

LET'S TALK!

A guide for
facilitators for
Let's Talk!, a card
game for young
people to talk and
learn about sexual
reproductive
health and rights



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Let's Talk!, a card game co-created by youth for youth around different topics of sexual reproductive health and rights. The goal of Let's Talk! Is to encourage young people (aged around 14-24) to have open and honest conversations with each other about topics like puberty, relationships, sex and sexuality.

What this game isn't

Let's Talk is not designed to replace formal education about sexual reproductive health and rights. It is not designed to offer all the facts and details about different SRHR topics. Instead, its goal is to create a safe space to talk, discuss and share perspectives and experiences so that young people feel more comfortable voicing their questions and experiences as they move through young adulthood.



YOUR ROLE & RULES OF THE GAME

As a Let's Talk! Youth Facilitator, you have an important role to play to:

- ensure that players feel safe to talk about their experiences
- offer guidance and encouragement to players
- provide accurate information about the topics in the cards
- ensure that misinformation or myths are not perpetuated

Even though Let's Talk! Is a game largely based on sharing individual experiences and discussing them, there are still some rules to playing:

- There are no right or wrong answers, except in the cases of:
 - Gender-based violence should never be condoned, under any circumstance
 - Consent is mandatory, under any circumstance
- There are no questions that are bad, wrong or stupid
- No one's experience is more valuable or 'true' than another
- There is no bullying, harassing behavior or other inappropriate behavior
- It is always OK for participants to step out or take a break if they need to
- Stress that this is a safe space. Participants should feel comfortable with sharing or not sharing what they want.

***Facilitator tip:**
write these
rules down
and put them
up on the
wall*



TRIGGER WARNING

The game is carefully designed to avoid triggering players with regards to the topics and the choice of words. However, there is always a possibility that participants get triggered, feel overwhelmed or don't want to play the game anymore.

It should be discussed beforehand with the participants that it is always OK to step out or take a break and that they can do so with no questions asked. It is equally important to offer additional support, should such a situation occur.

Facilitators are not psychologists and it is not expected of them to offer psychological help, nor should anyone who isn't trained for psychological help attempt to provide it.

That being said, there are some guidelines as to what to say and what not to say to a person who has suffered from trauma (see next page).





✓ Do's

- Put the lead with the victim. They decide if, how much and when they want to share with you and should not be pressured to disclose anything they don't want to.
- Listen, show empathy and don't ask too many questions. Questions can come across as accusing, even if you don't mean it that way. Realize that you don't need to know the whole story to offer support.
- Verbally state that you believe the other person. Especially with sexual and/or partner abuse, the fear of not being believed is a big obstacle for people not to share their story
- Ask how you can help the other person. This can differ per person, per situation and per stage of processing a trauma.
- In case of abuse, stress that the perpetrator is to blame and not the victim itself.
- Express your gratitude for sharing their story with you.

⊘ Don'ts:

- Ask 'why' questions. Examples are: why were you there? Why did you wear that? These questions enable victim blaming, which means that the victim gets (partly) blamed for what happened. This can also happen if you didn't mean it to.
- Other forms of victim blaming are questions such as: did you say no? Were you intoxicated? Were you able to leave?
- Pressure the person to take further steps. It should be their choice whether they want to file a report, tell somebody else or press charges.



BOUNDARIES

When talking about consent, it is important to know when it is okay to have sexual intercourse. That should be the case, if you can check of these 6 points.

- You both want it, and there is no doubt
- No one has to do anything or insists
- No one is the boss or superior
- Both feel like they are ready to do this
- The place is okay
- You respect yourself and the other person

Sexually transgressive behavior happens when someone who has power over the other person, crosses their borders and thereby abuses their power.

Examples include:

- Prolonged staring at someone's genitals, buttocks or breasts
- Showing or sending sex images without someone's consent
- Making sexual comments
- Asking inappropriate questions
- Touching someone at inappropriate places

Sexual transgression is never the fault of the person that it happens to. The person who is crossing a border is in the wrong and there is usually some form of power abuse at play. We know that many people who experience sexual assault have a freeze-reaction and are physically not able to do anything in that moment.



TOP 3 FACILITATOR TIPS WHEN PLAYING THE GAME

1

Pay close attention to the dynamics in the room.

Use the checklist below to help.

