

PUBERTY & HYGIENE LESSON PLAN

PUBERTY & HYGIENE LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW

This lesson plan was developed for educators to use within the classroom to reinforce the **Ministry of Education's Healthy Living Strand: Human Development and Sexual Health Grade 4 curriculum, strand D2.4 (2019)**.

Please note: Although hygiene is a focus in the grade 4 curriculum, this lesson plan can be used as needed for various groups of learners.

Materials

- **WECHU Handwashing Kit*** - includes GlitterBug® Potion and black light to complete a handwashing demonstration.
 - You can create your own handwashing demonstration using vegetable oil and flaxseeds. See the [WECHU Handwashing Lesson Plan](#) for instructions.
- **WECHU Pre-Teen Hygiene Kit*** – includes personal hygiene care items for demonstration purposes.
 - You can [make your own Puberty Hygiene Kit](#) (English). Print off the included photos or assemble your own kit. Most items are available in dollar stores (cost is about \$20 to create a kit). Use of any particular brand is not endorsed.

* To request a WECHU kit, contact your school nurse or send an email to chp@wechu.org

Additional Optional Teaching Aids

- **[Facilitator's Guide for Kahoot Hygiene Presentation](#)** – Contains content for slide presentation and support on how to access and navigate the Kahoot game online.
- **Laptops/tablets** – School provided (enough for students to participate individually or in groups)
- **[TeachingSexualHealth.ca - Inclusive Language](#)**: Using inclusive language in the classroom can promote respect, belonging, safety, and care. This approach also considers the circumstances and life experiences that learners may be experiencing. Find strategies for incorporating inclusive language into classroom practices to foster a safe learning environment for all.

Activity Objectives

- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of personal care needs and the application of personal hygiene products with the onset of puberty.
- Students will be able to make connections related to self-care, health and well-being and how their choices affect themselves and others.
- Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to apply health knowledge and social-emotional learning skills to make educated decisions and take appropriate actions relating to their health and well-being.

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Activity Structure & Suggested Format

- The activities are for students in Grades 4. However, this lesson plan can be implemented as needed for various groups of learners.
- Students of all genders should participate in the activities together.
- This lesson plan can be implemented in several ways:
 1. **Handwashing Kit** - can be used to demonstrate and reinforce proper hand hygiene techniques and coughing sneezing etiquette to stay healthy.
 2. **Hygiene Kit** - can be used for in-class demonstration and includes common hygiene personal care items to support learning.
 3. **Kahoot Hygiene Presentation** – a slide presentation and online game to support teaching and classroom discussion. **The Hygiene Kit** can also be used during the Kahoot presentation to provide examples of personal care items.
 - [Kahoot Hygiene Facilitator's Guide \(available in French\)](#) – Contains content for slide presentation and instructions to access and navigate the Kahoot game online.

Lesson Plan Content/Activities

Ice Breaker Activity:

- Have the group do a short physical activity (ex. jumping jacks, running on the spot) for approx. 30 seconds to 1 minute.
- Have students identify changes to the body after physical activity.

Discussion: What do you notice happens to your body after being physically active?

- Increased heart rate, sweat, messy or damp hair, smell, or body odour. Allow these points to lead into the discussion about the importance of hygiene.

Brainstorming Activity Classroom Discussion Points:

1. According to Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth (5-17 years), what is the minimum daily physical activity children and teens are supposed to have each day?
 - Children 5-17 years should have a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily. They should sweat and breathe a little harder, and their heart rate should increase.
2. What kinds of activities can you do?
 - Basketball, walking, biking, fitness/yoga classes. Being physically active will increase coordination, agility, flexibility, muscular endurance, strength, balance, and cardio-respiratory endurance (the ability of the heart and lungs to perform during activities).

