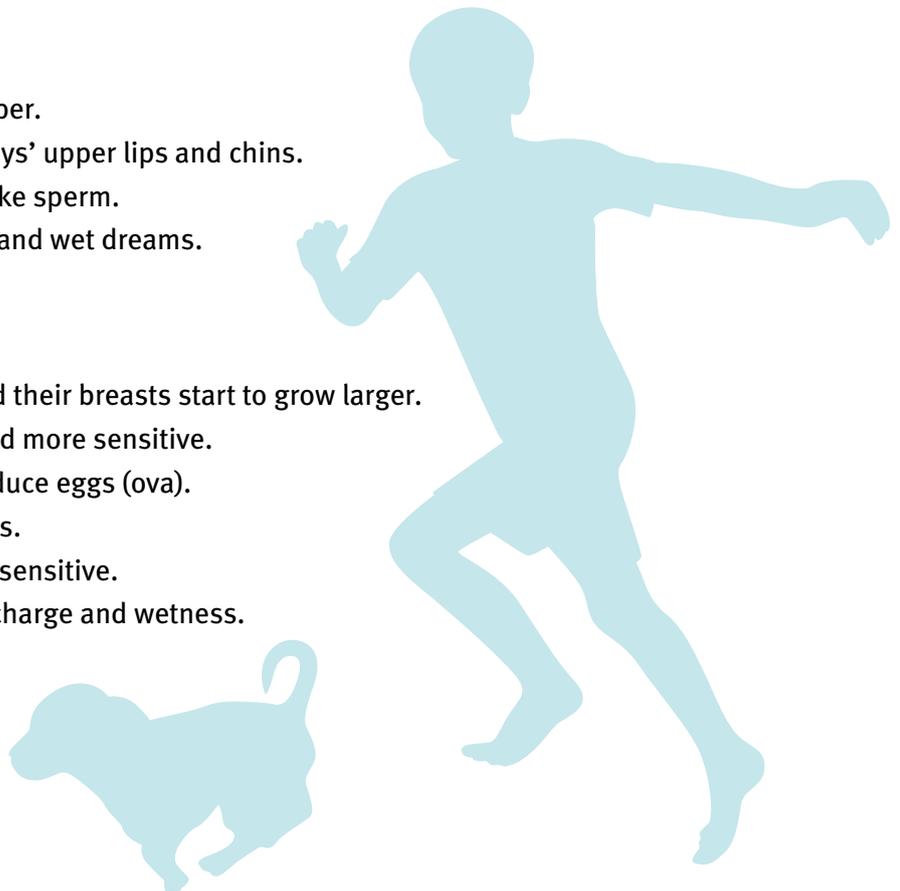
- Boys and girls will both grow taller and gain weight.
- Boys and girls grow hair under their arms and around their genitals.
- Boys and girls sweat more.
- Some boys and girls get pimples (spots) on their faces, chests and backs.
- Boys and girls may begin to feel emotional and moody, or feel giggly and excitable.
- Boys and girls may start having feelings of attraction towards other people.

Boys

- Boys' voices become deeper.
- Hair begins to grow on boys' upper lips and chins.
- Their testicles start to make sperm.
- Boys may have erections and wet dreams.

Girls

- Girls' hips grow wider and their breasts start to grow larger.
- Nipples become larger and more sensitive.
- Girls' ovaries start to produce eggs (ova).
- Girls' menstruation begins.
- Clitoris can feel hard and sensitive.
- There may be vaginal discharge and wetness.



Explaining menstruation and other changes

When a girl reaches puberty, her ovaries will release an ovum (or egg) about once a month. The egg travels from the ovary along the fallopian tube towards the uterus. During her life, a woman will release four or five hundred eggs most of which will not be fertilised and will pass out of the body. Every month the uterus prepares to receive a fertilised egg by making a thick, soft, spongy lining. If the egg does not connect with a sperm (that is, become fertilised), the egg and the lining of the womb will pass out through the vagina. This looks like thick blood and is called a period.

Breasts also change during puberty. The areola can change colour and nipples can become larger and more sensitive. The clitoris can also become more sensitive and firm. There may even be vaginal wetness. These are all normal changes.

To soak up the period as it passes out through the vagina, girls and women use either an absorbent pad or a tampon, which is inserted into the vagina. Periods will happen every month until the woman is about 50. When a girl starts her periods, it means that she can become pregnant. On average, the amount of blood leaving the body is about two tablespoons.

Periods are one of the later things to happen when a girl starts puberty; usually two years after her breasts have started to swell.

Explaining erections and wet dreams

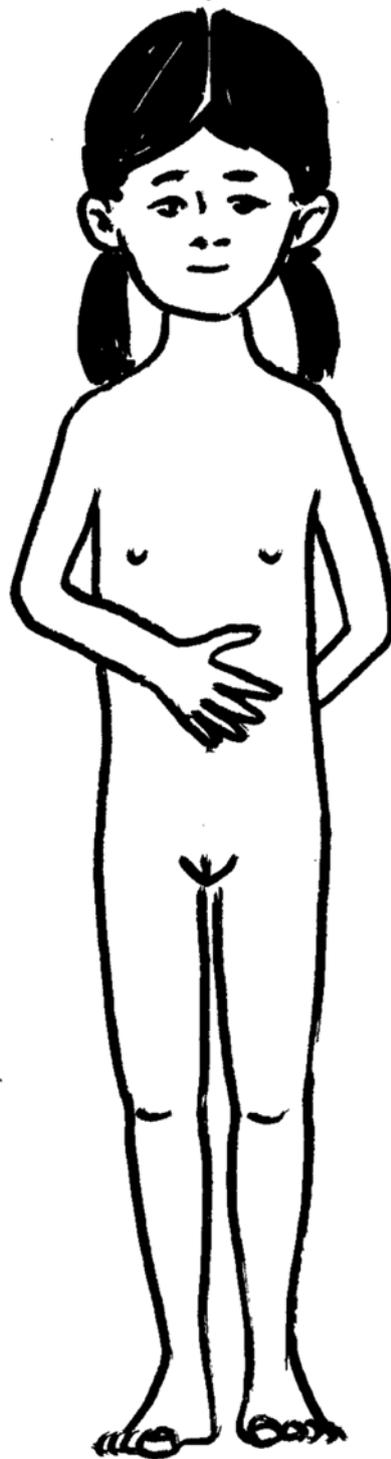
Boys get erections from the time they are babies. An erection is when the penis grows stiff and sticks out from the body. As boys grow older, and especially during puberty, they can get more erections because they are nervous or excited or it just happens by itself. This can be accompanied by a feeling of pleasure. It can be embarrassing at first but other people don't usually notice as much as the boy does.

During puberty, boys may have *nocturnal emissions* or *wet dreams*. For some boys it happens once or twice, for others, more often. It's normal and healthy. During puberty, the testicles begin to make sperm and sometimes, while the boy is sleeping, some leaks out (maybe just a teaspoonful). This is a normal part of growing up.

Girls can also experience what could be called a wet dream. This may result in vaginal wetness and a feeling of pleasure.

This information has been adapted with permission from Martinez A and Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children's Bureau.





Theme: Where did I come from?

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, students consider the human life cycle, in this case, conception, pregnancy and birth. Students of all ages love to learn about the developing foetus and there are many excellent books that show pictures of the embryo, foetus and baby developing in-utero. This leads to discussions about how the sperm and egg combine. Generally speaking, students at this age are ready and able to learn about human reproduction and sexual intercourse.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- describe the stages of human development across the human lifespan.

Suggested success criteria

- I know how babies are conceived, develop and are born as part of the human life cycle.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- a whiteboard or flip chart
- a copy of the DVD *In the Womb* by National Geographic Channel (this is optional but recommended). A copy of the DVD can be purchased through the National Geographic website at: <<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>> (use the search function with the words 'in the womb DVD' and select the relevant options)
- a short excerpt of the National Geographic film showing a foetus and the growth of an embryo to a foetus in-utero is available online from the National Geographic website at: <<http://www.nationalgeographic.com>> (use the search function with the words 'in the womb video' and select the relevant options)
- a Magnel Kit (this is optional but recommended)
- a copy of *Mummy Laid an Egg* (1995) by Babette Cole or other pregnancy and birth books that are readily available – pregnancy and birth books are often available from local libraries and from the Family Planning Victoria Library (for more information about the Family Planning Victoria Library see the 'Resources' section at the end of this resource).

- RESOURCE: 'Student cards – The amazing story of conception'. This is a set of cards that describe the conception journey (available for cut out)
- RESOURCE: 'Background information for the teacher'. This provides helpful information on how to explain intercourse, conception, pregnancy and birth (and the importance of being inclusive)
- RESOURCE: 'The amazing story of conception – In pictures!' This provides a visual overview from the start of a relationship to the birth of a baby.

These resources are provided at the end of this learning sequence.

Teacher advice

What is a Magnel Kit?

A Magnel Kit consists of a large magnetic whiteboard with full-sized male and female reproductive systems printed on each side and a set of magnetic overlays. The kit enables you to show conception, pregnancy and menstruation.

The kits are very expensive and not currently available for purchase. Your school nursing program or your local community health service may have one for loan or, if you are a member, you can borrow a kit from the Family Planning Victoria Library (see 'Resources' section). Some Department regional offices have bought a kit to share among schools. Some secondary schools also use them.



ACTIVITIES

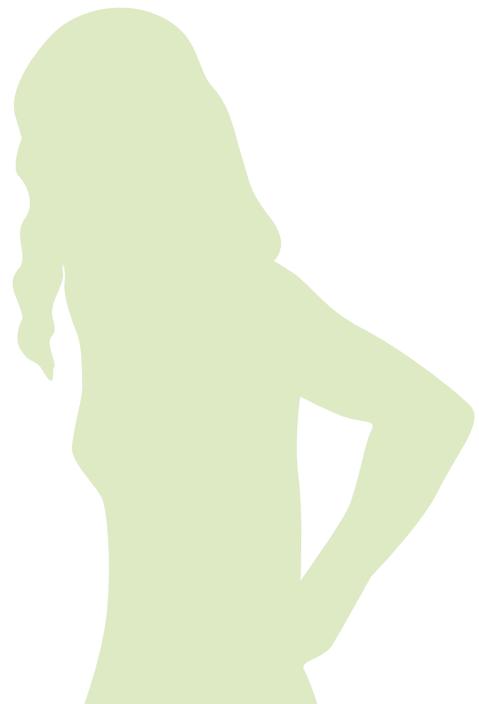
Introducing conception

By this age, students are likely to have speculated, asked and been told various stories about how babies are made. This activity provides you with an opportunity to affirm students' capacity to discuss this topic. You might like to go over ground rules about how we respect one another's questions (see 'Setting ground rules' on page 26).

- ➔ Remind the students that in previous sessions ('Learning Sequence 3 – Introduction to puberty', VELS Level 3) they learnt about how bodies begin to produce or release sperm and eggs. This prepares the human body for making babies.
- ➔ Read a book such as *Mummy Laid an Egg* by Babette Cole.

Mummy Laid an Egg includes a comical explanation of sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. Not all teachers (or schools) like to use this resource. However, many teachers say that the comic approach helps relax the group (and themselves).

- ➔ Ask the students, 'Does anyone know why we have funny stories about how babies are made?' Sample answers for the teacher:
 - In some places, there can be awkwardness when talking about sexual matters.
 - Fairy tales and other stories can be a good way to explain a baffling and invisible thing like the growth of a cell in the body and 'cell division and formation'.



Introducing conception – Homework task

- ➔ Ask the students to find out funny things their parents believed about conception and babies, and traditional stories they may have been told (for example, being found under a gooseberry bush or left by the stork). This is a great opportunity to hear stories from different cultures.
- ➔ Ask the students to report what they found out.
- ➔ Make your own class book compiled of the stories students have heard about how babies are made.

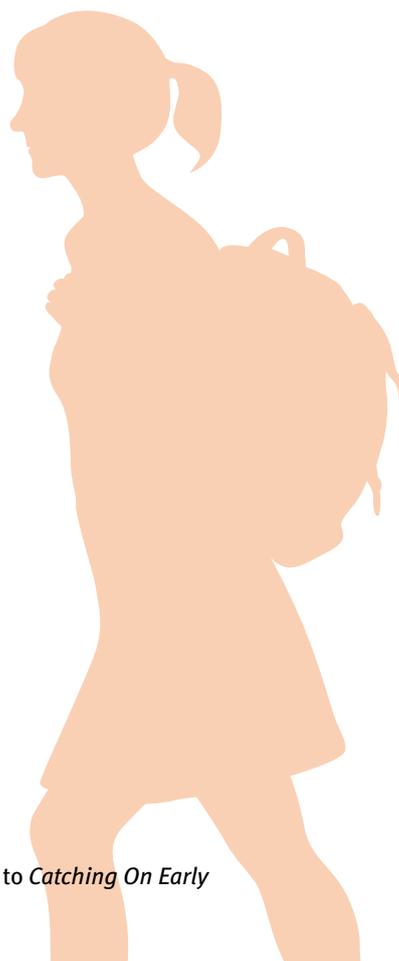
The amazing story of conception – Truth is stranger than fiction

- ➔ This activity looks at conception, pregnancy and birth. In discussing conception at this level, we want students to understand that the joining of a sperm from a male and an egg from a female make babies; living things come from other living things; and a baby develops inside a mother's uterus.
- ➔ Using books about pregnancy, a Magnel Kit and the National Geographic materials, show students pictures and videos of the growth of a baby in-utero.
- ➔ Use the background information resources 'The amazing story of conception' and 'The amazing story of conception – In pictures!' as a guide to telling the students more about this amazing story.
- ➔ The students will have many questions. Record the questions on a whiteboard or flipchart, so that students can investigate the answers. Some examples of questions that students often ask are:
 - How does the baby get food and oxygen?
 - Where does the baby grow?
 - Why are some babies twins?
 - How long does it take for one egg and one sperm to grow into a baby?
 - Where does the baby actually come out?
 - Does the foetus grow where the mother's sandwiches go?

