

# Life Skills Development/Module Two/Human Sexuality

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## Unit 1: Human Sexuality and Sexual Health

### Introduction

This unit will cover the content of Human Sexuality and Sexual Health. This topic is more than just sex and having sex; it is part of the physical, psychological and social makeup of an individual. Sexuality is about the person you feel you are as a man or a woman, about your sexual orientation and identity. Human sexuality is a function of one's whole personality that is life long, beginning from birth.

It includes how one feels about oneself as a person; how one feels about being a man or a woman, and how one gets along with members of either gender. Sexuality also includes genital and reproductive health, such as intercourse and child bearing. It is the way one thinks, feels and behaves (UNAIDS, 2004). Human Sexuality and Sexual Health, therefore, is the area dealing with information leading to the building of attitudes, beliefs and values about such topics as identity, body image and gender role, sexual development, reproductive health relationships, and intimacy (SIECUS, 2004).

Information on Human Sexuality and Sexual Health is crucial for preparing children for their lives as adults and parents. It will provide young people with skills such as responding adequately to demands for sexual intercourse or offers of drugs, taking responsible decisions, managing situations of risk, and seeking appropriate health services, counseling and care.



### Objectives

Upon completion of this unit you will be able to:

- Differentiate between sex and sexuality.
- Identify the concepts of sexuality.
- Distinguish the different physical changes that occurs in male and female individuals during puberty.
- Learn the process of conception and pregnancy.
- Recognize the most common methods of contraceptives used.
- Explain the concepts of STD, including HIV/AIDS.
- Demonstrate awareness towards risk factors related to priority problems such as Sexually Transmitted Infections/HIV/AIDS, Cancer
- Facilitate access to health information, products and services related to sexuality and sexual health.
- Promote healthy sexual practices and lifestyles.



### Definitions

- Sex: the biological reality of male and female,
- Sexual intercourse: Sexual intercourse is the act of inserting the erect penis of the male into the vagina of the female for reproduction and also for sexual enjoyment.
- Ejaculation: sudden discharge of semen during sexual intercourse or masturbation
- Rhythmic muscular contractions of the genitals (sex organs) combined with waves of intense pleasurable sensations; in males, results in the ejaculation of semen.
- Sexual Identity or Sexual Orientation: describes a person's perception of his or her own sex
- Homosexuality: refers to both sexual behavior and sexual attraction between people of the same gender or to a sexual orientation
- Heterosexuality: refers to sexual or romantic attraction between opposite sexes, and is the most common sexual orientation among humans.
- Transvestite: refers to someone who assumes the appearances and characteristics of the opposite sex; someone whose gender and sex do not match

# Human Sexuality

## Sex and Sexuality



### Preknowledge

Two important concepts related to Human Sexuality are **Sex** and **Sexuality**.

- Can you distinguish between sex and sexuality
- Discuss with your friends to find out their ideas about these two terms
- List down the different elements that your friends identified under each concept



**Feedback:** Sex refers to whether or not a person is male or female, whether a person has a penis or vagina. Many of you may have noticed on different forms you have completed for school or at the doctor's office that there is often a question on the form called "Sex." You are required to check either male or female. Sex is also commonly used as an abbreviation to refer to sexual intercourse.

Sexuality refers to the total expression of who you are as a human being, your femaleness or your maleness. Our sexuality begins at birth and ends at death. Everyone is a sexual being. Your sexuality is interplay between body image, gender identity, gender role, sexual orientation, eroticism, genitals, intimacy, relationships, and love and affection. A person's sexuality includes his or her attitudes, values, knowledge and behaviors. How people express their sexuality is influenced by their families, culture, society, faith and beliefs.

It is important, at this stage to stress on the cultural dimension of sexuality since our culture shapes to a large extent what we are. It should be remembered, though, that each culture approaches sexuality in its own distinct way. While in some societies children can talk openly to their parents on sex and sexuality, in other societies these topics are taboo. Children are left on their own to learn about them.



### Activity

Now that you have read about those two concepts

- Compare and contrast them with what you had found earlier
- Analyse your findings in solo or with your friends.

## Concepts of Human Sexuality



Having understood the meaning of those two terms, let us delve deeper into Human Sexuality. It describes the direction of an individual's sexuality, often in relation to their own sex or gender. It refers to the changes that you experience when growing up, the shape of your body, the ways of dressing up, the way you talk and feel about people. In fact, it is the sum total of who you are. It comprises a whole range of behaviour and processes, including the physiological, psychological, social, cultural, political, and spiritual or religious aspects of sex and human sexual behaviour.

