

Puberty Kit Description of Teaching Aids

The Puberty Kit is a tool that may be used to assist in teaching about puberty and personal hygiene. The products shown in the Elementary Puberty Kit are examples of many similar products available. Teachingsexualhealth.ca does not endorse the use of any particular brand.

It is important for the teacher to be familiar with the kit's contents and the discussion points for each item before using the kit. Teachers can access these kits at some community health centres in Alberta, or through their school nurse. For teachers who are unable to access these kits the materials can be collected separately.

Elementary Puberty Kit Contents

Active Living (Photo)

Physical and recreational activities such as sports, walking, having fun with friends outside, etc. improve energy, physical and mental wellbeing

Antiperspirant and/ or Deodorant (Product)/Baking Soda in Box (Photo)

Can be used as an inexpensive, absorbent foot powder.

Ball Cap (Product)

Hats or caps can become dirty. Wash them or change hats to keep dirt from the face or hair. Hats are good protection from the sun's heat and damaging rays.

Healthy Nutrition (Photo)

Eating healthy food choices improves energy, physical and mental wellbeing. Work towards increasing fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while minimizing high fat and high sugar foods/drinks.

Hot Water Bottle (Photo)

Exercise and warmth may help with menstrual cramps.

Jockey Short Boy's Cotton (Product)

Boys may choose to wear boxers or briefs. Cotton underwear allows the skin to "breathe" and keep moisture away from the body. Underwear should be comfortably loose. The scrotum moves close to or away from the body to adjust the temperature of the testicles, to promote the growth of healthy sperm. It is important to change underwear every day.

Bra (Product)

Girls can wear a bra for comfort as their breasts develop. Some boys develop breast tissue for a year or more, but this will go away.

Menstruation Supplies (Product X 5: Pad, Pad with "Wings", Panty-liner, Cardboard Tampon, Plastic Tampon)

Pads are widely available at drug stores and grocery stores. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Choose pads that are unscented. Pads attach to the inside of underwear by sticky strips. The wings wrap around the leg openings of the underwear. Pads catch menstrual flow. Keep pads in a backpack, locker or bag. Change and

dispose of used pads often (wrap in toilet paper and put in the garbage). Panty-liners are similar to pads and are used to catch light menstrual flow or vaginal discharge.

Tampons are best not to use until you are a teenager. Tampons need to be changed often (at least every 4 – 6 hours) and come with either cardboard or plastic applicators, some come with no applicator. To dispose of used tampons, wrap them in toilet paper and throw them into the garbage. You may need parental support to help remind you to remove them. Avoid super-absorbent tampons. Choose unscented tampons. Using tampons incorrectly could result in Toxic Shock Syndrome, a rare but serious infection.

Razor (Product) *put the razor in a bag if using the actual product.

Some men shave their facial hair and some women shave the hair on their legs and underarms. Ask your parents what you should do.

Shampoo (Product)

Wash hair often to clean away the oil and dirt. Some people wash their hair every day, some less often.

Shaving Foam (Photo)

Shaving with moisture feels better. Some people use shaving foam, or soap and water.

Soap Unscented (Product)

A mild, unscented soap in bar or liquid form is used for showering or bathing daily and for washing the face twice daily. Scented, deodorant soaps can cause dry skin.

Sock (Product)

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

Toothbrush, Paste, and Floss (Product)

Brush and floss teeth at least twice a day. For fresh breath also brush the tongue.

T-Shirt Cotton (Product)

Natural fibres such as cotton allow the skin to “breathe”. Clothes made from these fabrics may be more comfortable to wear.

Underwear Girl’s Cotton (Product)

Cotton underwear is more comfortable as this natural fibre allows the skin to “breathe”. Synthetic underwear (e.g., nylon, polyester, rayon) may not allow the skin to “breathe”. Some synthetic underwear, pantyhose and tights, have cotton gussets (crotches) to allow moisture to leave the body. Trapped moisture could cause vaginal infections.

Wash Cloth (Product)

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

Water Bottle (Product)

Drinking water is important and especially during physical activities and in hot weather. Plain water is the easiest and least expensive and doesn’t cause tooth decay. Don’t share water bottles and other mouth objects like lip balm or lip gloss and straws even with close friends or family members as they can spread germs that could make you sick or give you an infection in or around your mouth.

Procedure:

1. Introduce the Puberty Kit. Tell the students that you are going to use it to teach them about the tools that they have to help them get through the challenging parts of puberty.
2. Have students brainstorm the changes that occur during puberty that could be challenging.
3. Have students (or pairs of students) choose an item from the kit. You may also give students items, which would allow you to be sensitive to student needs, or to cluster products (i.e., washing items such as shampoo, soap and washcloth could go together).
4. Have students brainstorm answers to these questions:
 - What is the item?
 - How would the item be used?
 - How does this item relate to puberty changes?
5. Inform students that each item in the kit relates to a puberty change, and that they will complete a handout after this activity that tests their knowledge about each item.
6. Students present each item to the class, with the teacher adding comments to the discussion. (Use comments from the illustrations and the discussion points to enhance the discussion about items in the kit.) Students who are unsure about what the item is or how it would be used can simply state that they do not know.
7. Allow students to pass the items around so that they have a chance to examine them.
8. Debrief this activity using the following questions:
 - What items from the kit are most helpful for shaving? Menstruation? Preventing acne? Smelling good? Looking good? Feeling good?
 - Where can you find or buy most of the items in the puberty kit?
 - Who can you talk to about getting items in this kit?