Getting the amazing story straight

- ➔ Decide on the number of small groups you want to divide the class into. Using the resource: 'Student cards – The amazing story of conception' (available for cut out at the end of this learning sequence), create a set of cards for each small group.
- ➔ Divide the class into the small groups and distribute the cards.
- ➔ As a class, discuss the meaning of the words on the cards.
- ➔ Ask the students to put the cards into the correct order that describes the process of fertilisation.
- ➔ Use one of the body outlines made in a previous session (see 'Learning sequence 2 – Inside and Out, VELS Level 3) to visually plot the journey of the egg and sperm.
- ➔ As an extension activity, students could use the cards as a basis for creating their own storybook about the process of fertilisation. Students could take their books home to read to their parents.

This activity has been adapted with permission from the Calgary Health Region website: <www.teachingsexualhealth.ca>.





Some ideas for READING

It's So Amazing! A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies, and Families (2004) by Robie H. Harris, illustrator Michael Emberley.

Anything by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley is a good source of child-friendly explanations of growing up, sex and reproduction. This book also includes fun descriptions of the journey of the adventurous egg travelling along the fallopian tube and meeting a sperm. It is also inclusive of adult relationships between people of the same sex.

Where Did I Really Come From? (2008) by Narelle Wickham.

This book provides information on assisted conception including donor insemination, IVF and surrogacy. Adoption is briefly mentioned. The tone is open and friendly. Scientific and anatomical terms are used and simple explanations provided. The illustrations are clear, but sufficiently detailed.

A Book about Birth (2000) by Merri Collier.

This beautifully illustrated book is written in plain English. The book portrays the labour and delivery of a baby in uterus in the context of a mother's body. The illustrations are clearly labelled and the information is written in large text. The book was designed at the request of expectant parents who wanted to talk about childbirth with their older students (primary school age and up). This book is also helpful for people with reading or learning difficulties and for people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The amazing story of conception

(Note: The order is from the left column, down, and then the right column, down.)



It's time for an egg
to leave the ovary.
It travels along the tube.

The fertilised egg
travels down the tube
into the uterus.

Many sperms journey
into the vagina.

The fertilised egg
attaches itself to the
cosy lining of the uterus.

One sperm meets
the egg in the tube.
They combine.

The fertilised egg
uses the lining of the
uterus for nourishment.

1 sperm
+ 1 egg
= a fertilised egg.

The fertilised egg takes
nine months to grow
into a full-term baby.

These cards have been adapted with permission from 'Conception Cards from Grade 6, Lesson 2, Fetal Development' (2009), Calgary Health Region: <www.teachingsexualhealth.ca>.



Background INFORMATION for the teacher

The amazing story of conception

How to explain intercourse, conception, pregnancy and birth

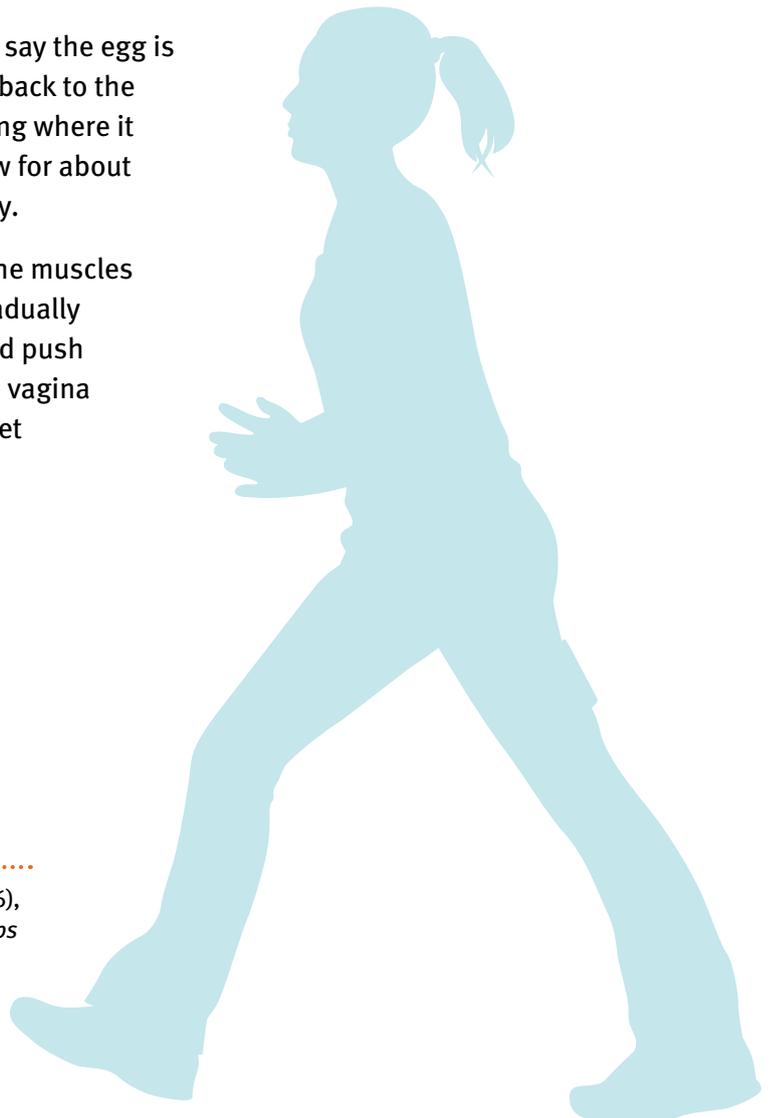
“ Now that you know about all the parts of the body, you can learn about the amazing way babies are made. We will find out about sexual intercourse, conception, pregnancy and birth.

To make a baby you need a sperm from a man’s body to join with a tiny ovum (egg) from a woman’s body. This is how it happens: When two adults become fond of each other and care for each other, they will enjoy touching each other’s bodies.

Sometimes they decide to have sexual intercourse with each other. Usually people call this ‘having sex’ or ‘making love’. This is when the man puts his penis into the woman’s vagina. During this time, sperms leave the man’s body and enter the woman’s. Sometimes (not all the time) an egg from the woman combines with a single sperm from the man and that might develop into a baby.

If an ovum and a sperm combine, we say the egg is ‘fertilised’. The fertilised egg travels back to the womb and settles into the womb lining where it starts to grow. It will continue to grow for about nine months. This is called pregnancy.

When the baby is ready to be born, the muscles around the entrance to the womb gradually work to stretch the entrance open and push the baby out through the vagina. The vagina also stretches so that the baby can get through and the baby is born. ”



Adapted from Martinez A and Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children’s Bureau.

Remember to be inclusive

When we talk about conception, how do we make sure adopted children, children from IVF, surrogacy and other assisted conception treatments, and children from same-sex families (two mums or two dads) feel they are a part of the discussion?

Being inclusive is not about pretending we are all the same. It's about valuing one another's different histories and lives as well as finding those things we have in common with one another.

From the start, include an explanation of conception that will enable all of the children to see themselves. For example, our families might look different to each other's, but every human baby starts the same way – with a tiny egg from a woman and a small seed called a sperm, from a man.

A sperm and egg can join these ways:

- sex between a man and a woman
- with the help of a doctor, an egg and sperms can be mixed together in a glass jar and put inside the mother's uterus.

Teacher advice

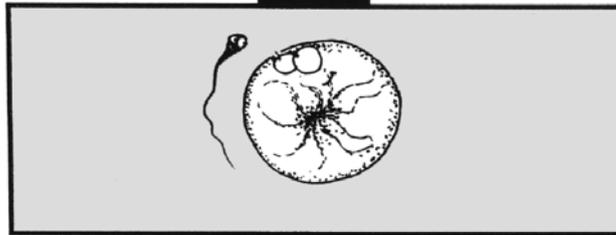
Questions about urination

Students often ask whether urination comes from the same place as sperm or vaginal fluids. Drawing a clear distinction between sperm, vaginal fluids, and urination is recommended. It is important that they understand the difference.

The urethra is a tube that connects the urinary bladder to the male or female genitals for the removal of urine from the body. In males, urine travels through the penis and is expelled from the urethral opening at the tip of the penis. In females, it is expelled from the urethral opening above the vagina.

Questions about the hymen

Some students may ask about the hymen. The hymen is a thin piece of skin inside the entrance of the vagina. It can break easily, for example, through engaging in physical activity such as bike riding, or through the use of a tampon. This is nothing to worry about. Not all girls are born with a hymen, and some are born with half a one, or smaller.



Theme: Belonging

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, students build a wall made of bricks that represent the different qualities we love and like in our friends and family. This is an opportunity to identify how we need a range of friends and adults in our lives rather than hoping to get everything from one person.

The learning sequence also helps students to identify the essential qualities in a friendship and to consider how friendships might change over time. This is particularly relevant in this age group, as students begin to form groups established on common interests and may leave existing friendships.

Discussion opportunities in the VELS Level 4 activities develop further understanding of the different kinds of relationships, including romantic ones, and the importance of respect in relationships.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › explain basic concepts of identity and use simple strategies to maintain and support self-worth.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- › demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people
- › support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences
- › work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.

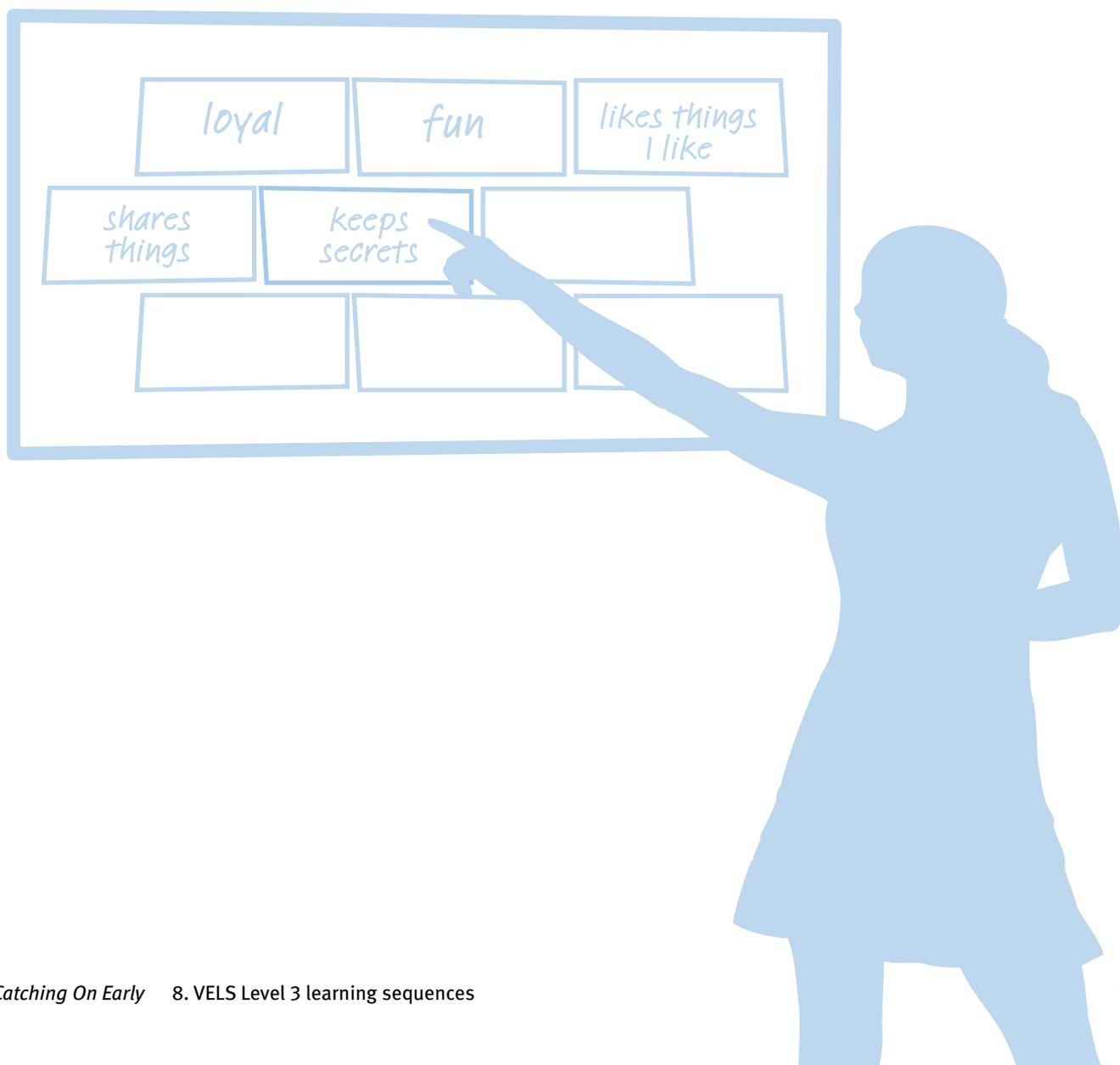
Suggested success criteria

- I know that a friend is someone I like to spend more time with and we share some of the same interests.
- I know how friends should treat me too, by taking turns and playing fair.
- Friends also have disagreements, and we can learn how to sort those out.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- a whiteboard and marker
- a drawn picture of a brick wall on the whiteboard.
(Ensure the bricks are large enough to write words inside.)