- Is anyone dominating the discussion?
 - If this is case, you can invite this player to give others a chance to share
- Does anyone seem hesitant to share?
 - If this is the case, consider the questions below before acting.
 - Sometimes people just don't want to share and that's also OK.
- Are there certain people who do not feel comfortable sharing in front of others (e.g. women who do not feel comfortable sharing in front of men, young people who don't feel sharing in front of elders)?
 - If this is the case, you can create groups that are based on gender
- Are there language barriers that prevent certain people from sharing?
 - If this is the case, you can create groups based on language or request an interpreter.

2

Facilitate by the 'Rules of the Game'

to ensure that everyone feels included and that no misinformation is spread.

3

Be accessible to players

- Let them know that they can come to you with any questions or concerns they have before, during or after playing the game.



HOW THE GAME WORKS

Basic information and play time

Let's Talk has 73 cards. The suggested play time is 45 minutes - 1 hour.

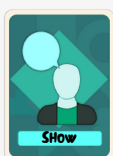
Players can get through as many cards as they can in this time. Try not to stop a good discussion but do keep an eye on the time, to make sure everyone gets at least 5 turns to pick a card.

Card categories

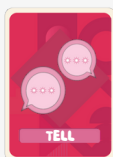
The cards are divided into 4 categories.

You can use the spinning wheel to determine what card needs to be drawn.

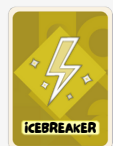
Facilitator tip if players are very engaged, it's OK to extend the play time as long as they'd like.



SHOW cards: short scenarios that players read out loud and have a discussion around. These cards can also be acted out through role playing.



TELL cards: these cards contain an open question and asks players to share what they think based on their own experiences



ICEBREAKER cards: questions that are put in randomly to get to know each other



MYTHBUSTER cards: these cards contain common false myths on SRHR and their counterfactuals



PLAYING THE GAME

Age range

The game was designed for teens in the age range of 14–24. This range is an average and is based on feedback from different pilot studies. However, it is for the facilitator to decide whether they want to include people that fall outside of this age range or not.

Before the game begins

The facilitator has the opportunity to select the cards in case they identify in advance that there are some sensitive issues that may harm someone. Furthermore, they can decide if all the cards are applicable to the stage of life all participants are in.

Number of players

Let's Talk! can be played in groups of 4–6 people.

Icebreaker

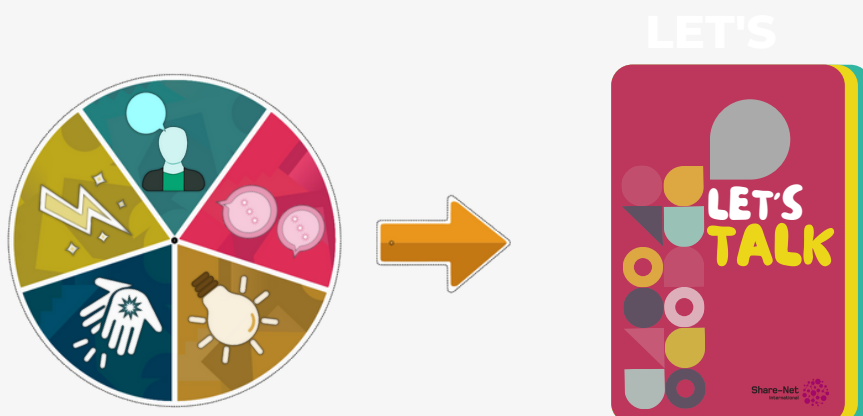
First start with an icebreaker activity, The goal of this activity is for everyone to feel at ease with other and comfortable sharing. Some examples are at the end of this guide or feel free to use your own!



Getting started

Next, ask each group to sit in a circle. Ask each group to identify one **SCORE KEEPER**. This person is responsible for keeping score.

- Shuffle the card deck
- Place the card deck in the center of each group
- Each group identifies one person to pick the first card
- Everyone goes around the circle picking a card at random, one at a time.
- The first person picks a card at random. If you choose to play with the spinning wheel, you can use this to help decide which card to pick
- Everyone who wants to participate or to answer, can.
- The facilitator listens and observes to make sure everyone feels comfortable and that no myths are being perpetuated in the discussion.



EARNING POINTS

The facilitator can decide beforehand or discuss with the group whether they want a point system or not.

The game can still be played without earning points and a winner. If played without a point system, the goal is to facilitate meaningful dialogue and discussion. In pilot studies, not having a point system was shown to be just as enticing to play as having one.

Should the group want to play the game with a point system, it is as follows.