Many classification schemes have been established to describe people's sexual orientations on the basis of psychological and behavioural components. Common terms for describing sexual orientation include homosexual (lesbian/gay), heterosexual (straight) and Transvestite. Another term which is becoming popular today is the term Transsexual whereby an individual can change his sex by undergoing a surgical operation. You will find more information on this section by following this [LINK](#).

Today there is a growing concern in society about how the young generation struggles with the question of human sexuality. With more exposure to the media, young people have seen more sexual innuendo and experienced more sex earlier than previous generations and yet, they know as little as their parents knew at the age of 18. A thorough knowledge of concepts of sexuality is crucial for a healthy and balanced development of the individual.



### Activity

Carry out the following activities to show that you have understood the concept discussed above:

- 1 List down three ways that you think you are a sexual being.
- 2 Think of five famous singers, artistes or other celebrities that you know and state what defines their sexuality.
- 3 Prepare a small speech for your friends on human sexuality highlighting the points that you have learned just now
4. Write an article for the local newspaper supporting the case that people have the right to have the sexual orientation they desire. Write another article taking an opposite stand.

## Sexual Health

Also referred to as reproductive health is the many factors that will impact individual sexual function and reproduction. These factors include a variety of physical, mental and emotional issues. Disorders that affect any of these factors can impact a person's physical and emotional health, as well as his or her relationships and self-image.

Sexual health is evidenced in the free and responsible expressions of sexual capabilities that foster harmonious personal and social wellness, enriching individual and social life. It is not merely the absence of dysfunction, disease and/or infirmity. For Sexual Health to be attained and maintained it is necessary that the sexual rights of all people be recognized and upheld.

*'Read more on Sexual Health on the following link.*

### Promotion of Sexual Health

[1]

## Puberty

**Puberty** refers to the process when your body change from child into an adult and then capable of reproduction. It brings profound changes in biologic, psychological and sociologic aspects of sexuality.

It is a period when sexuality looms and adolescents must learn to cope with their changing sexual roles and relationships and to live with their sexual urges and concerns.

Physically the body changes to a different size, shape, composition and function. But the body differences between boys and girls before puberty are almost entirely restricted to the genitalia. Boys usually start puberty at about 12 or 13 years but girls are a little earlier. This is referred to as secondary sex characteristics.

*Lets take a look as to how our body changes as we are growing.*

Check [HERE](#)

**Emotions During Puberty** Puberty is also the stage when important emotional changes take place. Young people get into and develop new relationships and the intensity of relationship also varies. They also become more conscious of what others think about them; the desire to be accepted and liked is strong at this stage. Some people become more important while others are held in less importance. Young boys start separating from their parents and building with other youngsters of their own age with whom they will identify. What is important at this stage is that young people begin to make decisions about what affects their life.

Many young people feel self-conscious about the changes taking place to their body and they often compare these changes with those of other people. During this period, youngsters become more aware of their sexuality; their feelings are awakened and their emotions run high over things that touch them intensely especially in relation to the opposite sex. This is the time when sex and sexuality is discussed and ideas formed. They will be asking questions

about masturbation, dating, kissing, having sexual intercourse, etc. For some adolescents, sexual activity may initiate psychological distress and for others they may become distressed.

During puberty, females experience different changes. The emotions and subsequent behaviors portrayed may be different even between females of the same household. Some females appear quiet and withdrawn and others loud with unusual behaviors. Criticisms made to them may bring on undesirable responses. Many of them begin to take a greater care of their appearance while others seem not to care. They begin to notice the opposite sex and many of them will concentrate solely in this area. This would lead them into situations which may generally lead to trouble such as unwanted pregnancy. The cycle of sex partner change repeats itself and tends to be the downfall of such females. They also put themselves at the risk of catching a sexually transmitted infection. Their self-esteem drops and if they are within the school system their performance is generally under the expectations.



### Activity

Work in groups of four people and discuss with them what you were told by family members, friends or teachers about puberty. Then compare it with what you have learned.

## Sex, Pregnancy and Contraceptives

### Sexual Intercourse

During adolescence, girls and boys will have some attractions for each other which will lead them to feel a sexual desire, pleasure or excitement. This excitement may lead to touching, kissing, hugging, cuddling, etc which is the beginning of sexual intercourse-**foreplay**. At this time both partners may reach a sexual excitement known as **sexual arousal**. When this happens the girls will get wet around their genitals because sexual fluids are produced in the wall of the vagina. This fluid is whitish in color. As for the boys the penis will stiff or become harder/stands up because more blood will flow in the penis. This is called an **erection**.

