

ANALYZING INFLUENCES ON SELF-CONCEPT AND BODY IMAGE DURING PUBERTY



LESSON INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this lesson is to learn about the changes that occur in adolescence (physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes that are known as Growth Markers) while analyzing how friends, family, media, technology, school, community, society and culture can influence self-concept and body image related to these body changes.



OBJECTIVES:

By the end of 8th grade students will be able to...

- Describe the physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes of adolescence.
- Analyze how friends, family, media, society and culture can influence self-concept and body image.



VOCABULARY

- Body image
- Cognition
- Self-concept



STANDARDS:

Wisconsin Standard for Health Education

- Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors.

National Sexuality Education Standards

- **PD.8.CC.1** Describe the physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes of adolescence.
- **PD.8.INF.1** Analyze how friends, family, media, society and culture can influence self-concept and body image.

GRADE: Middle School

LENGTH OF LESSON: 60 min

SEQUENCE: 3



ACTIVITIES:

- 3.1** Growth Markers-Mini Lecture with Graphic Organizer
- 3.2** Analyzing External Influences-Who Do You Turn to? And Where Do You Go?
- 3.3** Four Friends: Growth Markers and Adolescent Development
- 3.4** Assessment



MATERIALS/TECHNOLOGY:

- Enough copies of “Growth Markers Graphic Organizer” for each student
- “Growth Markers Graphic Organizer” on Smart Board or PPT slide for mini lecture and large group discussion
- 5 categories of influences to post around the room for the forced choice activity
- “Four Friends: Identifying Growth Markers” handout for each student
- Highlighters/colored pencils/crayons (blue, yellow, green, orange) for each student
- Assessment rubric
- Homework assignment web links



Revisit classroom ground rules and the Anonymous Question Box

(5 minutes)

Take a moment to check in on the ground rules. Ask if there are any questions or observations from **Lesson 1**. Remind students of the anonymous question box. If there were questions in the box, answer them. Remind students that the box will be available throughout the entire Human Growth and Development unit.



Activity 3.1: Growth Markers-Mini Lecture with Graphic Organizer (15 minutes)

Hand out copies of the graphic organizer labeled **Growth Markers Graphic Organizer**. Describe that there are four main categories of change (growth markers) that occur during adolescence. Have students write down the definition and examples of each growth marker on the organizer as you provide a mini-lecture on the information.

- **Physical Growth Marker:** Body changes that occur because of changes in hormones.
- **Social Growth Marker:** Changes in personality and the capacity to interact with others in socially-appropriate and culturally-sensitive ways.
- **Cognitive Growth Marker:** Adolescence marks a person's ability to reason and think beyond that of concrete thinking towards logical operations.
- **Emotional Growth Marker:** The feelings a person has that are associated with physical, social and cognitive changes.

Growth Markers Graphic Organizer Answer Key. Examples from students will vary.

Cognitive

Involves concrete thinking but moves towards logical operations.

Social

Changes in personality and the capacity to interact with others in socially-appropriate and culturally-sensitive ways.

Emotional

The feelings a person has that are associated with the physical, social, and cognitive changes that accompany puberty.

Physical

Body changes that occur because of changes in hormones.

