

Grade 9

Coping With Development



Learner Outcomes

W-9.3 Apply coping strategies when experiencing different rates of physical, emotional, sexual and social development; e.g., positive self-talk

See also the [Differing Abilities](#) lesson plans on Puberty.

Classroom Activities & Timing

- A. Ground Rules (5-10 minutes)
- B. Developing Coping Strategies (30-45 minutes)
- C. Question Box (5-10 minutes)

Background Information for Teachers

Puberty is a time of tremendous change, and each individual changes at a rate unique to that person. Physical, emotional, sexual and social differences between individuals can cause difficulties. In grade 7, students learned about the changes of puberty and in grade 8 they learned about accepting the differences between individuals due to puberty. This lesson focuses on applying strategies to cope with negative feelings about physical, emotional, sexual and social development.

Inclusive Language

Language is complex, evolving, and powerful. In these lessons, [inclusive language](#) is used to include all students, including those with diverse gender identities, gender expressions and sexual orientations. This includes the use of 'they' as a singular gender-neutral pronoun.

A person's sex can be assigned at birth as male or female. Some people are intersex (the reproductive, sexual, or genetic biology of a person is unclear, not exclusively male or female or otherwise does not fit within traditional definitions of male or female). Assigned sex is independent of gender.

Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as girl/woman, boy/man, fluid among genders or no gender (regardless of what sex they were assigned at birth).

For many people, their gender is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). For others, their gender identity is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. They may use terms like transgender, trans, non-binary, gender fluid, gender queer, agender or others, to describe their gender identity. The umbrella term 'trans' is primarily used here, to describe people whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth differ. While this umbrella term does not fit everyone, the intention is to be as inclusive as possible.

A. Ground Rules

Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can help ensure a successful lesson.

B. Developing Coping Strategies

Students identify healthy coping strategies when experiencing different rates of physical, emotional, sexual and social development.

1. Ask students to provide examples of when young people experience difficulty as a result of different rates of developmental change. For example:
 - getting romantic notes or texts from someone but not feeling ready to date yet
 - being the shortest person in class and not making the basketball team
 - a friend who is now more interested in dating than hanging out with friends
 - giving classroom presentations with a voice that cracks at unpredictable times
 - being embarrassed to change for PE because of body changes
2. Write down the examples students provide on the board.
3. As a class, categorize each difficulty into physical change, emotional change or social change.
4. Form student groups of 2-3 students.
5. Assign each group a difficulty from the board.
6. Give each group time to plan and practice a role play presentation that demonstrates one healthy way and one unhealthy way to cope with the situation they were given.

7. Have each group present their role play to the class, or have each group present to you while the other groups rehearse.
8. As a class, make a list of healthy coping strategies.

Healthy coping strategies can include:

- Positive self-talk
- Accessing support systems
- Responding to negative influences
- Becoming a peer leader
- Healthy lifestyle habits such as exercise, meditation, healthy eating, getting enough sleep, or journaling

C. Question Box

Answer any questions from the [question box](#) in the previous lesson. Have students submit any new questions and address them next class.

Addressing the questions at the next class allows you time to review the questions and prepare responses.

Self-Reflection

During the lesson, were:

- ground rules being followed?
- good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?

Student Assessment

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- identify healthy coping strategies when experiencing different rates of development?

Skills:

- practice using coping strategies to deal with development?

Attitudes:

- accept the value of healthy coping strategies?

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