Skin Care/Body Care during Puberty and Beyond Lesson Background Information

**Choose talking points based on the target audience.*

Use as background information to support [Kahoot Classroom Activity](#) or discussion with **Hygiene Kit.*

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- Just as some glands produce oil, sweat glands can produce sweat or perspiration.
- Perspiration is very important as it helps the body to keep the same temperature. Perspiration cools the skin to help cool the body overall. Perspiration can be triggered by heat, physical activity, physical stress, pain, mental stress, and hormone changes (puberty).
- There are two different kinds of sweat glands:
 - 1. The first type of glands are called the **eccrine** glands. They produce sweat that is clear and odourless. These glands start working from birth.
 - 2. The second type are called **apocrine** glands and only become active when puberty starts. They produce a different kind of sweat, which can smell unpleasant when it comes in contact with bacteria on the skin. This smell is known as body odour (B.O.). Many apocrine glands are located under the arms, in the genital area, and on the scalp.

**Sweat glands are everywhere on your body, except on your lips and ears. Ask students to guess how many each person has on their body (about 2.5 million!).*

Body Care and ways to help decrease body odour:

- Bathe regularly – this is the first step in controlling perspiration and body odour. Bathing helps remove dirt and oil from the skin and lowers the bacteria that can cause body odour.
- Change underwear and socks daily; change clothes regularly.
- Change your clothes more often if physically active during the day.
- Use antiperspirants or deodorants.
- Antiperspirants temporarily block sweat pores in the underarms, which reduces the amount of sweat reaching the skin and mixing with bacteria, a main cause of underarm body odour. Antiperspirant is the only product that helps stop sweat. Deodorants are perfumes that mask or cover up body odour. Deodorants can eliminate odor but not sweat. They are usually alcohol-based and turn your skin acidic, making it less attractive to bacteria. Body sprays are also a type of deodorant.

****Be aware of the amount of body spray being used due to the perfume sensitivities of those around you.***

- Deodorant and antiperspirant come in different types - solids, roll-on, aerosol and soft solids.
- ****Myth:*** *There is no evidence that the aluminum used in antiperspirants increases your risk for breast cancer* ([Canadian Cancer Society, Do antiperspirants cause breast cancer?](#))
- The purpose of perspiration is to cool your body – not get rid of toxins. Your liver and kidneys play the biggest role in doing this in your body.

Acne

- Acne is a normal part of puberty and sometimes adults have acne.
- Caused by overactive oil glands and occurs when pores become plugged. Causes include genetics, hormones, oil, and bacteria.
- Everyone's bodies are different and may have different skin care needs.

****Myth:*** *There is no evidence that chocolate and French fries cause acne. More likely, hands are touching the face after eating and clogging pores.*



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**Some things that can add to acne are everyday items that irritate the skin (i.e., chin strap, bra strap, hats), pore-clogging cosmetics/not properly removing make-up daily, sweating, over washing/exfoliating the skin, certain medications, changes in hormones due to menstrual cycle, picking or squeezing acne spots, sun, and stress.*

Daily facial care

- To get rid of dirt and oil on the face, wash twice daily (morning and night) with a gentle soap or cleanser. Choose a product that will benefit your skin type (ex. for oily or dry skin) or see a health care professional to discuss skin care options.

Other ways to help prevent acne:

1. Use sunscreen daily. This will help protect the skin and work by absorbing or reflecting the sun's UV rays away from your skin. All skin types should use sunscreen. Please note, that skin is more sensitive to UV rays when using acne treatment products.
2. Wash pillowcases and sheets regularly.
3. Do not squeeze or pop pimples. This can spread acne-causing bacteria and can lead to scarring.
4. Manage stress. This can lead to changes in hormone levels.
5. Do not scrub too much or too hard. This can lead to skin irritation and aggravate acne.
6. If choosing to use make-up on your skin, use non-comedogenic (will not clog pores) products, remove daily and wash brushes regularly.