 **ACTIVITY**

The bricks that build a friendship

- ➔ Read a story or show a video that depicts friendship. For example, a chosen scene from a children's novel, story or a scene from a cartoon or sitcom such as *The Simpsons* that illustrates qualities of a close friendship.
- ➔ Brainstorm the qualities important in a friendship.
- ➔ As the students call out their suggestions, write each quality on a brick on the whiteboard.
- ➔ Discuss if any characters demonstrated or experienced some of these qualities in the examined story. Also, discuss if some important friendship qualities disappeared or were not obvious.
- ➔ Identify what qualities might have been missing. Graphically demonstrate the disintegration of the friendship by rubbing out the appropriate bricks one at a time. Discuss how the characters may be feeling.
- ➔ Continue until the wall has so many bricks removed that it would obviously fall down and there would be no friendship left.
- ➔ Some further questions to promote discussion:
 - How would you feel if you were the character in this story?
 - How would you feel if a friendship was changing?
 - What would you do if that friendship was very important to you?
 - Can you rebuild a friendship once it has fallen down? How?

This activity was sourced from *Growing Up and Feeling Good: Strategies for teaching and learning about puberty*, by Peter Gourlay, Wendy White & Robin Walsh (1996).

This Family Planning Victoria manual contains easy-to-use classroom strategies and worksheets for upper primary and lower secondary school students. It covers issues under six topics: Talking about Puberty; Understanding our Bodies; Feeling Good; A Question of Gender; Friends and Relationships; and Decisions!

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Some ideas for READING

Fox (2004) by Margaret Wild.

This story tells the tale of two damaged characters, Dog, with his missing eye and Magpie, with her burnt wing. Together they overcome their obstacles and find comfort and friendship with each other. Into their life comes Fox with his haunted eyes and rich red coat. He is welcomed by Dog who is accepting, however Magpie senses something about Fox. She is wary of his smell of rage, envy and loneliness.

The Arrival (2007) by Shaun Tan.

The Arrival is a migrant story told as a series of wordless images that might seem to come from a long-forgotten time. A man leaves his wife and child in an impoverished town, seeking better prospects in an unknown country on the other side of a vast ocean. He eventually finds himself in a bewildering city of foreign customs, peculiar animals and indecipherable languages. He is helped along the way by sympathetic strangers, each carrying their own unspoken history. The story presents a good opportunity for students to talk about the experience of loneliness, confusion, love, and the many small kindnesses offered by people along the way.

Theme: Knowing me, knowing you

Core concepts

By the age of eight, students will display a sense of the rules about gender, for example, 'girls can't play soccer' or 'boys don't cry'. This learning sequence helps students to separate fact from fiction about being a boy and being a girl. A safe space and time to question strict gender rules can help to broaden their options and make it easier for the students who don't fit the stereotypes.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- explain basic concepts of identity and use simple strategies to maintain and support self-worth.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 3, students can:

- demonstrate respect for others and exhibit appropriate behaviour for maintaining friendships with other people
- support each other by sharing ideas and materials, offering assistance, giving appropriate feedback and acknowledging individual differences
- work with others to reduce, avoid and resolve conflict.

Suggested success criteria

- I won't let being a boy or being a girl stop me from doing the things that I love.
- I won't stop other students doing things they love because they are breaking 'boy rules' or 'girl rules'.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- two labels: *Girl* and *Boy*
- separate cards or labels for students to write answers on
- Blu-tack.
- catalogues with illustrations of boys' and girls' clothing.

 **ACTIVITIES**

What makes a boy? What makes a girl?

This activity explores gender stereotyping.

- ➔ Ask the class:
 - How else (apart from genitals) do we know if a baby is a boy or a girl?
 - When that baby grows up and comes to this school, can they be anything they dream to be and do anything they dream to do?
 - Are there rules for how to be a boy or how to be a girl?
- ➔ In small groups, ask the students to make lists of popular girls' and boys' activities in school, codes of dress, favourite music, TV shows, books, hairstyles and school subjects.
- ➔ Ask them to write answers on separate coloured cards.
- ➔ Stick the cards on a wall under *Girls* and *Boys*. As a class, discuss any commonalities.
- ➔ Switch *Boys* and *Girls* labels. Discuss what would happen to a child if they liked something from the other list.

Catalogues

- ➔ Make a large, class collage of boys' clothes and girls' clothes from clothing catalogues.
- ➔ This is a good way to broach discussion about the effect of different clothing on participation in activities.
- ➔ Possible discussion questions could include:
 - Do boys or girls clothing prevent them from being physically active?
 - What items of clothing would be most difficult to play sport in?
 - Does our school uniform allow both boys and girls to be physically active?
 - Can you think of examples where it is acceptable for men to wear a dress?
- ➔ Why might there be different rules in different cultures?
Compare the motifs on boys' T-shirts with motifs on girls' T-shirts and clothes.



Some ideas for READING

A Proper Little Lady (1989) by Nettie Hilton and Cathy Wilcox.

Annabella Jones feels like being a proper little lady today. She enjoys putting on her beads, frilly dress and shiny shoes. But after enjoying a day of footy, billycart racing and climbing trees, her mum suggests it would be easier to be a proper little lady in jeans and a T-shirt.

The Sissy Duckling (2002) by Harvey Fierstein, illustrator Henry Cole.

While others box, Elmer bakes. When they build forts, Elmer makes sandcastles. When they have a football game, Elmer puts on a puppet show. And when they call him a sissy, his mother insists that he is simply special and 'being special sometimes scares those who are not'.



VELS Level 4 learning sequences

KEY OUTCOMES

On completing this learning sequence, students will be able to:

- › describe the physical, social and emotional changes associated with puberty
- › understand that the timing of puberty will vary from individual to individual
- › respect the feeling of others
- › list the hygiene products used during puberty
- › understand the process of menstruation and sperm production
- › understand the process of sexual intercourse and reproduction
- › describe the qualities of good friends and compare these to the desirable qualities of a girl/boy friend
- › access and evaluate sources of information about puberty.

LEARNING
SEQUENCE

1

The ups and downs of
growing up

Theme: Knowing me, knowing you

Core concepts

This learning sequence acts as an assessment tool to identify the learning needs of the class and to inform teaching. It will particularly support assessment for learning. *Assessment for learning* occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching.

The learning sequence also provides the students with an opportunity to identify the things they are concerned about and are looking forward to when it comes to puberty and growing up.

You could draw on the outcomes of this learning sequence to set goals with the students for the coming sessions and to provide them with feedback on their progress.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- identify the likely physical, emotional and social changes that occur during puberty
- describe the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health and establish health goals and plan strategies for improving personal health.

Suggested success criteria

- I know the physical, social and emotional changes that occur during puberty.
- I know some of the good, bad, and best sources of information and support about puberty.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- butcher's paper
- textas
- RESOURCE: 'Letter for parents/carers – The ups and downs of growing up' (available at the end of this learning sequence).

 **ACTIVITIES**

The ups and downs of growing up

For this activity, it often works better to keep boys in one group and girls in another.

- ➔ Separate the students into small groups who feel comfortable working with one another.
- ➔ Provide each group with two sheets of butcher's paper and ask the students to title them:
 - The great things about growing up.
 - The difficult things about growing up.
- ➔ As a class, come up with an example or two for each heading. An example of a great thing could be *more independence*. A difficult thing could be *period pain*. Discuss with the class that some changes may fit into both categories. For example, more responsibility can be seen as both great ('I get to baby-sit!') or difficult ('Oh dear, I have to baby-sit').
- ➔ Give the students as long as you think they need until their ideas have run out.
- ➔ The groups can then post their sheets to the wall so that everyone can see, or they can take turns reporting back to the class.
- ➔ Further discussion questions:
 - Are there any differences in what is easy or challenging for girls and boys?
 - Are there any changes listed that probably won't happen?
 - Have you noticed that many people share the same feelings about different aspects of growing up?
 - Why might we use the word *difficult* instead of *bad*? (Some changes are difficult, or challenging, but they can turn out to be positive.)
- ➔ Ask the students to identify which of the difficult things can be addressed and which are out of their control.
- ➔ Make the following points:
 - People react differently to change. What is exciting for one person can be scary for another. Feelings about change are personal.
 - Some changes can be both difficult and great at the same time.
 - Families have different expectations of children as they grow older.

What can we do to make change easier?

- ➔ Collect the sheets that outline difficult things about growing up and swap the sheets around the class.
- ➔ Ask the students to come up with ways to make those changes easier to cope with. Remind them to identify skills within their grasp. For example, talking to someone, spending time with friends, using the school library.
- ➔ Help them identify support systems (that is, family, school and community members) that can provide help and support.
- ➔ Finish by telling the students that we will focus on issues to do with growing up in the coming weeks, which will provide them with information and opportunities to ask questions.

Activities in this Learning Sequence were sourced with permission from the Calgary Health Region website: <www.teachingsexualhealth.ca>.



Some ideas for READING

Puberty Boy (2006) by Geoff Price.

In this book, men and boys share their stories about puberty, when it happens and how your body will change. It explores the thinking and emotional changes that are happening alongside the physical. It takes special effort to describe the ‘brain shift’ that happens at puberty and discusses ways to handle it.

Puberty Girl (2004) by Shushann Movsessian.

For pre-teen girls, *Puberty Girl* talks about the big M, the V word (yep – vagina), the period costume, PMS, puberty power and even the B word – breasts. This illustrated book lets you know what to expect, physically and emotionally, as you tread the path to becoming a woman.

The ups and downs of growing up

Date _____

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Our class will be undertaking a unit of sexuality education. Students will be learning about:

- the physical, social and emotional changes associated with puberty
- variations in the timing of puberty
- respecting the feeling of others
- hygiene products used during puberty
- the process of menstruation and sperm production
- the process of sexual intercourse and reproduction
- qualities of good friends
- sources of information about puberty.

It helps the students to know that growing up and puberty is a universal experience. Could you take ten minutes to talk to your child about your growing up? Some questions that you might like to discuss with your child are:

- What were some of the great things about growing up for you?
- What were some of the difficult things?
- Did you have someone you could talk to about the difficult things?
- What made them a good person to talk to?

Thank you for your help.

Regards



LEARNING
SEQUENCE

2

They tell me I'm going
through puberty

Theme: My body

Core concepts

Students are often concerned to know what changes puberty brings to both boys and girls. They are often relieved to see that many changes are similar to both. They also want to know when the changes will happen and in what order.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- identify the likely physical, emotional and social changes that occur during puberty.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- demonstrate, through their interactions in social situations, respect for a diverse range of people and groups.

Suggested success criteria

- I know the physical changes of puberty experienced by both boys and girls.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- labels marked *Girl*, *Boy* and *Both*
- two hula hoops (or skipping ropes) to make a Venn diagram on the floor
- RESOURCE: 'Puberty cards' – you can prepare a few sets so that students can work in small groups, or just one set with enough for every child to have at least one card
- RESOURCE: 'Background information for the teacher'.

These resources are available at the end of this learning sequence.

ACTIVITIES

What is puberty?

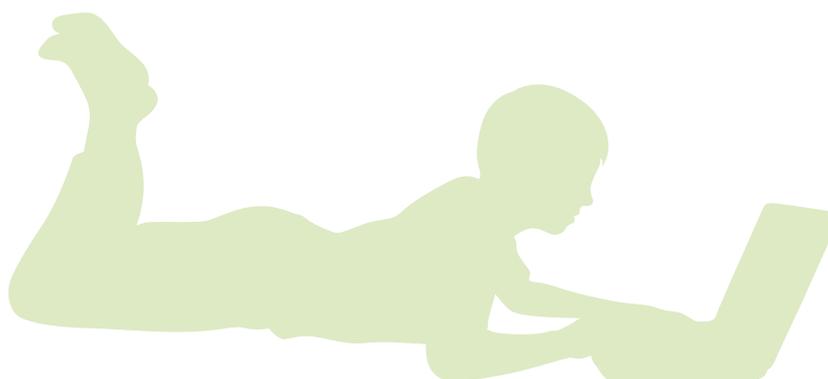
- ➔ Ask the students:
What does the word *puberty* mean to you?
- ➔ Write student responses on the board and as a class discuss the meaning of the word. Here are some definitions that can be used in the class discussion:
 - *Puberty* is when your body begins to change from the body of a child to that of an adult.
 - *Puberty* occurs because new chemicals produced by the body – called hormones – are developing in the body, creating changes in the body and turning children into adolescents, and eventually into adults.
 - *Puberty* does not happen all at once. It happens in stages and starts according to each person's own body clock.