Score breakdown:

- **First person to collect 3 SHOW cards OR 5 TELL cards wins.**
- **2 Icebreaker cards or 2 Mythbuster cards are worth 1 Show card or 1 Tell card.**



NEED HELP?

It's OK not to have all the answers. As a discussion-based game, many of the questions do not have right or wrong answers, and it's normal for unexpected questions to arise that you may not know how to answer.

If you feel stuck and don't know how to answer a question that comes up during the game, it can be helpful to:

- Validate the experiences that are shared (unless they break one of the rules of the game).*
- If you don't know an answer, ask other participants what they think and tell players you will get back to them after looking it up*

**Facilitator tip*: remember, you don't need to have all the answers. It's OK to refer players to other resources for more information about a topic. Your main role is to focus on facilitating honest conversations, in order to create a safe space to share and discuss.*



HELPFUL RESOURCES

Global

- [Sexually Transmitted Infections \(STIs\) Top 10 Myth Busters for All Ages](#)
- [Information, Tips and exercises for questions around sexuality](#)

Burundi

- [Yaga Burundi facebook page](#)
- [Yaga website with topics about SRHR](#)
- [Ministry of health website](#)
- [Le monde commence par moi](#)
- Some helpful hashtags used on social medias related to SRHR
[#UbufashaKwIronDoka](#) [#NdafisIjambo](#) [#OyaNiOya](#)

Colombia

- [ShareNet Colombia](#)
- [Corporación Red Somos](#)
- [Fundación Grupo de Acción y Apoyo a Personas Trans](#)
- [Liga Colombiana de Lucha contra el Sida](#)
- [Más que tres letras](#)

Netherlands

- [Centre for SRHR in NL, Europe, Africa and Asia](#)
- [Centre for sexual health in NL](#)
- [Health center in the Netherlands](#)
- [Sexual Health \(for Teens\)](#)
- [Pubergids](#)
- [Centrum Seksueel Geweld](#)



ACCESSIBILITY TIPS

For visually-impaired

Let's Talk! Is designed to be a verbal game. If in the **CARD MASTER** role, you can help by reading the questions aloud.

For hearing-impaired

If you have hearing-impaired participants, it is advised that you ensure there is a sign language interpreter present and that the interpreter is briefed on the 'rules of the game'.

Other considerations

- Think about the space where the game will be played. Does the space have a lot of stairs?
- Is the space accessible by public transport?
- Is it in an area that is well-lit (if players are leaving after dark)?



HELPFUL HINTS/ ANSWERS TO THE CARDS

Note: although the cards strive to be as inclusive as possible in regards to the names that are being used, they are still a reflection of the social environment of the people that created them. Please feel free to change the names to better reflect your community.

Icebreakers

#	Facilitator's hint
1	Do you think the actor who plays you should be the protagonist or the antagonist? Imagine what kind of movie you would star in: drama, action, horror or a romantic movie.
2	Are you better at water sports or are you more into group sports?
3	You could choose to have superior strength, the ability to sing like a star, or know how to speak every language in the world.
4	What would you ask an elephant? What would you say to your pet? Would you talk to the tree that has been in the park near your house all your life?
5	Do you prefer animated series, mystery, comedy or soap operas? Or are you one of those who prefer to listen to music or radio programs while doing your daily routine?
6	It is common to play traditional sports such as soccer or basketball, but there are also more local, neighborhood games.
7	You can choose an object that is always the first in your suitcase: a book, sunscreen, pens and paper to draw on while on the road.
8	Choose between a public figure, a well-known person or a fictional character and share the quality that inspires you the most in the person you chose.



Show

#

Facilitator's hint

People may have different reactions to a positive pregnancy test.

- 1 There are many possible feelings that people can have if they find out they're pregnant, such as: anxious, surprised, happy, insecure, guilty, angry, sad or any combination. They might need support from a partner, family and friends and also should be able to talk to health professionals about their options.

2 Transgender means that somebody was born in a body that has a different gender than how they feel. So, someone could feel like a boy/man but was born with a female body. You can feel like a boy/man, girl/woman, neither, both, or something in between. That is called your gender identity.

2 There are also medical procedures available in some places for those who want to change their body so that it matches their gender identity. That's called gender affirming surgery. The health center is available for professional help and talking about the different options.