Healthy Hair

- Hair can get dirty from dust, pollution, sweat, and... dirt!
- Hair can be damaged by heat (from curling irons and hair dryers), brush rollers, over-teasing, dyes and bleaches, brushes with sharp bristles, and styles that tug at the roots.
- Styling products can be used and have different functions: Gels hold shape and styles; mousses give a softer hold and sometimes add extra volume; hair spray holds style (too much can make hair sticky or hard looking), waxes may hold styles as well.
- There are shampoos and conditioners for all hair types: normal, dry, fine, curly, coarse, and oily.
- Wash as frequently as required based on hair type and rinse thoroughly. Shampoo will help remove dirt, oil, and hair products. Conditioners will help detangle and add moisture to the hair and help protect it from damage. Shampoo should be applied first, then rinsed out, followed by conditioner.
- You don't have to wash your hair every day, and too much washing can dry out your hair and scalp, but if hair looks greasy or dirty between washings, it may need to be washed more often.
- Swimming may damage hair because of chemicals in the water. It is recommended to use a swimming cap or use shampoo and conditioner immediately after.
- If hair is cut very short, use sunscreen to protect the scalp, neck, and ears from burning when outside. Wearing a hat also helps protect your face and scalp from sunburn.

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Body hair

- During puberty, more hair may grow on different parts of the body such as the legs, under the arms, chest, upper lip or chin, and genital area. Choosing to remove body hair is an individual choice based on personal reasons. It is important to respect the choice of each person. Some may choose to shave this hair or not, and some may not need to shave very often at first.

***Myth:** *Shaving does not cause hair to grow back thicker or faster* ([Mayo- Expert Answers Does shaving unwanted body hair makes it grow back thicker and darker?](#))

How to shave safely:

1. Prepare the skin: rinse the area to be shaved with warm water to open the pores.
2. Apply a thin layer of shaving cream or gel to help reduce skin irritation. Shave the easy areas first.
3. Start with light/gentle strokes in the direction the hair grows to avoid irritation razor burn.
4. Rinse the skin and pat dry. Apply a moisturizer to seal in the skin's natural moisture barrier.

**Do not share razors to avoid possible transmission of infections and change your razor regularly. Dull razors can irritate the skin.*

**If planning to shave for the first time, it is recommended to talk to a trusted adult first.*

Dental care

- Good care of your mouth is important to prevent cavities and bad breath. Having bad breath often can be a sign of gum disease or dry mouth. Things you can do to keep your mouth healthy and fresh:
 - Brush with toothpaste for 2 minutes at least twice a day, first thing in the morning and before bed.
 - Always use a soft bristle brush and a toothpaste containing fluoride. Brush teeth on all surfaces. Finish with the tongue, the roof of the mouth (palate), and floss between all of the teeth.
 - When snacking and you do not have access to a toothbrush, rinse your mouth with water whenever possible.
 - Visit the dentist regularly for a cleaning and check-up (minimum yearly).
 - Change your toothbrush every 3 months or when able.

**The WECHU has dental programs that might support a student who does not have dental coverage:* [Healthy Smiles](#).

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Germ Lesson:

This lesson can be completed using the **WECHU Handwashing Kit** (GlitterBug® Potion and blacklight). Contact your school nurse, or contact chp@wechu.org to borrow this kit.

You can create your own handwashing demonstration using vegetable oil and flaxseeds. See the [WECHU Handwashing Lesson Plan](#) for instructions.

Ice Breaker

- 1) **Tennis Ball Activity:** To demonstrate how germs are spread, “sneeze” on the tennis ball with the spray bottle filled with water and toss the ball to a student. Tell them to pass the tennis ball quickly to someone else. Make sure everyone handles the tennis ball. This activity demonstrates how germs can be spread quickly on the hands. Bacteria and viruses can travel fast. Do not forget to wash or sanitize hands after this activity.
- 2) **Spray Bottle Activity:** Fill a spray bottle with water and spray the water in the air. This demonstration shows how respiratory droplets can travel from person to person when we cough or sneeze without covering our mouth/nose or cough or sneeze into our hands. Remind students that it is best to cough or sneeze into your sleeve or elbow. If you cough or sneeze into your hands, then please wash or sanitize your hands after to prevent spreading germs to others.