My Sexual Health: My Future

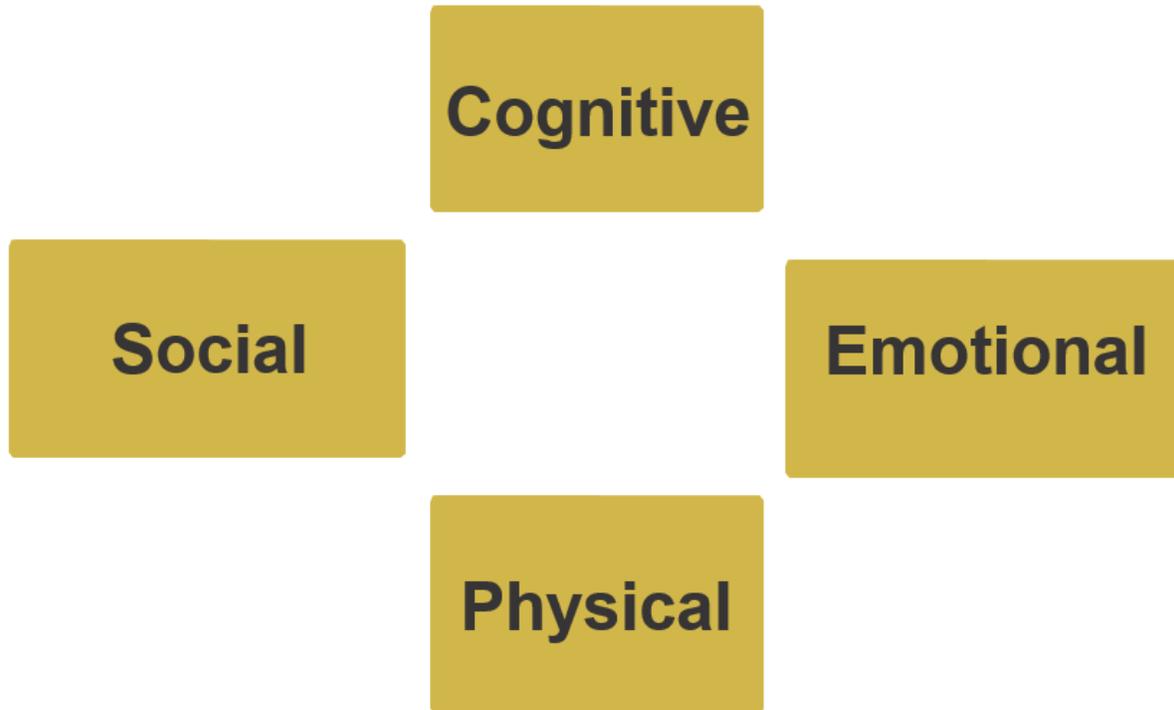
Explain that these aspects of development can occur at different stages of the lifespan. People go through various growth spurts in each area often at different times. The combination of the physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes makes an individual unique and different from others.

The four growth markers help shape an individual's identity. Link this back to the intersecting circles in **Lesson 2** of internal and external influences. These growth markers are internal, but how a person views them are likely to be influenced by external forces, like the observations made about gender in **Lesson 2** as well. Review the definitions of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation from **Lesson 2**.

My Sexual Health: My Future



Activity 3.1: Growth Markers Graphic Organizer





Activity 3.2: Analyzing External Influences: To Whom Do You Turn? And Where Do You Go?

(10 minutes)

Remind students about internal and external influences you discussed in **Lesson 2**. An internal influence is something that comes from inside you. An external influence is something that comes from outside you. Let students know that today you're going to focus on the influence of external factors.

Place the following signs around the room.

- Friends
- Family
- Media, Internet and Technology
- School
- Community (e.g. community center, house of worship)

Explain that the words on the signs represent external influences that can impact and shape **self-concept** and **body image**. Define these concepts, or ask students to do so for the class:

Self-concept: an idea of the self, constructed from the beliefs one holds about oneself and the responses of others.

Body image: a subjective picture of one's own physical appearance established both by self-observation and by noting the reactions of others.

Explain the activity you're all about to do will be forced choice and students are only allowed to choose one of the categories placed around the room. Tell students that the purpose of this lesson is to analyze how friends, family, media, society and culture can influence self-concept and body image.

Tell students to stand next to the category that represents what they think of as having the biggest overall influence on self-concept and body image for people their age/their friend group. Ask the following questions:

- What do you notice about where your classmates are standing?
- Are people scattered around the room equally or all in one or two places?
- Using thumbs up (healthy), thumbs down (unhealthy), or thumbs sideways (potentially healthy and/or unhealthy), do you think the person(s) you are thinking of in the category you are standing under has a healthy or unhealthy influence on self-concept, body image and behavior?

My Sexual Health: My Future

- Highlight the healthy influences and discuss how young people often are positively influenced in healthy ways by factors like their family, school, community and friends.