Talk about the importance of consent. Consent is when both people approve of what is being done or proposed by another, such as kissing or touching. It is important to check if the other person wants to do the same things as you. Examples of asking consent are:

3 Are you okay with this?

4 Can I kiss/touch you?

10 Do you like this?

I It is always OK to say no, including if you already said yes before. You're allowed to change your mind. It is possible that if someone you like says no, you feel rejected and that is a pesky feeling. However, it is important to not make your partner feel guilty or bad but to support their choice: it is their body.

Sometimes, people use their power over a partner and that's called power abuse. Tim decreases Sascha's feeling of self-worth with what he says and does.

- 5 In relationships, it is important to support each other. Making the other feel insecure can be a sign that the relationship is not healthy. Physically hurting your partner is called domestic violence, that is against the law and wrong. It's important to remind players: it's never the person's fault who is experiencing abuse.



#

Facilitator's hint

6

On TV, in magazines and on social media, we often see stereotypical male-female roles, and the 'ideal body'. We see thin women who act sexy and muscular men who are tough. That is not how reality is, and not how it should be. Everyone is different and their bodies are too. And that's OK.

7

An erection is a hardening of the penis that occurs when sponge-like tissue inside the penis fills up with blood. Although many erections are caused by sexual arousal, others seem to happen for no particular reason. So if you've had an erection in an odd or embarrassing situation, there's no reason to worry that something is wrong with you. Your body is just acting naturally as your body changes with puberty.

8

There is no golden standard for a normal sex life. It looks different for everyone. A sudden change in sexual drive may be caused by several things such as any deficit (food, sleep, energy) also depression, trauma and many many other things. What's important is that partners communicate with each other about what they want and need and seek advice from a health counselor if they have questions

9

It can be OK to ask your friends about their first time, but it should be done in a respectful manner and the person you're asking should be comfortable sharing.

Don'ts:

Ask a stranger

Ask it in a public place where other people can hear the answer

Sexualize the person ('I bet you were on fire your first time')

Be inappropriate

Demand an answer

Share the answer with other

Do:

Ask if you can ask a personal question

Do it out of interest

Express the confidentiality of the answer

Make the person feel comfortable enough to share

Respect the other's decision to not share or only share a little bit





#

Facilitator's hint

11

Everyone experiences sex in their own way. Sometimes it can be painful, other times pleasurable. Your body, thoughts and feelings together determine whether you enjoy it. That is not something another person can decide for you or judge you for. The orgasm is often considered as the climax of a sexual intercourse. It is hard to recognise and it isn't always reached. The most important thing during sex is to feel safe with your partner and to share your thoughts and experience with each other.

12

Masturbation or self-gratification is a safe, healthy way to discover your body. And if you don't masturbate, that's okay, too. Masturbation involves touching or rubbing of the genital area (penis for males and clitoris for females) to the point of a physical sensation called arousal. Masturbation is not physically damaging to the genitals or body. Having questions about masturbation is normal. The questions about it should be asked in a safe environment.

13

Puberty can be scary and hard to handle on a physical and mental level. It can be helpful to talk to someone you trust about some of the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty (for more on these changes, see Helpful Hints for related cards).

Tell

#

Facilitator's hint

1

Finding out your sexual orientation is different for everybody. Some know from a young age and others figure out who they like much later in life. There is no age where you 'should' know and it is normal to never have a definitive answer. For some people, it can change over time. Sometimes they are more into girls/women, and other times more into boys/men, or sometimes they are not attracted to anyone. That is called being Asexual and is also completely normal.

2

To protect yourself and your partner, always use a condom.

You are always encouraged to check for STDs at the health center before having unprotected sex.

Having unprotected can have consequences such as getting pregnant, getting a STD or a urinary tract infection (UTI).

People can decide to have unprotected sex if they are dating exclusively and have checked for the absence of STD's, and/or if they want to get pregnant.



3

A healthy sexual relationship is when both partners express what they want and respect each other's wishes. No one's desires are more valid or more important.

Consent should always be given. If something is one person's desire, but the other doesn't want to do it, then it shouldn't happen. Everyone has an equal right to their own bodies.

4

We meet a lot of people online and on social media. The protection of the screen can feel like a comfortable way to interact without feeling vulnerable. But online dating or flirting can also be a way for others to pretend to be someone they're not, which can be dangerous.

You should not have a sexual relationship with someone that you do not know or never met. If you are an adult and choose to meet someone you met online in-person, always do it in a public space and together with a friend or family member.

5

There are many different sexual orientations and people may identify with different orientations throughout their lives. Some examples are homosexual (attracted to the same gender), heterosexual (attracted to the opposite gender), bisexual (attracted to women and men), asexual (not sexually attracted to anyone), pansexual (attracted to others no matter their gender identity or sex). There is no sexual attraction that is better than others. It's based on our own individual preferences.