**The best way to cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough is tightly into your elbow/sleeve.*

What are germs? Discuss what they are and how to prevent from getting sick:

- Germs also known as bugs (viruses or bacteria) are tiny living organisms that cannot be seen by the eye alone. Germs can ONLY be seen by using a microscope.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY:

Sometimes we use other words for germs. What are they?

- Bugs, microbes, fungi, protozoa, viruses, or bacteria. Viruses and bacteria are the most common.

Bacteria come in all shapes: round, straight rods, twisted spirals, long, thin, and narrow with spindly legs. Viruses tend to be round in shape with spikes, tadpole-like, puffy or bumpy (under a microscope). Since there are different types, there are different methods to treat them if medication is required.

Can show images of bacteria and viruses from the [Hand Hygiene Bug Out book](#) for grades 4-6 located in the **Handwashing Kit.*

Bacteria are tiny, one-celled creatures that get nutrients from their environments to live. In some cases, that environment is a human body. Bacteria can reproduce outside of the body or within the body and can cause infections. Not all bacteria are bad. Some bacteria are good for our bodies and can help keep things in balance. Good bacteria live in our intestines and help us use the nutrients in the food we eat and make waste from what is left over. We could not make the most of a healthy meal without these



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important helper germs! Some bacteria and viruses are also used by scientists in labs to produce medicines and vaccines.

Viruses need to be inside living cells to grow and multiply. Most viruses cannot survive very long if they are not inside a living thing like a plant, animal, or person. Whatever a virus is living in is called a host. When viruses get inside people's bodies, they can spread and make people sick. Some viruses can live for a short time on things such as doorknobs or countertops.

Can you name any bacteria or viruses?

- **Bacteria** may be E. coli, salmonella, shigella, streptococci, staphylococcus pneumonia or aureus, Haemophilus, or Helicobacter pylori.
- **Viruses** may be chickenpox, measles, mumps, flu, H1Ni, Ebola, Hepatitis A, B, C, COVID-19
- Some can cause ear infections, tonsillitis, strep throat, cavities, or pneumonia. Some cause worse things such as severe diarrhea or damage of internal organs and death.

Where do we find them? Where do they live?

- Everywhere: doorknobs, toys, other people, keyboards, contaminated food, water, soil. Some enjoy the heat, and some can hibernate in the freezing cold. Germs can also be found in plants, animals, as well as in the body.
- Some bacteria can be good for you by helping to digest food and absorb nutrients. They can also help in the production of certain foods like cheese and yogurt. Other germs can cause diseases and can make people sick such as a cold or the flu (viruses).

What are some ways to help stay healthy?

- Eating nutritious foods, regular exercise, proper coughing and sneezing etiquette, not sharing food or drinks with others, regular check-ups with your health care provider, getting the flu shot and immunizations, staying home when you don't feel well, resting/sleeping, staying away from others who are sick, take all medication as prescribed, and proper hand washing and hygiene.

These are the best methods to prevent the spread of germs:

- Cough into your sleeve or elbow.
- Use a tissue and throw it away in a garbage container then wash your hands.
- Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom and before eating.
- Use hand sanitizer if no soap or water is available.
- To help prevent a urinary infection for persons with a vagina, remember to wipe from front to back with toilet paper after using the bathroom.

Handwashing videos and posters:

- [Handwashing Heroes - Government of Canada \(French\)](#)
- [What you need to Know about Handwashing – Centre for Disease Control and Prevention \(French\)](#)
- [Coughing etiquette and handwashing posters \(WECHU\)](#) (available in French, Spanish and Arabic)



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Handwashing Lesson: Use the borrowed **Handwashing Kit** to increase knowledge of commonly missed areas during handwashing or make your own handwashing activity (see the [WECHU Handwashing Lesson Plan](#) for instructions).

REFERENCE RESOURCES:

[Always Changing & Growing Up from Ophea](#)

[Bug Out from Red Cross Canada](#)

[Canadian Dermatology Association](#)

[Ontario Dental Association](#)

[Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines](#)