This activity has been used with permission from *Puberty Changes, Grade 4, Lesson 2*, Calgary Health Region (2009) <www.teachingsexualhealth.ca>.

Teacher advice

The Hormone Factory is a specially designed website for children between the ages of 10 to 12. It was developed by researchers and educators for the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, Australia.

The Centre has a long-established record in research, policy and practice into sexual and reproductive health with a focus on young people, and in working with the school sector on sensitive issues.



Boy, girl, both

- ➔ Create a two-circle Venn diagram on the floor. You could use two hula hoops or skipping ropes to create the two intersecting circles.
- ➔ Place the labels 'Girls' and 'Boys' in the circles, and 'Both' in the intersection.
- ➔ Distribute the Puberty Cards, at least one to each student.
- ➔ Working in pairs or alone, ask students to place their card(s) in the appropriate place. For example, changes only experienced by girls are placed in the area labelled 'Girls'.
- ➔ Ask students to sit in a circle around the Venn diagram, and review the results to see if you need to change the card placements. Ask students questions such as:
 - Do you agree with the placement of the cards?
 - Are there any cards that you would like to move?
 - What is your reason for suggesting a card should be moved?
 - Are there any cards you would like explained?
 - Are there more similarities or differences in the changes experienced by boys and girls?
- ➔ Point out that there are many changes that everyone experiences.

Question box

Providing a question box is a good way to complete this learning. Often students are embarrassed to ask a question in front of the rest of the class. Using the question box enables students to be anonymous. The use of a question box also has the added benefit of allowing the teacher time to reflect on how to answer the students' questions.

- ➔ Ask students to write and place in the class question box, a question or topic suggestion they would like to explore further at a later date.

Additional activity

Group Research

- ➔ Over two or three sessions, the students can work in groups to research topics such as periods, erections or wet dreams.
- ➔ After vetting the question box and rewriting the questions so students cannot recognise their peers' handwriting, students can be given the responsibility of answering the questions or finding out more about certain topics.
- ➔ Each group could present its findings to the class.
- ➔ Students could use selected books and resources, and La Trobe University's The Hormone Factory website to assist in their research:
 - the Hormone Factory: <www.thehormonefactory.com>.



Some ideas for READING

Puberty Book: A Guide for Children and Teenagers (2001) by Wendy Darvill and Kelsey Powell

This book gives children and teenagers accurate and up-to-date information about themselves, their bodies and growing up. In simple, straightforward language, the authors discuss the changes that happen at puberty, sex and sexuality, health and looking after yourself, relationships, pregnancy and birth.

Let's Talk About Sex: Growing Up, Changing Bodies, Sex and Sexual Health (2005) by Robie H. Harris

This book has many excellent (and funny) illustrations about the biological and psychological facts of sex from conception and puberty. It answers questions and has sections about sex and feelings, our bodies, families and babies, and sexual health.

Teacher advice

What if students express distress over weight gain during puberty? Reinforce that normal changes of puberty include weight gain and temporary out-of-proportion growth; fat does not by itself define 'overweight'. Dieting interferes with normal hunger regulation and is counterproductive to weight loss. Children (and adults) need to learn to appreciate and accept their body type.

Changes experienced by boys and girls



Feel hungrier

Arms and legs get longer
making you sometimes
appear clumsier

Need more sleep

Body starts making
new hormones

Body shape changes

Breasts change (which
starts as tiny swellings
beneath the nipples)

Internal body organs
grow larger

Sweat more.
Smell stronger

Can become interested
in having a boyfriend
or girlfriend

Grow underarm hair



More interested in
how you look
(appearance)

Hair gets oily

Face shape changes

Hair grows on face

Grow taller

Hair on arms and legs
is more noticeable

Friends become more
important than they
were before

Get acne

Some people are more
easily embarrassed
and are worried about
whether others like them

Oilier skin



Start having sexual thoughts and feelings

Deeper friendships

More concern for others

Some people have stronger feelings at this time (the same emotions as ever, just stronger)

Weight increases

More attracted to other people

Girls' changes



Ovulation – eggs start to leave the ovaries

Hips widen

Start making a vaginal discharge

The vagina, uterus, and ovaries get bigger

Periods start

Vaginal wetness

Clitoris hardens and becomes more sensitive

Breasts and nipples grow larger and they become more sensitive

Boys' changes



Penis grows bigger

Shoulders get wider

Wet dreams

Start making sperm

Ejaculation – semen
released from penis

Bigger muscles

More erections (penis
gets hard)

Testicles and scrotum get
bigger

The 'Puberty Cards' have been adapted with permission from *Puberty Changes, Grade 4, Lesson 2*, Calgary Health Region (2009) <www.teachingsexualhealth.ca>.

i Background INFORMATION for the teacher

The following notes are provided as a reference for teacher explanations on puberty change.

The need for more sleep. Children may begin to sleep in longer. You can explain to the children that they grow most while they are asleep, though it is very slow.

Breast development in boys. Nearly one in two boys experiences temporary enlargement of the breasts during puberty. Breast development is related to an increase in the estrogen hormone. It usually disappears within six months or a year. It can be frightening if the boy doesn't realise how common it is. If it doesn't disappear in a year's time, he may wish to talk to a doctor about it.

Hair on girls' faces. Hair can become more noticeable on girls' faces. This is particularly so for some cultural groups.

Weight increase. When girls' breasts begin to grow and the body becomes curvier, or when boys put on more muscle mass and their shoulders grow wider, they should expect to put on some weight. It's meant to happen.

Sweat more. It can be useful to explain that we all sweat when we are hot, but in puberty a new kind of sweat is made that has a stronger smell. Different people feel differently about the smell. Many people find it unpleasant and use deodorant or antiperspirant and bathe more often.

Hips widen. Girls' hips form into a kind of bowl, so that if they ever decide to have a baby, the hips can support the pregnancy.

Shoulders grow wider (boys). This is a skeletal change in boys and not something that can be sped up through strength-training, although strength-training is not a problem.



Theme: Growing and changing

Core concepts

When talking about growth and development, outside of wanting to know the answer to the question ‘Am I normal?’ students most often ask, ‘When will it happen?’ This learning sequence outlines the likely order of physical change and reinforces the idea that students will develop at their own rate.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- identify the likely physical, emotional and social changes that occur during puberty
- describe the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health and establish health goals and plan strategies for improving personal health.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- accept and display empathy for the points of view and feelings of their peers and others.

Suggested success criteria

- I understand that puberty does not happen all at once. It happens in stages.
- I know that puberty happens to everyone somewhere between the ages of eight and 18.
- I know that everyone is on their own body clock and puberty will start according to each person’s body clock.
- I appreciate that we can all feel sensitive about our bodies at this time of our lives and we need to be respectful of each other’s feelings.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- RESOURCE: 'Puberty cards' (available from the previous learning sequence)
- RESOURCE: 'Puberty for girls/Puberty for boys – What happens when?'
- RESOURCE: 'Dear Abby – Is puberty the same for everyone?'

These resources are available at the end of this learning sequence. If you wish, the 'What happens when?' timelines can be reproduced in poster size. This will allow students to see at a glance the order that changes are likely to occur.

ACTIVITIES

What happens when?

- ➔ Using the 'Puberty cards' ask the students to place them in order of occurrence.
- ➔ As a class, check the results against the 'What happens when?' timelines (pages 150-152).
- ➔ Comment:
 - Puberty changes generally occur in a certain order, but the age of change can be approximate and the order can also be different. There are no hard and fast rules.

Dear Abby – Is puberty the same for everyone?

- ➔ Read the letters written to Abby the magazine health adviser.
- ➔ As a class discuss the following questions:
 - Why are Concerned or Worried unhappy about their bodies?
 - When does puberty start and finish?
 - Does puberty happen at the same time for everyone?
 - Are Concerned or Worried normal?
 - What advice would you give Concerned or Worried?
- ➔ Ask students to write an advice letter to either 'Concerned' or 'Worried'. The letter should address the concerns expressed in their stories and answer their questions.

Teacher advice

How do you explain sexual feelings?

During puberty, it is normal to feel more sexual. In boys, the main sign of strong sexual feelings is an erection of the penis. In girls, it is wetness of the vagina, a hardening of the clitoris and may include sensitive nipples.

Sexual feelings can come from reading a romantic novel or thinking about another boy or girl. Having sexual feelings is normal and is nothing to feel guilty about.



What happens when?

Girls usually start puberty anywhere between eight and 14 years of age.

Puberty happens in stages and can be on-again-off-again in nature. Someone may have early signs of puberty then not show another sign for years. All the physical changes can happen within a year and a half, or can occur over five or more. Puberty changes generally occur in a certain order, but the order can also be different.

How quickly one develops in their teen years doesn't necessarily affect how they will look as an adult. A person who stays short all through school may still end up the tallest by the time they reach 18 years of age and attend their secondary school graduation night.

Somewhere around 8 to 13

- Hormones have quietly switched on inside the female body and the ovaries are growing bigger.
- Breast growth begins with small buds developing behind the nipple. The breast area can become quite tender.
- Fine pubic hair begins to grow under the arm and on the vulva.
- Height and weight increase. There is a growth spurt.
- Many girls will experience their first period. (The average age for a first period is 11½ years.)

Then from around 13 (can be from 9 to 15)

- Breasts growth continues, becoming fuller and rounder in shape.
- Pubic hair continues to grow, becoming darker, thicker and curlier.
- The vagina grows slightly larger and begins secreting a clear or whitish fluid, which is a normal cleaning process.
- Muscle mass develops (not as much as boys) and the hips may start to widen.
- The sweat and oil glands become more active. This may result in acne.

Then from around 14 (can be from 10 to 16)

- Ovulation (release of egg cells) can begin, but typically not in a regular monthly routine yet.
- The menstruation cycle may begin, and become more regular for some.
- The pelvis grows wider and her face starts to change its shape.
- Pubic hair forms a triangular shape in front and around the genital area, and underarm hair grows darker. Her underarm hair and body hair starts to change and grow darker.
- The uterus grows slightly larger.

Then at around 16 to 19

- Adult height is usually reached by the age of 15 or 16.
- Pubic hair is fully established.
- Breast development is complete.
- Menstruation and ovulation have become regular and occur monthly.



What happens when?

Boys usually start puberty between nine and 14 years of age. Boys usually start puberty about six months after girls.

Puberty happens in stages. A person may have early signs of puberty then may not show another sign for months, even years. All the physical changes can happen within a year and a half or up to five years or more. The rate a person develops in their teen years doesn't necessarily affect how they will look as an adult. The tallest boy now could be one of the shortest men later, or he may still be tall. Puberty changes generally occur in a certain order, but the order can also be different.

Somewhere around 9 to 12

- Hormones are switched on with no sign of physical changes.

Then from about 12 (can be from 9 to 15)

- The testicles become larger. This is the first sign of puberty starting. It's common for one testicle to be bigger than the other.
- The scrotum becomes lower and darkens in colour.
- Pubic hair begins to grow at the base of the penis.
- Hair growth begins under the arm and on the legs.

Then from around 13 (can be from 11 to 16)

- The penis, scrotum and testicles grow bigger. This usually occurs after the first fine pubic hairs have grown.
- Pubic hair continues to grow, and becomes darker, curlier and thicker.
- There is a growth spurt (this can be as much as eight centimetres in one year).
- The sweat and oil glands become more active. This may result in acne.
- Body odour becomes stronger.
- Sperm production may begin and about a year after the penis starts growing, he may have his first ejaculation.
- Erections occur more often.
- The Adam's apple (the larynx) increases in size and the voice cracks and deepens.



Then from around 14 (can be from 11 to 17)

- Height increases, muscles develop and become larger, changing the body shape. The arms and legs often grow before the shoulders and body. More muscle tissue grows.
- The breasts/nipples can swell and become tender (this disappears within a year).
- Facial hair begins to grow.
- The penis and testicles continue to grow.
- The shape of the jaw and the shape around the eyes starts to change.

Then from around 16 (and onwards into early twenties)

- Adult height is reached for some, while others may reach their full height in their early twenties.
- The penis and testicles are fully developed.
- Hair growth begins to thicken on the face and body. Chest hair begins to grow. (Some males may not grow much chest hair.)

Dear Abby – Is puberty the same for everyone?

Dear Abby

I'm the shortest person in my class. Even the girls are taller than me! I try to hide my body in the change rooms as I don't have hair growing on my body like the other boys. Will my penis ever be as big as the other boys? Will I ever go through puberty? Is there something wrong with me?