**Sexual intercourse** or *having sex* is when a man inserts his penis into a woman's vagina, followed by a moment of intense sexual excitement known as an orgasm. During this act the males will release sperms and the females feel a special excitement and well being in body. Having sex can make a female become pregnant since the sperm may join with the egg to make a baby. During puberty males are capable of producing sperms that can fertilize an egg whilst women release fertile eggs until late 40s or early 50s.

In order for you to understand how pregnancy happens you need to know about the **menstrual cycle**. This cycle and timing of sexual intercourse is critical to the success of pregnancy or reproduction. The **menstrual cycle** is the time from one period to the next counted from the first day of the bleeding to the last day before the next bleeding. This takes about 28-29 days but may be shorter or longer and may change from month to month. During the first ten days the egg is nurtured as it travels from the tube to the uterus. Then at the mid cycle of about 10-14 days the female is very fertile and if she is having sex the egg can be fertilized by the sperm/egg of a man. After about 14 days if the egg has been fertilized, the egg will then stick to the lining of the uterus and grows into a baby.

If the egg is not fertilized the uterus will pick up that nothing has happened and the egg along with the lining of the uterus will break and pass through the vagina in the form of blood.

***You can read more on the menstrual cycle if you click on the following link.***

[2]



### Activity

Read the following statement and indicate if they are true or false. For each *false* answer discuss why you say so.

- Sexual intercourse can only take place with the man on top of the woman.
- A man can only get a woman pregnant if he has an orgasm.
- A woman can get pregnant only if the man's penis goes inside of her vagina.
- A woman can get pregnant no matter what position she has sex in.
- It is important for a woman to know her menstrual cycle so that she prevent pregnancy.



**Feedback:** The following are the required answers. The first three (3) statement are false. Read why the statement is false.

Sexual intercourse can take place in many position.

It is not necessary for a man to have an orgasm for the woman to get pregnant because semen and sperm leave the penis before an orgasm.

Semen and sperm can be release during foreplay that is even before he ejaculates.



### Assignment

Using a calender and the knowledge of the menstrual cycle, discuss the process of the menstrual cycle.

**Drug Use and Sex** The unacceptable habit of drug use and abuse has a serious impact on the sexual experiences and its outcomes. Individuals who have sex under the influence of marijuana, alcohol, cocaine, heroin, crystal meth and others, may experience a great deal of pleasure but would also behave in a very irresponsible manner since their thoughts of self self control and and acceptable behaviour are non-existent. Sex, therefore must be under the control of a rational individual and not under the conditions in which there is no responsible behaviours.

### Contraceptives

Contraceptives are medications or tools that are used to prevent pregnancy. That is it prevents a man's sperm from coming together/joining with the woman's eggs. People use contraceptives to prevent unplanned pregnancy. Not all methods of contraceptives will protect you from sexually transmitted diseases or HIV/AIDS. There are different methods of contraceptives but we will be discussing the most commonly used ones.

**Common Methods Condom** is a contraceptive that is put on the erect penis just before having sex. This is a barrier method that is made from thin rubber and is use only once and discard. This method would prevent semen from entering the vagina, the anus or the mouth. This is one method that can protect you from pregnancy, STI and HIV.

**Femidom** This is the female condom that is inserted into the vagina up to 8 hours before sex or shortly before sex. It is bigger than a male condom and it has two plastic rings on each end. As with the condom this can only be used once and discard. It works similar to the male condom in that it prevents the exchange of body fluids. This method protects you from pregnancy, STI and HIV.

**Pill**This is a tablet to be taken by a woman every . It prevents a woman's ovaries to release an egg every month. So if there is no egg release she cannot fall pregnant. This contraceptives can prevent pregnancy but not STI/HIV.

*You will find more information on this topic on the following link*

LINK.

## Sexually Transmitted Infections(STI)

It is also commonly known as sexually transmitted diseases. These are diseases that are passed on from one person to another through sex including vaginal, oral and anal sex. Some STD are relatively harmless and can be treated e.g. candidiasis, chlamydia. Others such as gonorrhoea, genital, herpes, syphilis and HIV/AIDS are much more dangerous. If an STI is not treated you can have serious consequences such as damage to the reproductive organs resulting in infertility.

Click [HERE](#)



### Activity

Ask the participants to divide themselves into groups of twos. Each group should choose one (1) Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) and depict the signs and symptoms of the STI chosen.

## HIV/AIDS

HIV stands for *Human Immunodeficiency Virus*. It is the virus that causes *AIDS-Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome*. This virus only infects humans and slowly weakens the body's immune system. That is it makes the body vulnerable to different illnesses and eventually causing deaths. Diseases such as diarrhea, tuberculosis, pneumonia, skin cancer, etc. are typical illnesses associated with HIV. These are known as opportunistic infections.

