

# 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

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

### Background Information for Teachers

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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, [gender-neutral language](#) is used to be inclusive of all students, including those with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. This includes the use of 'they' as a singular gender-neutral pronoun. The lesson plans use the terms 'male' and 'female' when referring to biological sex (sex assigned at birth), such as when discussing reproductive anatomy. A person's reproductive system can be male, female or intersex (not clearly defined as either male or female).

People are assigned a sex at birth based on their reproductive anatomy. Sex assigned at birth is independent of gender identity. Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as female, male, both or neither, regardless of their biological sex assigned at birth.

For many people, their gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). Others may identify as being transgender or gender diverse if

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their gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. A person's gender identity can be girl, woman, boy, man, transgender, gender fluid, gender queer, agender or others. The intention in this material is to use language that reflects these many possibilities.

### A. Ground Rules

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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

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*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.

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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

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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

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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

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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?