Yours sincerely
Worried (aged 12)

Dear Abby

I'm so embarrassed. My face is covered in pimples and I'm the only person in my class who wears a bra. In the last year I've grown so fast. Now I am taller than most of the boys! What's happening to me? Am I normal?

Yours sincerely
Concerned (aged 10)

Write a letter to either Concerned or Worried and explain what is happening to them. Make sure you answer their questions.

Dear _____

Yours sincerely

Theme: Growing and changing

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, the students become familiar with a range of personal hygiene items and products. They go on to discuss the importance of keeping clean and healthy.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- describe the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health and establish health goals and plan strategies for improving personal health
- describe a range of health services, products and information that can be accessed to help meet health needs and concerns.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- accept and display empathy for the points of view and feelings of their peers and others.

Suggested success criteria

- There are things I can learn to do to manage puberty changes.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- a single tampon and a single pad, a glass beaker (with a lip) and some food colouring (for a water experiment activity)
- a tray with objects relating to personal hygiene and something to cover them. For ideas, see the RESOURCE: 'The growing-up kit – Some suggestions'
- RESOURCE: 'Pads or tampons?' (Diagrams illustrating the use of pads and tampons.)

The two above resources are available at the end of this learning sequence.

ACTIVITIES

Why are some body changes difficult and some great? People react to changes differently. Some changes may be considered great by some people and difficult by others. Feelings about change are personal and can vary widely.

Learning more about the items one ‘gets to play with’ as part of growing up and undergoing body changes can make the change experience easier. The following activities focus on a range of these items.

Teacher advice

Body odours

If a student is being singled out by others because they are considered ‘smelly’ or unclean, this may be because of hygiene needs or the other students may be reacting to a ‘foreign’ smell. In either case, the students need to learn how to manage their feelings in a way that doesn’t hurt the child in question. Remind the class of the working agreement about treating each other kindly.

Poverty and illness are two common causes of body odours. You or the school nurse may choose to talk to the parent or carer about reasons for this happening and the possible problems for the child. A school nurse or home liaison worker may be able to help the parents address some of the causes.

The growing-up kit – A memory game

This is a fun and non-threatening way to introduce the range of hygiene products students might want to try. Use a range of objects and products relating to personal hygiene, such as soap, tissues, toothbrush or toothpaste, deodorant, washer or facecloth, towel, shampoo, pads, tampons, nailbrush, pimple cream, razor, and clean socks or pants.

- ➔ Put the objects in a tray.
- ➔ Give the students time to study and memorise the contents of the tray.
- ➔ Cover the tray and remove one item at a time, leaving one final item hidden. As you remove each item, invite students to explain it, asking *what is it?* and *how can this help with changes in puberty?* (For example, *it is a facecloth and it can help with sweat.*)



- ➔ Ask students to identify which final item is still hidden in the tray.
- ➔ Remove the item once it is guessed. The student who guessed it wins the prize: they can have a go at explaining it to the rest of the class!
- ➔ Discuss with the class why all these items are important as you grow older and how they can help you take responsibility for looking after yourself.
- ➔ Ask the students to divide all the items into essentials and non-essentials.
- ➔ Now ask the students to decide which are the most important if they only had room in their bags for three of them.
- ➔ Discuss with the class the two main reasons for keeping clean:
 - So that we are pleasant to be with
 - So that we keep healthy and don't spread or catch germs.
- ➔ Ask the class:
 - Where can you find or buy most of these items?
 - Who can you talk to about getting items in this kit?

Pads or tampons?

It can be useful for boys to be involved in this activity to facilitate a greater understanding of the menstruation cycle that girls experience. Alternatively, teachers may wish to conduct this activity separately for boys and girls. This would allow the girls to discuss their concerns about using pads and tampons without feeling embarrassed in front of the boys.

- ➔ Ask the class:
 - What hygiene measures are associated with menstruation?
 - What are the differences between pads and tampons?
- ➔ Using the resource 'Pads or tampons?' (available at the end of this learning sequence), discuss the advantages and disadvantages of pads and tampons especially with regard to use, hygiene, disposal and absorption.

The tampon/pad experiment

This activity provides a rough demonstration of the different absorption processes for tampons and pads.

- ➔ Ask students to set up an experiment using water to explore the differences.
- ➔ Place a few drops of food colouring into the beaker of water to make it easier for students to observe what happens.
- ➔ Drip some of the water onto the pad. Observe what happens.
- ➔ Suspend the tampon into the beaker of water. Observe what happens.
- ➔ Discuss how tampons expand with liquid within the vagina and how pads absorb and hold liquid and adhere to the inside of the underwear.

Teacher advice

Some points to raise about pads and tampons

Using tampons or pads is a matter of what you prefer but most girls find it easier to use pads when they first start having periods.

Some girls like to use tampons right from the start. There are detailed instructions inside the tampon box on how to correctly use tampons. Some tampons come with a special skinny cardboard tube called an applicator, which helps insert the tampon into the vagina.

There is a common concern that a tampon may become lost inside the body. It's good for students to know that they cannot go higher than the top end of the vagina.

Pads and tampons need to be changed about every three to four hours. A single pad for overnight use is fine.

Pads and tampons should be thrown away in special sanitary bins located inside toilet cubicles, or wrapped up and thrown in a bin. Don't flush pads or tampons down the toilet as they can block it.

Swimming centres indicate it is expected that a girl (or woman) will wear a tampon if she goes swimming, to make sure no leaking of blood occurs. The tampon should be changed after leaving the pool, as it will have absorbed water.

Question box

Often students are embarrassed to ask a question in front of the whole class. Using a question box enables students to be anonymous and ensures important questions are answered. The use of a question box also allows the teacher time to reflect on how to answer the students' questions.

- ➔ Ask students to write a question about pads or tampons and place it in the question box.

Additional activity

Making a leaflet

There are different ways to cope with changes. A range of ways are explored in this additional activity.

- ➔ Ask the students to create a leaflet as a class that describes their ideas for coping with body changes.
- ➔ The final leaflet can be placed into the library for other students to read.
- ➔ Students can take a copy of the leaflet home for their families to read. This will facilitate awareness at home of the areas students might need some support with. This will also keep parents abreast of the issues being discussed in class.

The activities in this learning sequence have been used with permission from Martinez A and Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children's Bureau.

This table provides a list of potential items that can be used in the growing-up kit. Some discussion points have been included for each item listed.



Deodorant

When used in addition to daily washing of the underarms, deodorant stops sweat from smelling. (Also *antiperspirant*.)

Hot water bottle

Exercise and warmth may help with sore bellies.

About two thirds of girls at some time will experience a period pain. If the pain is not too bad, a hot water bottle can help, as can some exercise. If there is a lot of pain, consultation with a doctor should be considered.

Menstrual pads

Pads are available at pharmacies and supermarkets and come in a variety of shapes and sizes. You should choose pads that are unscented and thus free of unnecessary additives. Pads attach to the inside of underwear by sticky strips. If they have wings, these wrap around the leg openings of the underwear. Pads catch menstrual flow.

Keep your pads in a backpack, locker or bag. Change and dispose of your used pads often (wrap in toilet paper or a paper towel and put in the garbage, or dispose in the special sanitary bins if provided). Do not flush down a toilet – it will block the toilet!

Runners and socks

Wash your feet and change your socks every day. Occasionally, wash the insoles of your shoes.

Shampoo

Wash hair often to clean away the oil and dirt. Some people wash their hair every day, some less often (for example, every two to three days).

Soap

A mild, unscented soap in bar or liquid form is used for showering or bathing daily. Scented, deodorant soaps can cause dry skin. You do not need to use over-hot water or wash your hands for a long time – twenty to thirty seconds is fine. Remember to rinse the soap off.

Tampons

It is best not to use tampons until you are a teenager. Tampons need to be changed often (at least every four to six hours). To dispose of used tampons, wrap them in toilet paper and throw them into the garbage. Do not flush down a toilet – it will block the toilet!

You may need parental support to help remind you to remove them. Using tampons incorrectly could result in toxic shock syndrome.

Toothbrush and floss

Brush your teeth at least twice a day. You can also use floss. For fresh breath, remember to brush your tongue.

Underwear

You should change your underwear everyday. If you're getting itchy around the genitals, it might be good to try cotton underwear.

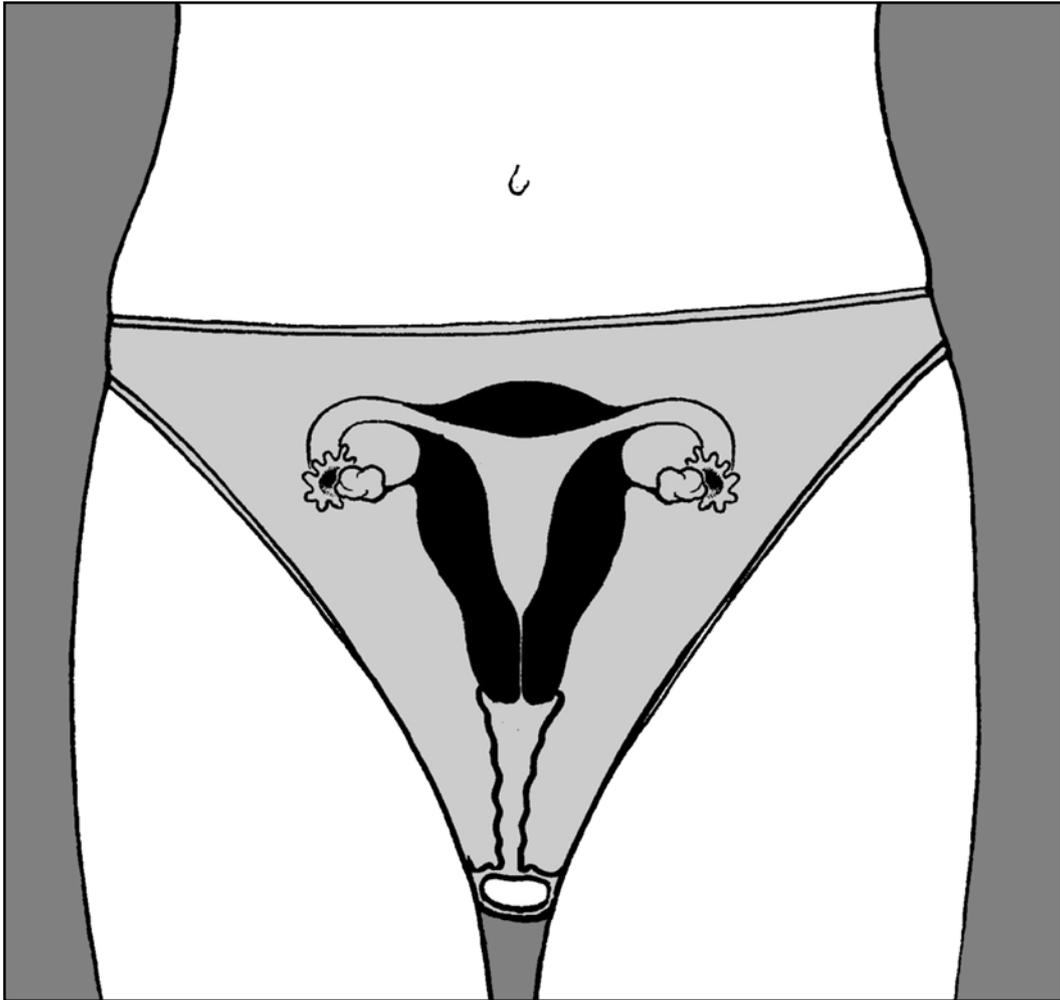
Washer/facecloth

A clean sponge or washcloth with warm water and mild soap can be used twice daily to wash the face. No other skin care products are necessary unless advised by a doctor or parents.