6

Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights is an umbrella term for everything that has to do with human rights related to sexuality and reproduction. Think of sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health and reproductive rights. Everyone is entitled to their health and rights. And everyone should have the right to decide what they want to do with their own bodies,

7

STDs are diseases that you can pass on via sexual encounters. It depends on the type of STD how they are transmitted. Some are transmitted through blood, others through saliva, sperm or the mucous in the vulva and vagina. Chlamydia, genital warts and gonorrhea are some of the most common STDs. It is also possible to have a STD without noticing, but you are always encouraged to get checked at a health center, especially if you've had unprotected sex. To prevent STDs, always ask your partner if they've tested recently. Use condoms and get tested after you have sex at a health center if you think you may have been exposed. Even if you're not sure, many clinics offer free STD testing.

8

There are many ways of having a relationship that are not between a man and a woman. For example, two men or two women, but also relationships between people who are non-gender conforming (for example: non-binary people). Some people have open relationships or have polyamorous relationships, meaning that they date more people at the same time or have a relationship between three or more people.



9

Safe sex involves communication between you and your partner. It is important that you both can be yourselves and treat each other as you want to be treated. Always check in with each other. Safe sex also means protecting your body against consequences that you don't want, such as STDs and unwanted pregnancy. You can do this by wearing condoms, taking birth control, and getting tested for STDs if you're worried that you may have been exposed.

10

Everyone experiences sex in their own way. Sometimes it can be painful, other times pleasurable. Your body, thoughts and feelings together determine whether you enjoy it. That is not something another person can decide for you or judge you for. The orgasm is often considered as the climax of a sexual intercourse. It is hard to recognise and it isn't always reached. The most important thing during sex is to feel safe with your partner and to share your thoughts and experience with each other.

11

You and your partner both can use contraception (also called birth control). For women, this can come in many forms like a daily pill, a monthly patch or a device inserted into your uterus every few years. For men, condoms are the most common products used to prevent unplanned pregnancies. No single contraceptive method is always 100% effective on its own. There are many different types of contraception. It's best to consult with a health counselor to determine which method is best for you. Withdrawal and ovulation tracking and having sex only on certain days are not reliable methods to prevent a pregnancy.

12

Communication is the basis for any (sexual) relationship between people. Communication also means non-verbal ways of expressing what you like, such as body language, gestures or sounds. You can talk together about what you like and don't like and where your boundaries or limits are regarding sex and intimacy.

13

Masturbation or self-gratification is a safe, healthy way to discover your body. And if you don't masturbate, that's okay, too. Masturbation involves touching or rubbing of the genital area (penis for males and clitoris for females) to the point of a physical sensation called arousal. Masturbation is not physically damaging to the genitals or body. Having questions about masturbation is normal. The questions about it should be asked in a safe environment.

14

While vagina has emerged as the most common term for women's genitalia, vulva is actually the correct term for all of the external organs. The vagina is the canal that connects the uterus to the vulva. It's what babies pass through during childbirth, as well as a woman's menstrual flow. It's also what is generally used for sexual penetration.



15 Crossing boundaries can be saying something inappropriate or that makes your partner uncomfortable. It can also be crossing a physical boundary like touching in a way that makes your partner feel uncomfortable. You are always allowed to tell a person that what they're doing is not OK. Boundaries can change. It's always the right of each person in a relationship to create set own boundaries. It's important to always communicate with each other so that you are aware of each other's boundaries and can ask questions if you're not sure.

16 If someone tells you that what you're doing is not OK to them, you should apologize and stop doing it. You might also notice that your partner is uncomfortable without them saying anything. If you notice this, always check with your partner if what you're doing is (still) OK. Boundaries can change. It's always the right of each person in a relationship to set their own boundaries. It's important to always communicate with each other so that you are aware of each other's boundaries and can ask questions if you're not sure.

17 You start growing a lot, you might gain weight and start to notice changes in overall shape. Guys' shoulders might grow wider, and their bodies will become more muscular. Their voices will become deeper. Girls' bodies usually become curvier. They might gain weight on their hips, and their breasts develop. One of the first signs of puberty is hair growing where it didn't grow before. Another thing that comes with puberty is acne, or pimples. Acne is triggered by puberty hormones. A lot of teens notice that they have a new smell under their arms and elsewhere on their bodies when they enter puberty.