If you are infected with HIV you will eventually develop AIDS. It can take between 2-10 years to develop AIDS after being infected with the HIV. There is treatment for HIV/AIDS but no cure, therefore you must protect yourself from getting the virus. There are specific ways how HIV can be transmitted, let look at the ways of HIV transmission.



### Preknowledge

Circle the ways how you can get HIV infection.

- Body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal secretions
- Holding hands
- From cups, spoons or other eating utensils
- Infected mother to child (in the womb, during birth or through breast milk)
- Car seats
- Sharing needles, razors and toothbrushes with infected blood on them
- Receiving blood that is contaminated with HIV
- Playing games
- Having unprotected sex with an HIV positive partner



**Feedback:** The following are the required answers:

Body fluids such as blood, semen, vaginal secretions

Infected mother to child (in the womb, during birth or through breast milk)

Sharing needles, razors and toothbrushes with infected blood on them

Receiving blood that is contaminated with HIV

Having unprotected sex with an HIV positive partner

## Sexual Practices

### Sexual Abuse

Keeping safe from unwanted touches



#### Preknowledge

Share with your colleagues your understanding of safe sex practices.



**Feedback:** Check [HERE](#) for the possible answers



#### Activity

The following activity looks at risky behaviors. Tick the habits which exposes an individual at risk of getting HIV.

- Having sex (oral, anal or vaginal) with an HIV negative person
- Running around the park
- Having unprotected sex with partners whose status is unknown
- Playing with HIV positive children
- Feeding AIDS patients
- Having unprotected sex with partners whose status is unknown
- Sharing a dwelling with HIV positive people
- Deep kissing with an individual who has bleeding gums or sores in the mouth
- Having sex with a partner who has had a history of Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Having sex with a partner who has given you a sexually transmitted infection
- Having sex with a partner who has other partners
- Swimming in a pool
- Being bitten by insects
- Using unclean sex toys
- Working with HIV positive people
- Practising serial monogamy



**Feedback:** The following are the required answers.

Having unprotected sex with partners whose status is unknown

Having unprotected sex with partners whose status is unknown

Deep kissing with an individual who has bleeding gums or sores in the mouth

Having sex with a partner who has had a history of Sexually Transmitted Infections

Having sex with a partner who has other partners

Using unclean sex toys

Practising serial monogamy



AM I AT RISK?



**Activity**

Let us look at our risk. This is personal and you are advised to copy the assessment and then tick the responses in order to maintain your privacy. DO NOT DO THIS TEST ON LINE.

Tick 'Yes' or 'No' under the headings in the table below as the sentence applies to you

Statement	YES	NO
I practise unprotected sex		
I have had more than one sexual partner		
I have had sex with a partner who has had other partners		
I have unprotected sex with omeone whose HIV status is unknown		
I have had sex under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol		
I have had a sexually transmitted infection		
I have been raped		
I am a victim of incest		
I have received blood from doubtful sources		
I have shared needles with someone whose HIV status is unknown		



**Feedback:** If you have answered "YES" to anyone of the above statements you have exposed yourself to HIV and you need to be tested.



## Summary

In this unit you have learned about the:

- Differences of sex and sexuality- what determines a person determines to be a male or a female
- The composition of Human sexuality
- How sexuality varies
- Influence of sexuality on human behaviour
- Concepts of sexuality
- Recognize pubertal change in both sexes.
- Different concepts of sex and pregnancy.
- Different methods of contraceptives.
- Different types of STI.
- Recognize safe sexual practices.

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2. Norton, J. & Dawson, Colleen (1999). *Life Skills & HIV/AIDS Education-A Manual and Resource Guide for Intermediate Phase School Teachers*, Sandton: Heinemann Publishers.ISBN 1-868-5373-07
3. Yin y Yang: [http://flickr.com/photos/308entre2/8472469/uploaded by ricardo.fdez](http://flickr.com/photos/308entre2/8472469/uploaded%20by%20ricardo.fdez)
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Skills Development/Module Two <http://www.wikieducator.org/images/c/ca/Previous.png> <sup>[3]</sup> | Skills Development/Module Two/Relationships <http://www.wikieducator.org/images/c/c4/Next.png> <sup>[3]</sup>

## References

- [1] <http://www.paho.org/English/HCP/HCA/PromotionSexualHealth.pdf>  
 [2] <http://www.coolnurse.com/menstrual.htm>  
 [3] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life>

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