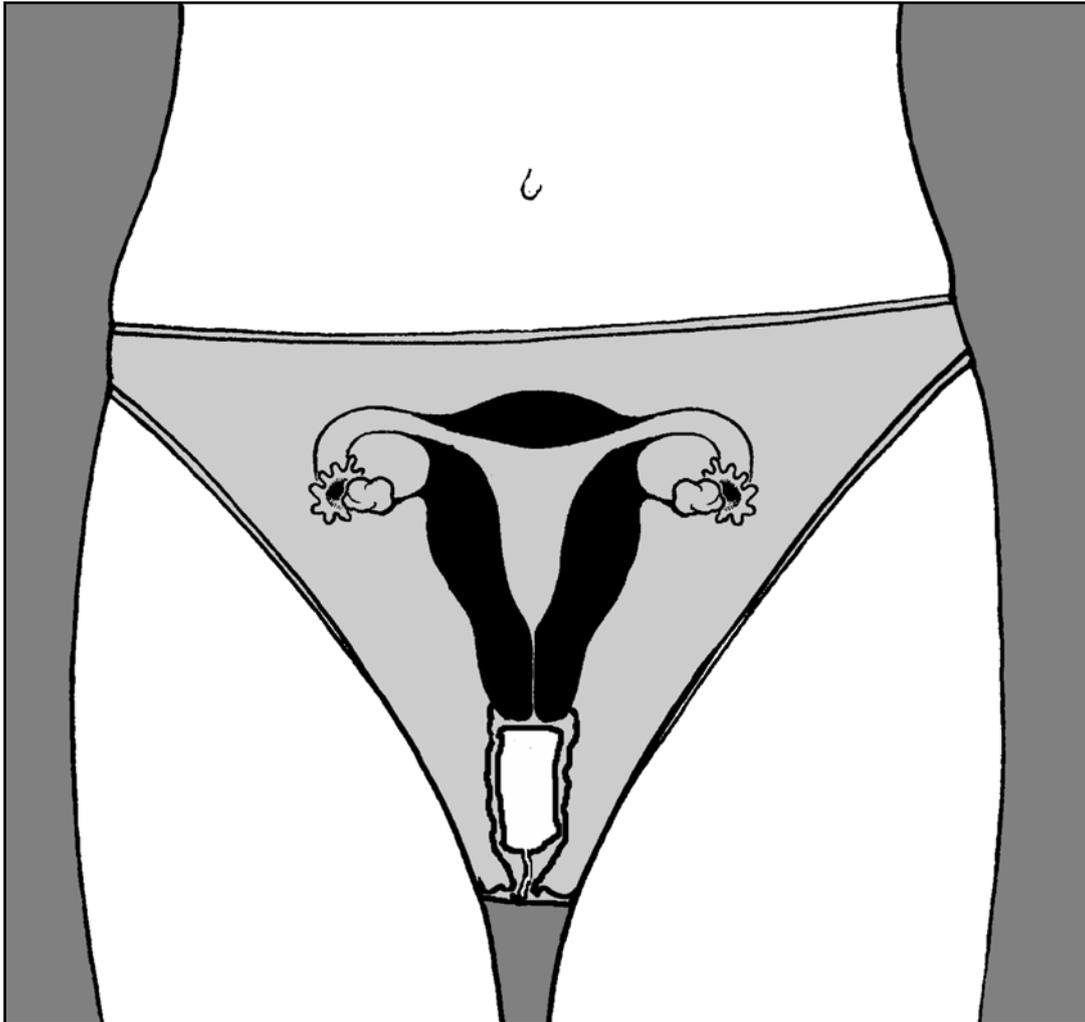
Washing powder

Because we sweat more as we get older, the sweat can give our clothes a smell. Washing school clothes once a week or changing shirts during the week can help.

Pad diagram



Tampon diagram



Theme: Where did I come from?

Core concepts

This learning sequence provides a final chance to review the relationship between the menstrual cycle, sperm production and conception.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- describe the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health, establish health goals and plan strategies for improving personal health.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- accept and display empathy for the points of view and feelings of their peers and others.

Suggested success criteria

- I understand the processes of menstruation and sperm production.
- I understand the process of sexual intercourse and reproduction.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- a Magnel Kit (this is optional but recommended, pictures and books selected by the teacher can be used as an alternative)
- RESOURCE: 'The story of conception – Becoming pregnant (diagram)
- RESOURCE: 'Menstruation' (diagrams)
- RESOURCE: 'Activity sheet – Step-by-step stories' (prepare enough copies of the two step-by-step stories so that each student can have at least one).

The above resources are available at the end of this learning sequence.

Teacher advice

What is a Magnel Kit?

A Magnel Kit consists of a large magnetic whiteboard with full-sized male and female reproductive systems printed on each side and a set of magnetic overlays. The kit enables you to show conception, pregnancy and menstruation.

The kits are very expensive and not currently available for purchase. Your school nursing program or your local community health service may have one for loan or, if you are a member, you can borrow a kit from the Family Planning Victoria Library (see 'Resources' section). Some Department regional offices have bought a kit to share among schools. Some secondary schools also use them.



ACTIVITIES

Pair share

- ➔ Establish what students know about conception, pregnancy and birth by asking them to pair up, share and then brainstorm with the whole class:
 - Where do babies come from?
 - How are babies made?
 - How are babies born?
- ➔ Ask students to discuss what they were told about pregnancy and birth when they were young and what they now know.
- ➔ Students brainstorm as many parts of the male and female reproductive system as they know, using the correct classroom terminology.
- ➔ Using a Magnel Kit or pictures, revise information on the female and male reproductive organs.
- ➔ Use the appropriate magnetic pieces from the Magnel Kit to explain the process of sexual intercourse and conception. The resource 'The amazing story of conception – Becoming pregnant' (available at the end of this learning sequence), can be used to help explain where fertilisation occurs and where the baby grows in the womb.



- ➔ Explain that the uterus can stretch as the baby grows. The approximate size can be further demonstrated by holding the relevant pieces against an adult body. Other materials can be used to describe this process to students (see the 'Resources' section on page 180).
- ➔ Ask the students to write at least one question about conception, pregnancy and birth. These should be anonymous and placed in a question box.
- ➔ Review the questions to determine the skills and content of future activities in this area, or to use as a part of a visit to the classroom by a school nurse or other health expert.

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The 'Pair share' activity was adapted with permission from Martinez A and Cooper V (2006), *Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools*, National Children's Bureau.

The menstrual cycle and sperm production

This activity sheet identifies the steps of the menstrual cycle and sperm production as they pertain to conception. The sentences in the two stories are out of order.

- ➔ Use the resource: 'Menstruation diagrams' (available at the end of this learning sequence) to explain the process of the menstrual cycle.
- ➔ Using the two stories prepared from the 'Activity sheet – step-by-step stories', ask the students to choose a story and number the sentences in the correct order.

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The 'Menstrual cycle and sperm production' activity was adapted with permission from Seattle and King County (Washington) Public Health (2008) 'Family Life and Sexual Health, Grades 4, 5 and 6, Lesson 12 F.L.A.S.H. Reproductive System Worksheet 6', available from: <www.kingcounty.gov/healthServices/health/personal/famplan/educators/>.



Additional activity

The school nurse

- ➔ Invite the school nurse to visit the class.
- ➔ Prior to the nurse's visit, have students practise asking their prepared conception, pregnancy and contraception questions.
- ➔ Send the nurse a copy of the students' questions prior to the activity.
- ➔ Ask the nurse to also describe agencies where young people can get help about sexual health issues.



Some ideas for READING

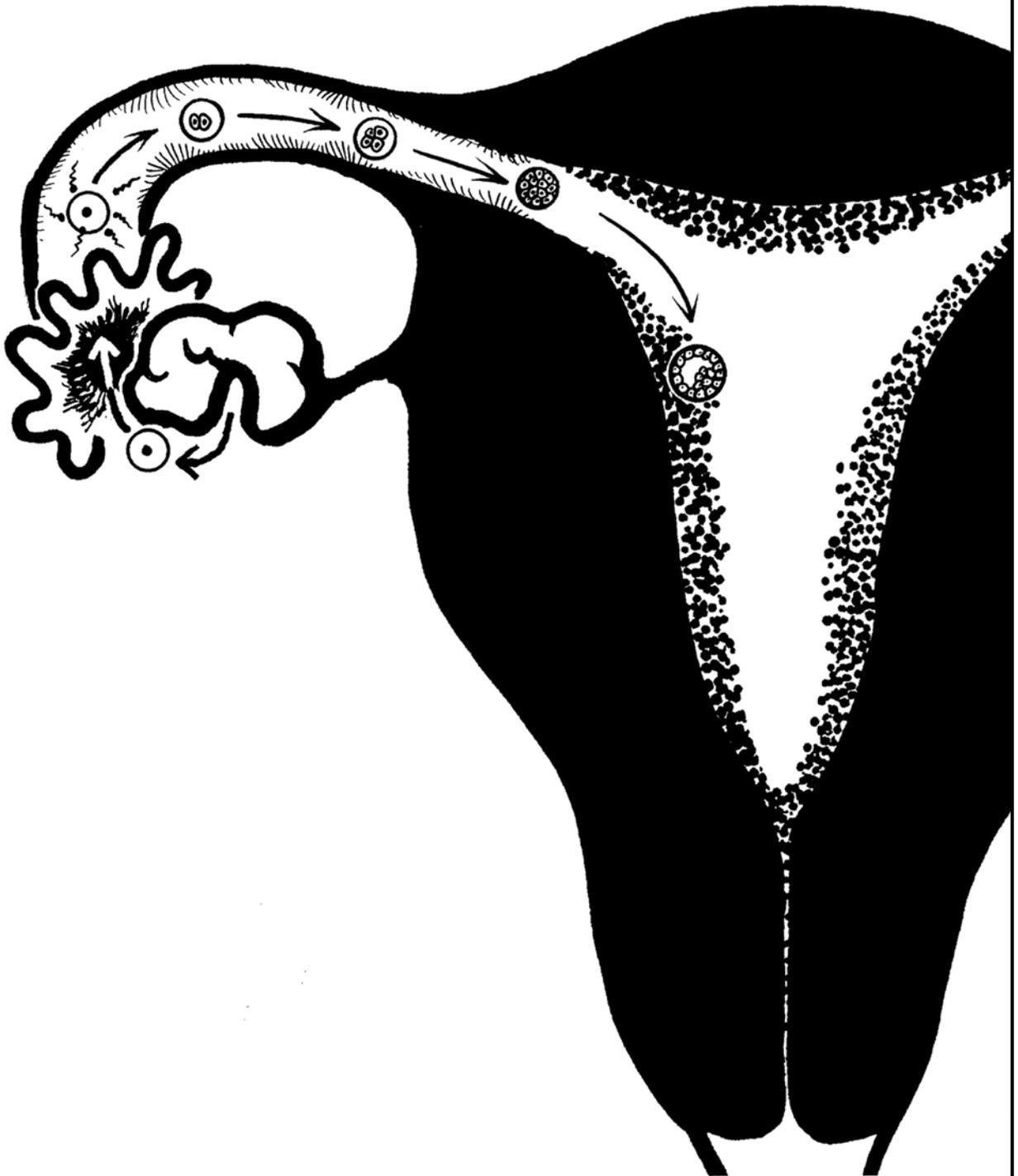
So That's Where I Come From (2010) by Gina Dawson, Illustrated by Beth Norling.

This colourful and well-illustrated book provides a good overview of diverse family structures, the developing male and female body, conception (both natural and assisted) and birth. It includes a skilfully worded description of sexual intercourse and pleasure.