17 Setting and respecting boundaries in relationships isn't always easy. It's the right of each person in a relationship to set their own boundaries. It's important to always communicate with each other so that you are aware of each other's boundaries and can ask questions if you're not sure. You can talk to friends, your parents, or a healthcare professional about what it means to set boundaries and communicate about your boundaries with your partner. It's important you talk to someone you trust and who you feel comfortable with.

18 Setting and respecting boundaries in relationships isn't always easy. It's the right of each person in a relationship to set their own boundaries. It's important to always communicate with each other so that you are aware of each other's boundaries and can ask questions if you're not sure. You can talk to friends, your parents, or a healthcare professional about what it means to set boundaries and communicate about your boundaries with your partner. It's important you talk to someone you trust and who you feel comfortable with.



#

Facilitator's hint

19

It's easy to feel embarrassed or anxious when talking about sex, but you want to be sure you have all the right information. Some teens can talk to their parents, siblings or friends about sex and get all their questions answered. If you feel funny talking to your parents about sex, there are many other people to talk to, like your doctor, a school nurse, a teacher, a health counselor, or another adult you feel comfortable talking with. You can also look online for information but be aware that not everything online is accurate.

20

It's easy to feel embarrassed or anxious when talking about puberty, but you want to be sure you have all the right information. Some teens can talk to their parents, siblings or friends about changes that happen during puberty and get all their questions answered. If you feel funny talking to your parents about puberty, there are many other people to talk to, like your doctor, a school nurse, a teacher, a health counselor, or another adult you feel comfortable talking with. You can also look online for information but be aware that not everything online is accurate.

21

Heartbreaks are feelings of sadness and loss that are experienced on a personal level and often occur when relationships end for different reasons. How to deal with heartbreak will change depending on different factors. It's helpful during heartbreak to have a support system to lean on – including friends and family, who can offer a listening ear or comfort. As a facilitator, try to ensure that the discussion will not trigger people.

22

Breakups often occur when relationships end for different reasons. How to deal with breakups will change depending on different factors. It's helpful during a breakup to have a support system to lean on – including friends and family, who can offer a listening ear or comfort. As a facilitator, try to ensure that the discussion will not trigger people.

23

STDs are diseases that you can pass on via sexual encounters. It depends on the type of STD how they are transmitted. Some are transmitted through blood, others through saliva, sperm or the mucous in the vulva and vagina. For example, the STD Hepatitis can lead to liver cancer and HPV (human papillomavirus) can lead to cervical cancer. HIV (Human immunodeficiency virus) can lead to serious infections throughout the whole body (called AIDS or Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). To prevent STDs, always ask your partner if they've tested recently. Use condoms and get tested after you have sex at a health center if you think you may have been exposed. Even if you're not sure, many clinics offer free STD testing.



A person is called seropositive when they conduct a blood test and the result for HIV comes back positive.

24 When a HIV test is found positive, the person is treated with medications that keep the virus in their body on a really low level. But to this date, there is no cure or vaccine for HIV so it's important to always get tested at your local health facility on a regular basis if you are sexually-active or if you think you may have been exposed to HIV (through unprotected sex, for example). If you think you may be exposed to HIV in the future, there are preventative medications that can help reduce your chance of getting HIV. Many clinics offer free or reduced cost HIV counseling, medication and testing.

Menstruation is due to hormonal changes that occur in a girl's body as it develops into its adult form, usually lasting from about 12 to 51 years of age.

Menstruation means that girls and women bleed a little from their vagina every month for 2-7 days. It's called a period. It isn't because they're hurt. It's just the body releasing an egg that hasn't been fertilized by male sperm.

25 Getting your period is completely normal and part of growing up. Period blood can be different colors or thickness. Some girls and women experience changes in mood and energy before or during their periods. Some also can experience some pain and cramping. All of this is completely normal. There are different products girls and women use when they have their period to catch the blood, like pads, tampons or cups. These are usually available at local pharmacies. It's always good to reach out to a health professional with questions about menstruation and how to manage it.

26 Gender-based-violence (GBV) is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender. Violence against women is one of the most common forms of GBV. Violence against women is a violation of human rights. It can be in the form of physical harm, sexual harm or psychological harm. Sometimes GBV can be obvious if in the form of physical violence. Other times it can be hard to know if GBV is occurring in a relationship. If you or someone you know ever feels hurt, scared or uncomfortable in a relationship, talk to someone you trust about it - your parents, siblings, friends or a health counselor - so that you get the support you need to safely leave the situation. If you're in a situation with immediate violence, always call the police.