Now let students know you're going to read a series of questions and they should answer by moving to the category they feel is the strongest influence for that question. Which of these external influences would you turn to, if...? For each question, have a quick talk with the group about their choices, calling on a couple students to share why they make the choice. Be sure to highlight and normalize the healthy influences students identify, to promote the norm among the class that youth are often positively influenced by factors like their family, school, community, and friends.

- You received an award or accomplished something spectacular?
- You were sick?
- You wanted to ask someone out and weren't sure how?
- You wondered what to wear to the school dance?
- You wanted information about a new teacher?
- Someone was bullying you online?
- Someone hurt you physically?
- A boyfriend or girlfriend broke up with you and you were upset about it?
- You thought you had an STD or something was not normal related to your sexual health/development?

Have everyone return to their seats. If there were large differences in who students would turn to if they were sick versus who they would turn to about sexual health, have a conversation with the class about why. Go back to the idea of healthy or unhealthy influences and mention accurate sources of information (something you may have touched upon in previous health content).



Activity 3.3: Four Friends: Growth Markers and Adolescent Development (20 minutes)

Explain that you are going to read a story about four friends that illustrates ideas around external influences on self-concept and body image and brings all the things you talked about today together, including the four growth markers. Pass out copies of **Four Friends: Identifying Growth Markers** to each student. Ask them to listen for topics related to the four growth markers and external influences as you read the story.

Four Friends:

Hannah and Tricia are at school early waiting for the school doors to open for the day. As students slowly arrive they cluster in peer groups. Jack and Keenan arrive and begin skateboarding on the sidewalk far from other students while Melodee and Lynn text on their phones. Soon the school doors open and teachers greet the students. Everyone makes their way to their lockers. Hannah, Tricia, Melodee and Lynn all head to the girls' bathroom before the first bell. All four girls have been friends since first grade, but seem to be spending less time together as a group outside of school.

The four push their way to the mirror. Melodee and Lynn adjust their bras and pull on their tee shirts. Lynn asks Hannah about their friend Jack in her first period class. "So, do you know who Jack likes?" Hannah rolls her eyes and looks uncomfortable then mumbles, "How would I know?"

Melodee responds, "I think you two would make a cute couple, you both look like you're still in elementary school!" Lynn laughs along with Melodee.

"Not everyone can be as hot as you *think* you are, Melodee," snaps Tricia.

Suddenly there's a moment of quiet in the bustling bathroom as all the girls register the insult. But Melodee waves it off, steps back to look at herself in the mirror and she and Lynn leave the bathroom. Hannah looks at her friend with great appreciation. Tricia is dressed in a bulky school sweatshirt over her basketball jersey and baggy jeans with her

My Sexual Health: My Future

hair pulled up. She loves sports and hanging out with her guy friends, but really doesn't understand the focus on boys and appearances that is happening in the bathroom. She checks her jeans pocket for the tampon she grabbed out of her locker. What a pain to be dealing with her period on a game day!

Outside the girls' bathroom Jack and Keenan stand awkwardly. Without their skateboards, they suddenly have nothing to say or do. Keenan is waiting for Melodee to emerge so he can follow her to her first period class. He dreams of asking her out, but feels like she is now totally out of his league, even though he is now a foot taller with a deep voice and a confident smile. Jack tries to be encouraging, but thinks Melodee is self-centered and has changed a lot since they all got to middle school. Jack feels sad about the separation that is starting to happen among his friends; with Melodee and Lynn hanging out with the older students and trying to get invited to parties where there are rumors of alcohol and hook-ups.

Discussion:

Review what self-concept and body image mean. Have a large group discussion to help students analyze how these peer-to-peer interactions may influence self-concept and body image. Revisit the forced choice activity and explain that the influences of peers and family (just to name a few) can significantly impact and shape self-concept and body image. Highlight the unhealthy influences in the scenario and have students help identify how these unhealthy influences can be offset by positive peer power in affirming statements/actions that align with empathetic responses. Frame the discussion with the following questions:

- How can friends, family, media, society and culture influence one's body image and self-concept?
- How might some of these external influences help shape one's body image and self-concept?
- How might some of these external influences be hurtful to one's body image or self-concept?
- What are potential short-term and long-term consequences of harmful or helpful influences related to body image and self-concept?
- How might one's ability to believe they can accomplish something (self-efficacy) be supported or hindered by these external influences?