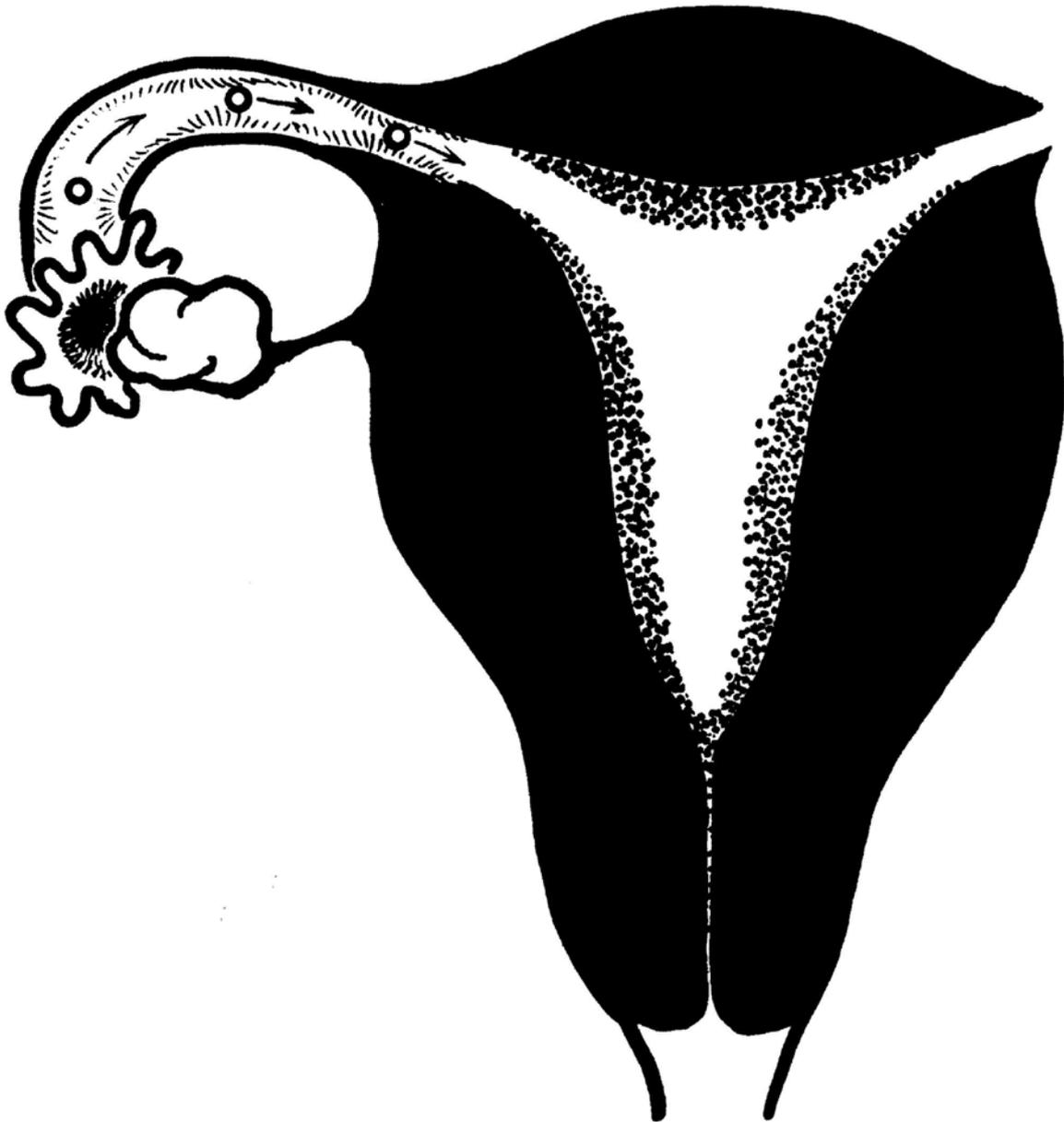
Teacher advice

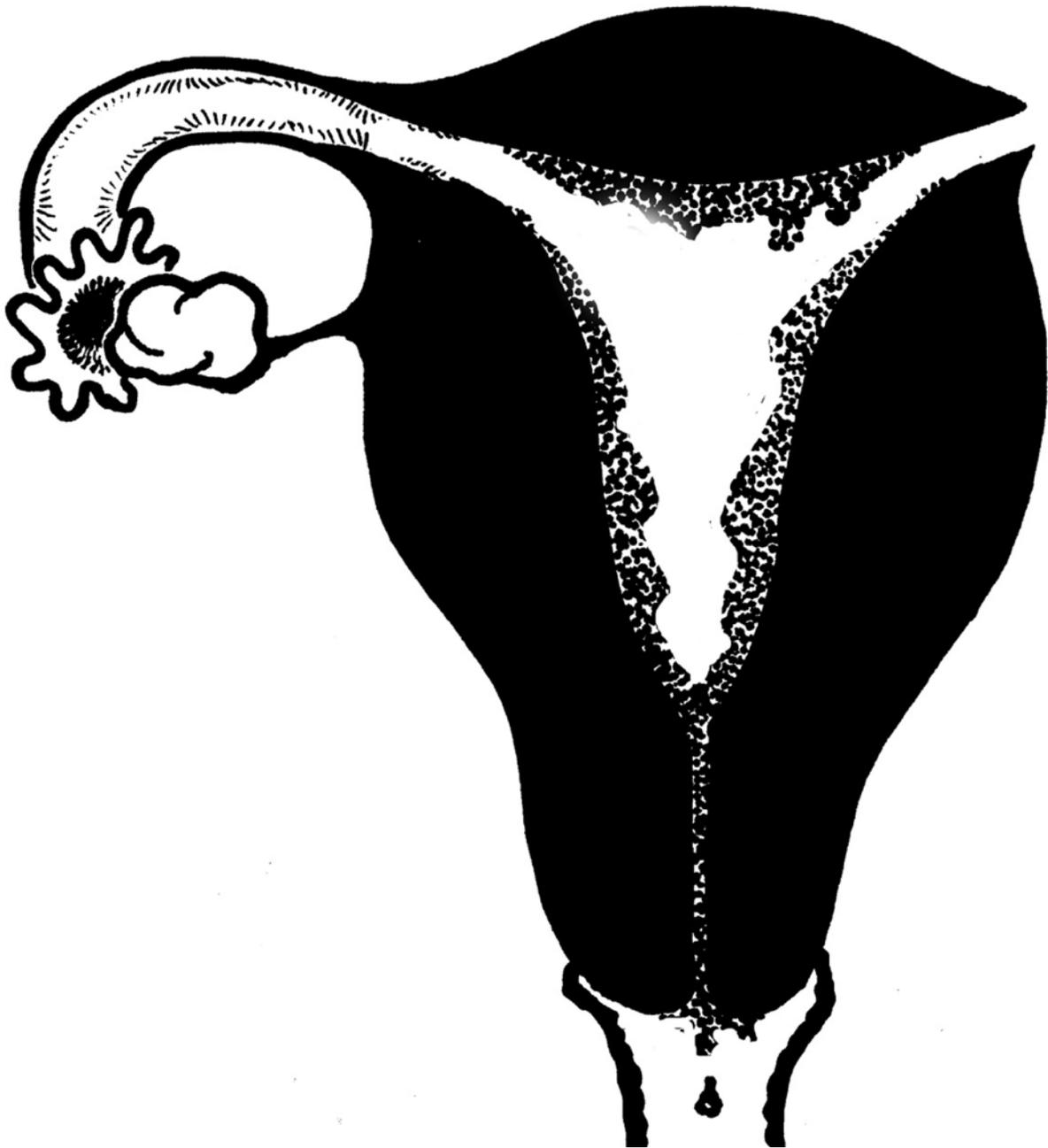
It can be useful to organise separate question and answer sessions for girls and boys for the menstruation, sperm production and conception topic. It is terrific if you can find a male and female team to present the information to the students. Make sure that while focusing on the needs of the gender group, students also understand the changes experienced by the other sex.

Make sure the girls know where to go if they need pads or a change of underwear at school. They should not have to wonder what the procedure is.









DIRECTIONS: After you have finished numbering the sentences in the stories, check to make sure you have used them all. Then read the new order of the stories aloud to a classmate to see if they make sense.

THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE	No.
It travels through the fallopian tube.	
The ovary releases the ovum.	
About two weeks later, since the lining of the uterus is not needed for a pregnancy, it comes out through the vagina; this is generally referred to as 'a period'.	
It is incredible how the female body knows how to prepare for pregnancy!	
If the egg cell doesn't meet a sperm, it dissolves.	
While the ovum is developing, the lining of the uterus is getting thick and soft.	
Another ovum starts to develop in one of the ovaries and the process begins again.	
An ovum (the female reproductive egg cell) starts to develop.	

THE LIFE OF A SPERM CELL	No.
I am produced in the testicles.	
I go through the vagina, into the uterus and the fallopian tubes, in search of an egg cell.	
I develop for two or three months in the testicles.	
When the penis becomes erect, I leave the testicles and travel through some tubes and into the urethra.	
As I pass through the tubes, I mix up with other fluids so that I can live longer and swim more easily.	
Let me tell you about me! Without me and an egg cell, there couldn't begin the amazing process of reproduction.	
The urethra carries me (along with about 200 million other sperms) out of the penis in a process called ejaculation.	
If I can find the ovum before the other sperms do, I will be the winner: part of a fertilised egg!	

Answer key

THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE	No.
It is incredible how the female body knows how to prepare for pregnancy!	1
An ovum (the female reproductive egg cell) starts to develop.	2
While the ovum is developing, the lining of the uterus is getting thick and soft.	3
The ovary releases the ovum.	4
It travels through the fallopian tube.	5
If the egg cell doesn't meet a sperm, it dissolves.	6
About two weeks later, since the lining of the uterus is not needed for a pregnancy, it comes out through the vagina; this is generally referred to as 'a period'.	7
Another ovum starts to develop in one of the ovaries and the process begins again.	8

THE LIFE OF A SPERM CELL	No.
Let me tell you about me! Without me and an egg cell, there couldn't begin the amazing process of reproduction.	1
I am produced in the testicles.	2
I develop for two or three months in the testicles.	3
When the penis becomes erect, I leave the testicles and travel through some tubes and into the urethra.	4
As I pass through the tubes, I mix up with other fluids so that I can live longer and swim more easily.	5
The urethra carries me (along with about 200 million other sperms) out of the penis in a process called ejaculation.	6
I go through the vagina, into the uterus and the fallopian tubes, in search of an egg cell.	7
If I can find the ovum before the other sperms do, I will be the winner: part of a fertilised egg!	8

Theme: Belonging

Core concepts

This learning sequence is an opportunity for the students to reflect on the value and qualities of friendships. It can also extend into reflecting on the benefits and disadvantages of students having boyfriend/girlfriend relationships.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- › identify and discuss the validity of the ways people define their own and other people's identity.

Interpersonal Development – Building social relationships dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- › demonstrate, through their interactions in social situations, respect for a diverse range of people and groups
- › identify and use a variety of strategies to manage and resolve conflict.

Suggested success criteria

- I know that puberty also means changing emotions and attitudes and my relationships may grow and change, and there are skills I need for that too.
- It is good to have someone to rely on. It is even better if I can enjoy relationships with more than one person.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- blank cards, approximately brick-sized.

ACTIVITIES

The bricks that build friendships

- ➔ Discuss with the class the qualities important in friendship. Reflect on the variety of qualities that we appreciate in people.
- ➔ Distribute the blank cards to the students.
- ➔ Ask them to write one friendship quality on each card. They can do more than one card if they want to.
- ➔ Now, build a brick wall on the floor with the cards.
- ➔ Ask the students to notice the qualities that we value in a friend. There may be some that many students have written, such as 'kindness' or 'fun to be with'.
- ➔ Ask them:
 - Are all these qualities likely to exist in the one person?
- ➔ Explain that this is why we need more than one close friend. We appreciate different people for different qualities. In the same way, we cannot hope to have every quality. We are valuable for the ones that we have.
- ➔ Ask them:
 - What are the qualities that are essential to friendship?
 - What happens if these qualities are taken out of the wall?



What are qualities we appreciate in a girlfriend or boyfriend?

- ➔ Brainstorm with the class the advantages and disadvantages of being in a girlfriend or boyfriend relationship.
- ➔ Some discussion questions:
 - If we built a brick wall of what we would like in a girlfriend or boyfriend, would it look very different to the brick wall in the previous activity? How?
 - Are there some essential bricks that have to be in both walls to have a happy and respectful relationship with someone?
 - How does being in this kind of relationship change our expectations of how we should be treated and how we treat one another?
- ➔ Finishing comment:
 - Sometimes when people are first 'falling for someone' or becoming a boyfriend or girlfriend, they may let all their other friends go, but we all need more than one person in our life.



Theme: someone to talk to

Core concepts

In this learning sequence, the students explore why it can be difficult to ask for help. They identify sources of help in and out of school, and look at how we can help each other. They practise good listening. They discuss different sources of information as well as criteria for reliable sexuality-related information.

VICTORIAN ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Health and Physical Education – Health knowledge and promotion dimension

In Level 4, students can:

- › describe the actions they can take if they feel unsafe at home, school and in the community
- › describe the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health and establish health goals and plan strategies for improving personal health
- › describe a range of health services, products and information that can be accessed to help meet health needs and concerns.

Suggested success criteria

- I can identify adults that I trust and who can ask for help.
- I can be a support to my friends.
- I can assess good sources of information about my body, sexuality and growing up.

Preparation and materials

You will need:

- eight large sheets of butcher's paper (or enough sheets for groups of four students)
- thick textas (one per group).

Divide each sheet of butcher's paper into four large columns. Write one of the following headings at the top of each column: *Puberty changes, Friendship, Family life, Sex.*

Teacher advice

Talking about the potential need for help could raise anxiety in a student who is wanting help in their life. If a student becomes upset, you may want to remove them from the class and find someone (for example, a student wellbeing support person or learning support assistant) to be with them until you can attend to them after the activity.



ACTIVITIES

Sources of information

- ➔ Discuss with your class the importance of talking to someone if you have a problem or a question.
- ➔ Ask:
 - Why is it important to have someone to talk to about problems?
 - Why might it sometimes be difficult to tell someone your concerns, or to ask someone a question?
- ➔ Divide the class into small groups, distribute the prepared sheets of butcher's paper, one to each group, and ask them to consider how things might be different if someone had a question about:
 - puberty changes
 - family life
 - friendship
 - sex.
- ➔ Ask the students to write three important questions they might like to ask under each of the four headings on their butcher's paper.
- ➔ Now ask the groups to brainstorm as many potential sources of information for each of the above categories. They should write these down in the relevant columns on the butcher's paper.
- ➔ At the end of this task, to be sure you have good sources of potential information, ask the groups to swap their butcher's papers and add any new ideas to another group's work.

Examples of common sources for each category may include: parents, other adults, siblings, friends, peers, pamphlets/brochures, magazines, school health education, teachers, doctor, television, a local library, radio, a family planning centre, health professionals, school nurse and the internet.

Which is the best source of information?

- ➔ Ask the students to rate the sources of information on a scale of one to 10 for:
- comfort – how comfortable would you feel using this source of information?
 - credibility – how much do you trust this source of information for its correctness?
 - reliability – can you rely on this source of information to take the action you need and to respect your privacy?

Additional activity

Personal directories

- ➔ Ask the students to create their own personal directories of people they could talk to if they were worried about something, with phone numbers, email addresses, web addresses, or where they can be found.
- ➔ They could make their directory into a little card or booklet for their school bag. (If you have laminating facilities in your school, it might be possible to make the booklets more durable.)



Some ideas for READING

Mr Peabody's Apples (2003), by Madonna.

This story is about the long-ranging effect of rumours. It is a good motivator for students to talk about trusting the source of the information they hear, and the effect on their friends of spreading rumours.