27 Emotional changes are normal! While your body is adjusting to puberty, so is your brain. During puberty, your emotions may become stronger and more intense. Your mood might change more frequently, quickly and randomly. You may have strong emotions that you've never experienced before. It's common to feel confused, scared or angry and not know why as your body adjusts to its adult form.

28 During puberty, you might feel confused or have strong emotions that you've never experienced before. You may feel anxious about how your changing body looks. You might feel overly sensitive or become easily upset. Some teens lose their tempers more than usual and get angry at their friends or families. Sometimes it can be difficult to deal with all of these new emotions. It might be your new "puberty brain" trying to adjust. And while the adjustment can feel difficult in the beginning, it will gradually become easier. It can help to talk to someone and share how you're feeling — a friend or, a parent, older sibling, or adult who's gone through it all before. You might have new, confusing feelings about sex — and lot of questions. The adult hormones estrogen and testosterone are signals that your body is giving you new responsibilities, like the ability to create a child. That's why it's important to get all your questions answered.

29 It's easy to feel embarrassed or anxious when talking about menstruation, but you want to be sure you have all the right information. Some teens can talk to their parents, siblings or friends about changes that happen during puberty and get all their questions answered. If you feel funny talking to your parents about puberty, there are many other people to talk to, like your doctor, a school nurse, a teacher, a health counselor, or another adult you feel comfortable talking with. You can also look online for information but be aware that not everything online is accurate.



DEFINITIONS

Sexually transmitted disease (STD)/ sexually transmitted infection (STI)

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), or sexually transmitted infections (STIs), are infections that are passed from one person to another through sexual contact. The contact is usually vaginal, oral, or anal sex. But sometimes they can spread through other intimate physical contact. This is because some STDs, like herpes and HPV, are spread by skin-to-skin contact.

Hormones

Hormones are chemical substances that act like messenger molecules in the body. After being made in one part of the body, they travel to other parts of the body where they help control how cells and organs do their work.

Sex hormones

When you reach puberty, your brain releases special hormones that start the changes of puberty. It affects the growth of the reproductive organs (ovaries, testes) and the development of secondary sex characteristics (facial hair growth, breast development, voice deepening)

LGBT/ LGBTQIA

LGBTQIA+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Transgender

Transgender is an umbrella term. It describes people for whom their gender identity doesn't match with the gender they got assigned at birth. The term includes different identities, such as trans man and trans women, non-binary people or genderqueer people.





Puberty

When your body reaches a certain age, your brain releases a special hormone that starts the changes of puberty. It's called gonadotropin-releasing hormone, or GnRH for short. Guys and girls both have hormones in their bodies. And depending on whether you're a guy or a girl, these hormones go to work on different parts of the body.

For guys, these hormones travel through the blood and give the testes the signal to begin the production of testosterone and sperm.

Testosterone is the hormone that causes most of the changes in a guy's body during puberty. Sperm cells must be produced for men to reproduce.

In girls, hormones target the ovaries, which contain eggs that have been there since birth. The hormones stimulate the ovaries to begin producing another hormone called estrogen. Estrogen causes a girl's body to mature and prepares her for pregnancy. So that's what's really happening during puberty — it's all these new chemicals moving around inside your body, turning you from a teen into an adult with adult levels of hormones. Puberty usually starts some time between age 7 and 13 in girls and 9 and 15 in guys. Some people start puberty a bit earlier or later, though. Each person is a little different, so everyone starts and goes through puberty on his or her body's own schedule. This is one of the reasons why some of your friends might still look like kids, whereas others look more like adults.

Body diversity

Body diversity means that all bodies are different and that there is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to the body. If everyone in the world would eat, sleep and exercise the same, we would still all look different.

Masturbation

Masturbation is when you have sex with yourself. This can be done with hands, instruments, sometimes by sexual fantasies or by a combination of these things.



Sexuality

Sexuality is a word we use to talk about how we understand our bodies and how we understand our relationships. This understanding includes all aspects of who we are – our values and beliefs, bodies, desires, relationships, gender and our thoughts and feelings about all of these. Because our sexuality is made up of so many different components, our understanding of our own sexuality is ever-changing and unique to each person. The most important thing to understand about sexuality is that it is self-defined; that is, that every person is allowed to talk about and understand their own sexuality in their own way that makes sense to them. Sexuality is dynamic and always changing; often we may discover that different parts of our lives may interact with each other in confusing or affirming ways. This is okay and is part of our normal development. Exploring our own sexuality, rooted within the principles of consent and sexual rights, is a key determinant of our health and wellness.