Activity 3.3: Four Friends: Identifying Growth Markers

Hannah and Tricia are at school early waiting for the school doors to open for the day. As students slowly arrive they cluster in peer groups. Jack and Keenan arrive and begin skateboarding on the sidewalk far from other students while Melodee and Lynn text message on their phones. Soon the school doors open and teachers greet the students. Everyone makes their way to their lockers. Hannah, Tricia, Melodee and Lynn all head to the girls' bathroom before the first bell. All four girls have been friends since first grade, but seem to be spending less time together as a group outside of school.

The four push their way to the mirror. Melodee and Lynn adjust their bras and pull on their tee shirts. Lynn asks Hannah about their friend Jack in her first period class. "So, do you know who Jack likes?" Hannah rolls her eyes and looks uncomfortable then mumbles, "How would I know?"

Melodee responds, "I think you two would make a cute couple, you both look like you're still in elementary school!" Lynn laughs along with Melodee.

"Just leave it be Melodee", snaps Tricia, "not everyone can be as hot as you think you are."

There is suddenly a moment of quiet in the bustling bathroom as all the girls register the insult. But Melodee waves it off, steps back to look at herself in the mirror and she and Lynn leave the bathroom. Hannah looks at her friend with great appreciation. Tricia is dressed in a bulky school sweatshirt over her basketball jersey and baggy jeans with her hair pulled up. She loves sports and hanging out with her guy friends but really doesn't understand the focus on boys and appearances that is happening in the bathroom. She checks her jean's pocket for the tampon she grabbed out of her locker. What a pain to be dealing with her period on a game day!

Outside the girls' bathroom Jack and Keenan stand awkwardly. Without their skateboards, they suddenly have nothing to say or do. Keenan is waiting for Melodee to emerge so he can follow her to her first period class. He dreams of asking her out, but feels like she is now totally out of his league, even though he is now a foot taller with a deep voice and a mischievous smile. Jack tries to be encouraging but thinks Melodee is self-centered and has changed a lot since they all got to middle school. Jack feels sad about the separation that is starting to happen among his friends; with Melodee and Lynn hanging out with the older students and trying to get invited to parties where there are rumors of alcohol and hook-up.



Activity 3.4: Assessment (10 minutes)

Pass out copies of **Four Friends: Identifying Growth Markers** to each student. Ask them to go through the story and highlight the growth markers using a color-coding system. On the back of the story, have students write a paragraph on how friends, family, media, technology, school, community, society and culture influence the self-concept and body image of characters in the story. Answers will vary. Use the **Assessment Rubric** provided in the resources.

- Blue: Physical
- Yellow: Emotional
- Green: Cognitive
- Orange: Social



Activity 3.4: Assessment Rubric

Based on **Activity 3.4**, review students' identification of the Growth Markers in the story, and their paragraph on the back of the story. Assess student mastery of the lesson objectives based on the following...

Student name:			
Objective	Not Present	Developing	On target
Describe the physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes of adolescence.	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Analyze how friends, family, media, society and culture can influence self-concept and body image.	Student participation and work reflects minimal to no understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects some understanding of the objective.	Student participation and work reflects thorough understanding of the objective.
Teacher comments:			



Activity 3.5: Homework: Flipped Lesson

Tell students to watch either the Khan Academy videos or view the male and female Kids Health web pages for next class. For students without home internet access, assist students to watch either set of videos at school. During the next class you'll review the male and female reproductive system, including ovulation in females and sperm production in males.

Khan Academy

<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/health-and-medicine/human-anatomy-and-physiology/reproductive-system-introduction/v/welcome-to-the-reproductive-system>

Kid's Health

Male reproductive system: <http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/male-repro.html?WT.ac=ctg#>

Female reproductive system: <http://kidshealth.org/en/teens/female-repro.html?WT.ac=ctg#>