The background features three orange silhouettes: a man in mid-air with arms outstretched, a woman on a skateboard, and a girl running. A blue diamond shape is centered on the page, containing the number 10 in white.

10

Resources

Victorian evaluation reports on sexuality education

Catching On Everywhere – Sexuality education program development for Victorian schools (2008) Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

This guide is designed to assist primary and secondary school principals and teaching staff in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive sexuality education program.

Catching On Everywhere (Part 1) provides a background to the project, a literature review and an outline of the sexuality education policy environment.

Catching On Everywhere (Part 2) provides school case studies, the Model for Whole-school Learning in Sexuality Education, a suggested three-year program development plan and a curriculum audit tool. This resource was distributed to all Victorian schools throughout 2009.

The guide is available for download from the program development webpage of the Department's *Catching On-line* website: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/teachingprog.htm>>.

Bass Coast Sexuality Education Project – Needs Analysis and Professional Development Evaluation Report (2004) Deakin University.

This report reflects the shared responsibility nature of sexuality education between schools, parents and the local health community.

The evaluation report presents useful data provided by principals, teachers and parents on the provision of primary school sexuality education. The evaluation tool is also included.

The report is available for download from the program development webpage of the Department's *Catching On-line* website: <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality/teachingprog.htm>>.



Professional learning

Australian Research Centre In Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University

The Centre offers professional learning sessions for both primary and secondary school teachers to be trained in the use of the *Catching On* resources.

More information is available at: <www.latrobe.edu.au/cleu/for_teachers.htm>.

Family Planning Victoria

Family Planning Victoria offers primary and secondary school teachers a range of statewide capacity building and training programs on all aspects of sexual and reproductive health education.

More information is available at: <www.fpv.org.au>.

Rainbow Network

The Rainbow Network provides workshops, information and support to schools to ensure their learning environments are safe and inclusive. Their website includes the network contact list and information on their latest workshops.

More information is available at: <www.rainbownetwork.net.au>.

Recommended websites

Ansell Sex-Ed.

This website from La Trobe University's Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), is moderated by an experienced teacher in sexuality education. It gathers a wide range of resources, including classroom activities and 'all things sex ed'. Ansell Sex-Ed. is accessible at: <<http://www.ansellsex-ed.org.au/>>.

Catching On-line

The Department's sexuality education website provides a range of sexuality education learning and teaching resources and policy documents. The website provides specific information for principals, teachers and parents, and links to many useful websites. School nurses, wellbeing staff and community health educators working with schools will also find the website useful.

The website is home to this resource, the *Catching On Everywhere* (2008) program development guide and the *Supporting Sexual Diversity in Schools* (2008) policy booklet.

You can access the website by entering the words 'catching on sexuality education' into your Google web browser, or at: <www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/health/sexuality>.



Catching On-line, the Department's extensive sexuality education website, is also readily accessible by entering the words 'catching on sexuality education' into your Google web browser.

The Hormone Factory

Developed by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, this website offers specific sexual and reproductive development information for parents and children (10 to 12 years).

The Hormone Factory is accessible at: <www.thehormonefactory.com>.

The Victorian Better Health Channel

This Victorian Government website provides simple tips and information about a wide range of health and wellbeing related issues. Some of the topics include:

- sex education for children with intellectual disabilities
- masturbation
- menstrual cycle
- puberty
- acne
- female genital mutilation
- circumcision.

Better Health Channel is accessible at: <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>.

Family Planning Queensland

The Family Planning Queensland website provides fact sheets designed to inform you about puberty. It also has excellent information about sexual development in children and a range of excellent teaching resources.

Areas covered include:

- communicating about sexuality with children and sexual development in early childhood
- sexuality education and Asperger's syndrome – information for parents and carers
- puberty – information for parents and carers.

The website is accessible at: <www.fpq.com.au>.

The Donor Conception Network

This website provides a set of United Kingdom booklets aimed at parents of children conceived via a donor. The booklets cover the ages 0-7, 8-11 and 12-16.

The website is accessible at: <www.dcnetwork.org/Telling and Talking>.

Children, Youth and Women's Health Service

This South Australian website provides parenting and child health information on family and relationships, growth and development, emotions and behaviour, and healthy lifestyle.

The website is accessible at: <www.cyh.com>.

South Eastern Centre against Sexual Assault

This website contains information on sexual assault, child abuse, sexual harassment and family violence for children and schools, family and friends, survivors and workers.

The website is accessible at: <www.secasa.com.au>.

Family Planning Victoria

This extensive website provides a range of resources on sexual development, sexual health and training. It also describes how you can access support services, including young people with a disability. Additionally, you can subscribe to e_Update and receive free electronic publications three times a year.

The website is accessible at: <www.sexlife.net.au>.

The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

This website includes a focus on information and tools for guiding your child down the path to becoming a sexually healthy, well-rounded adult.

The website is accessible at: <www.sexualityandu.ca>.

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society

This extensive website is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and applied skills in sexual health research and education at a local to international level. Key activities include research, teaching and community development, education and training, policy advocacy and consultancy. The site is home to a number of publications which are downloadable, including the national education framework *Talking Sexual Health*.

The website is accessible at: <www.latrobe.edu.au/arcshs>.

Australian Institute of Family Studies

This website provides a range of research articles on raising children and family life, including the school experiences of children of lesbian and gay parents.

The website is accessible at: <www.aifs.gov.au>.

Planned Parenthood

This website from the United States provides information to support parents when talking to their children about sexuality. Articles include:

- ‘Human sexuality: what children should know and when they should know it’
- ‘The facts of life – a guide for teens and their families’
- ‘How to talk with your child about sex’
- ‘Talking with kids about tough issues’
- ‘Ten tips for parents to help their children avoid teen pregnancy’.

The website is accessible at: <www.plannedparenthood.org>.

Books for parents, students and teachers

The following books are available on the internet or through regular and specialist bookshops. Books for students relevant to specific activities are also recommended throughout the learning sequences.

For parents and carers

Everything You Never Wanted Your Kids to Know About Sex (But Were Afraid They'd Ask): The Secrets to Surviving Your Child's Sexual Development from Birth to the Teens (2004) by Richardson and Schuster.

This is a guide to coping with a child's sexual maturation. Available through Hares and Hyenas Books, Johnston Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne.

For students – VELS Levels 1 and 2 (from prep)

It's Not the Stork: A Book about Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families and Friends (2006) by Robie H. Harris, Michael Emberley.

This text is straightforward, informative and personable. Facts are presented in a step-by-step manner and with humour.

Everyone's Got A Bottom – A Storybook For Children Aged 3-8 Years (2007) by Family Planning Queensland.

This book is a useful tool for parents and carers to gently start a conversation with their children about self-protection.

Where Did I Really Come From? (2008) by Narelle Wickham.

About conception, adoption and surrogacy. Unlike other books of this genre, *Where Did I Really Come From?* embraces a wide range of conception stories, including donor insemination, IVF and surrogacy, and a wide range of family types.

My House (2002) by Brenna and Vicki Harding.

This is one of a series of colourful Australian picture books for younger primary school readers. It describes a girl with two mothers having fun in a family doing everyday things.

For students – VELS Levels 3 and 4 (from grade three)

Let's Talk about Where Babies Come From (2004) by Robie H. Harris.

Includes topics such as *How Babies Really Begin; Growing Up; What's Love?; Sperm and Egg Meet; Pregnancy, Birth and Adoption;* and 'good' and 'bad' touches.

Secret Boys' Business (2006) by Fay Angelo, Heather Pritchard and Rose Stewart, illustrated by Julie Davey.

This is a book to help boys understand the changes they go through when reaching puberty. *Secret Boys' Business* has large clear text that is easy to understand and every page is full of amusing and colourful illustrations.

Secret Girls' Business (2003) by Fay Angelo, Heather Pritchard and Rose Stewart, illustrated by Julie Davey.

This attractive book about periods will particularly appeal to younger girls. *Secret Girls' Business* is fun and easy to understand with plenty of brightly coloured illustrations. Girls learn about changes that happen at puberty and are encouraged to make the transition with dignity and joy.

Special Girls' Business (2004) by Fay Angelo, Heather Pritchard and Rose Stewart, illustrated by Julie Davey.

This book about managing periods is for girls with special needs and their carers. It comes in a large format, uses engaging, full colour illustrations and clear text. It includes a section on handy hints for mums, dads and carers, and a section specifically for school staff.

What's the Big Secret? Talking about sex with boys and girls (2000) by Laurene Krasny Brown and Marc Brown.

Are boys and girls different on the inside? How do you tell girls and boys apart? Do girls and boys have the same feelings? Is sex a dirty word? What does being pregnant mean? How do you get a belly button? This book explores these questions and more.

Hair in Funny Places (2000) by Babette Cole.

This is a picture storybook about puberty for middle to late primary school boys and girls. In this book, Mr and Mrs Hormone, two hairy monsters, mix potions that turn children into adults. We see some of the changes that result from these potions. *Hair in Funny Places* can be a good conversation starter, easing the way for more detailed discussions about puberty.

The Puberty Book: A guide for children and teenagers, fourth edition, (2007) by Wendy Darvill and Kelsey Powell.

This new edition of *The Puberty Book* contains up-to-date information on all aspects of puberty and includes a new chapter on mental health which addresses issues that may concern young people as they are growing up.

Puberty Boy (2006) by Geoff Price.

This book provides a reassuring discussion of male adolescence including detailed drawings and diagrams of male and female anatomy. It addresses topics from sweat to semen, and body odour to body image. The book includes coverage of the emotional changes, independence, and the responsibilities that come with puberty.

Puberty Girl (2005) by S. Movsession.

This beautifully illustrated book covers information for girls 11-15 about all aspects of puberty, from body changes and menstruation through to hygiene, body image, personal safety and conflict resolution.

Let's Talk About Sex: Growing Up, Changing Bodies, Sex and Sexual Health (2005) by Robie H. Harris.

This book is informative, interesting and reassuring – with a generous dash of humour.

Autism-Asperger's and Sexuality: Puberty and Beyond (2002) by Jerry and Mary Newport.

This is a personal look at the sexual challenges of those diagnosed with autism or Asperger's syndrome.

For teachers

Sex and Relationships Education: A step-by-step guide for teachers (2002) by Blake, S.

The teacher's resource – this book is intended to inform teachers responsible for organising and delivering programs in schools. It describes best-available practice to support teachers in developing policy and classroom practice. It presents general principles and then focuses on sex and relationships in primary, secondary and special schools. It includes advice on choosing, developing and using resources, a glossary of terms and practical exercises that can be done alone or in staff meetings to prepare for the delivery of sexuality education programs.

Assessment, Evaluation and Sex and Relationships Education: A practical toolkit for education, health and community settings (2004) by Blake, S and Muttok, S.

Assessment of learning and evaluation of teaching are key to developing effective programs. This toolkit explains the importance of assessment and learning and offers advice and a range of practical activities. Available to buy online from the United Kingdom.

Growing Up and Feeling Good: Strategies for teaching and learning about puberty (1996) by Peter Gourlay, Wendy White and Robin Walsh.

This manual from Family Planning Victoria contains easy-to-use classroom strategies and worksheets for upper primary and lower secondary school students. It covers issues under six topics: *Talking about Puberty; Understanding our Bodies; Feeling Good; A Question of Gender; Friends and Relationships; and Decisions!*

Libraries

The Family Planning Victoria Library

The Family Planning Victoria Library contains a wide range of books, journals, DVDs and videos, teaching resources, and articles relating to sexual and reproductive health. The Library's Specialist Collection contains a number of resources relating to disability, as well as primary school sexuality education. These include training manuals, Magnel Kits, games, and anatomically correct dolls. To borrow from the library, the school will need to become a member. Membership rates are reasonable.

The Library is located at 901 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill.

Ph. (03) 9257 0146.

Email: library@fpv.org.au.

Community libraries

Many local libraries carry a wide range of useful books for children that focus on families, puberty, growing up, relationships and health.

Bookshops

Options Bookshop – Family Planning Victoria

901 Whitehorse Road

Box Hill

Vic. 3128.

Phone: (03) 9257 0100.

Website: <www.sexlife.net.au>.

This bookshop offers a range of books on sexual and reproductive health issues. A large range of resources are also available from Family Planning Victoria's library, as noted above.

Hares and Hyenas

63 Johnston Street

Fitzroy

Vic. 3065.

Phone: 03 9495 6589.

Website: <www.hares-hyenas.com.au>.

This bookshop offers a range of books on sexual and gender diversity, both fiction and non-fiction, including books for children.

Open Leaves Books

79 Cardigan Street

Carlton

Vic. 3053.

Phone: 03 93472355.

Website: <www.openleaves.com.au>.

This bookseller specialises in the areas of psychotherapy and mental health and has a large range of children's books (including books about friendships, expressing feelings, when parents divorce and so on).

Peoplemaking

375 Camberwell Road

Camberwell

Vic. 3124.

Phone: 03 9813 2533.

Website: <www.peoplemaking.com.au>.

This is a Victorian bookshop with an online store. It specialises in books and teaching materials on student wellbeing, emotional and social competencies, relationships and mental health.



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