Erection

An erection is a hardening of the penis that occurs when sponge-like tissue inside the penis fills up with blood. Usually, an erection causes the penis to enlarge and stand away from the body.

Contraception

When you deliberately prevent getting pregnant.

Fetish

A fetish is an extremely strong devotion to something. There are sexual fetishes and nonsexual fetishes: both are obsessive interests.

Consent

Consent is when both people approve of what is being done or proposed by another, such as kissing or touching.



Gender-based violence

GBV is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. Violence against women is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and means all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in physical harm, sexual harm, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women. It can include violence against women, domestic violence against women, men or children living in the same domestic unit. Although women and girls are the main victims of GBV, it also causes severe harm to families and communities.

Victim blaming

When a victim/survivor of sexual assault gets the blame. Questions that are blaming the victim are, for example:

Why didn't you resist?

Why didn't you scream for help?

Why did you go out looking like that?

You shouldn't have worn that!

You flirted with him!

Orgasm

Orgasms can come through sex or masturbation. Orgasms are good feelings in the genital area. Men and women can have them. There's a feeling of buildup and a release, sort of like when you sneeze. During an orgasm, a man ejaculates—that means sperm comes out of his penis.

HPV

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that can cause cervical cancer as well as genital warts. It can spread through sex and from some types of skin-to-skin-contact. Because HPV can infect areas that are not covered by the condom, condoms will not fully protect you against HPV, but condoms do help in HPV prevention. Where available, HPV vaccination is recommended at ages 11-12 years to protect against cancers caused by HPV infection.



HIV

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus that attacks the immune system. The immune system becomes weaker, making it harder for the body to fight off infections and some kinds of cancers. Most people who are diagnosed early and take medicines for HIV can live long, healthy lives. Chances of contracting HIV are higher with unprotected sex (anal or vaginal), sharing needles or other contact with bodily fluids of an infected person like blood, vaginal mucous or semen.

AIDS

AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) can happen after someone has had HIV for many years. In AIDS, the immune system gets very weak. So, serious infections and health problems can happen. The best way to avoid AIDS is to get tested for HIV and other STDs as soon as you suspect you may have been exposed.

Libido

Libido is a person's overall sexual drive or desire for sexual activity. Libido is influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors and is different from person to person and from situation to situation. There is no 'normal' libido.

Foreplay

Foreplay usually comes before sexual intercourse. Foreplay can include a lot of different things, like kissing, sharing fantasies, or touching one another's genitals. The purpose of foreplay is to add to sexual excitement, and to help prepare the body for intercourse. It can also be a way for couples to play/have fun with each other leading up to sexual intercourse.

ICEBREAKER IDEAS

2 truths 1 lie

You tell three facts about yourself and the rest has to guess which one is the lie

'I am the only one who'

Sit in a circle on chairs and one person stands in the middle. They make a statement about themselves such as 'I'm the only one who has red hair'.

Everyone who also has red hair stands up and has to switch chairs. The one person who is left stands in the middle and makes another statement etc.

Compliment round

Everyone has to give themselves a compliment

Guess my name

Introduce yourself but use a different language to say/translate your last name. For example, My name is Martha Forest (in Dutch, this would be Martha Bos because Bos means forest). Ask the other players to guess your name in your mother tongue.

What's the order?

Participants have to form a line from lowest to highest based on factors such as age, distance to a place, number of pets, etc. They are meant to ask each other questions to find out who should stand where. For example, the youngest stands at one side and the eldest on the other.



Guess where I am from

Someone from the group describes where she/he/they is from using only three words and the rest of the group tries to guess the place. The words should not include the name of the place of course ;)

Secret move

Participants form a circle around a guesser in the middle. There is one leader who decides which move all the participants should be doing repeatedly. The move can be a special handshake, hand move, leg movement, head movement. The leader shows the move discreetly so the guesser doesn't see them and the leader keeps switching moves until the guesser guesses who the leader is.

Try not to laugh

Participants take turns in making a funny sound or move. The participants who laugh are eliminated till there is only one winner.

Guess what animal it is

The person in charge of the activity will whisper an animal to draw to someone from the group. That person will have to draw it on a piece of paper, but they will have to do it blindfolded. The other participants will have 1 minute to guess the animal being drawn.

