



**Share-Net
Jordan**

The Knowledge Platform on
Sexual and Reproductive Health
and Reproductive Rights



Parents' Guide to Sexual and Reproductive Health of Their Adolescent Children

Questions and Answers



2023

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Introduction :

A number of studies indicate that adolescent in the age group (10-19) years, or the so-called adolescence period, is the most in need of sexual and reproductive health services and information because of the specificity of this phase in their lives and also because of the biological, psychological and social changes that this group goes through.

Adolescents at this stage feel that they are already adults because of their physical development, while their feelings are fluctuating due to hormonal and physical changes. It is difficult for them to deal with many situations accordingly and in an appropriate manner, and therefore they need the care and attention of their parents and to be given a sense of belonging through dialogue and communication and not to hesitate or shy away from addressing their questions.

This guide comes as part of the interest of Share-Net Jordan (hosted by the Higher Population Council) in promoting the strong healthy growth of our adolescents (10-19) years, by providing practical information based on scientific facts and away from misleading knowledge sources on the internet and the social networking sites and from peers. The significance of preparing this guide has risen through the rationalizations and evidence provided by many studies and policy brief prepared by the Higher Population Council and Share-Net Jordan. We summarize the most important of them as follows.

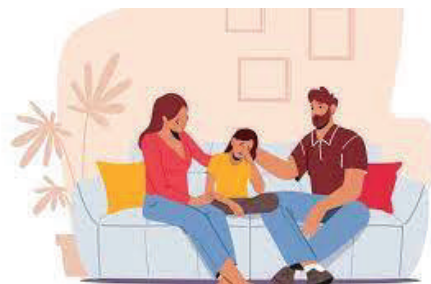
- Youth complain about the lack of family dialogue on topics related to this stage of their life and their dependence on peers or social networks. From their perspective, their main concern is to raise awareness among parents through awareness campaigns and community communication about the concept of reproductive health and its components to make it easier for parents to address this issue, gain trust and understand their children's needs.⁽¹⁸⁾

- Youth's affirmation that there is a need to rehabilitate and educate fathers to talk with their sons about the physical changes associated with adolescence. ⁽¹⁹⁾
- Complaints from service providers that most awareness campaigns were unable to attract and engage parents in awareness programs about sexual and reproductive health for youth and adolescents, and that the main challenges they face in providing awareness programs for youth and adolescents regarding parents were parents' lack of awareness of the importance of sexual and reproductive health issues and the difficulty in targeting and reaching out to them, especially fathers, which has created a knowledge gap between adolescents and their families. ⁽²⁰⁾
- Youth in focused group discussion sessions in one of the studies prepared by HPC and Share-Net Jordan indicated that almost half of them face challenges that hinder obtaining the knowledge they need about sexual and reproductive health. Here, they identified a number of challenges, the most prominent of which was parents' refusal and reluctance to have their children (especially females) access information related to sexual and reproductive health and considering this kind of information unsuitable for their children at this age accompanied by a feeling of embarrassment to ask and the culture of 'shame.'

The care you show in addressing your siblings' questions helps them attain healthy physical and mental growth and enables you as a family to cooperate together to bring your children to a safe and sound adulthood.



Who is this guide for



This guide is designed to help parents and caregivers address the questions that adolescents struggle to find answers to and have a strong desire to get answers from their parents.

Although the guide provides documented scientific answers provided by specialists in health, psychological and educational sciences, it will not answer all questions in detail but will give some highlights and instructions that need to be followed up by the reader for more information on the topic at hand.

This guide has been prepared for all those who undertake the task of caring for adolescents, and the term parents will be used to refer to those who care for the adolescent, whether father, mother, or a family member, and the term son/ daughter/ adolescent will be used to refer to as the adolescent.

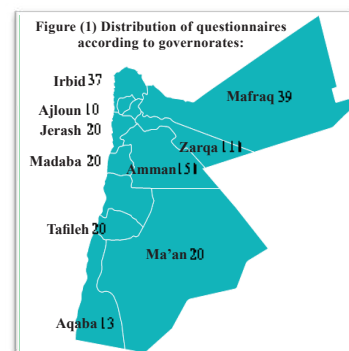
The purpose of this guide



Adolescents go through a very critical stage of their lives, which is considered to be one of the most dynamic stages in human growth and development; it is a period of redefining and developing relationships with parents, family, and peers. Adolescents are exposed to several factors that affect their health and behaviour, which may be a cause disrupting their psychological development and wellness, such as the changes accompanying puberty leading the adolescent to form a distorted image of their body accompanied by severe mood swings. Also, their need to prove that they have grown to be independent adults may cause them to rebel against the rules, in addition to the family environment and relationships within the family such as rivalry amongst brothers, family conflicts, and having to face financial difficulties, added to that is what adolescents face at school such as academic burdens, bullying, rejection or exclusion, the inability to express their fears and anxieties. Moreover, not getting enough sleep or not having healthy nutrition are all factors that may lead adolescents to take wrong decisions and formulate improper behavioural patterns.

The guide aims to help parents provide scientifically documented answers to a wide range of questions that their adolescent children ask about the physical and psychological changes they feel during this period. These questions and issues were answered by a wide range of Jordanian experts from specialists in health, education, and psychology with a belief that adolescence is a period that responds to learning and advice and an opportunity to learn good health practices.

- Within the framework of the Share-Net International Rapid Improvement Model (SHIRIM) application project, Share-Net Jordan formed a local team of 23 members of the target group (parents and adolescents) and local experts from various related specialties to develop the package of change in addressing the issue of refining parents and their adolescents' information about sexual and reproductive health and interpreting their knowledge in this field to be used in changing practices related to raising parents' awareness on the sexual and reproductive health information needed by their children and enhancing communication between parents and their siblings, in response to the previously mentioned studies' findings.
- Three workshops were held for the newly established local team, and the package for change prepared by the main team from the Share-Net Jordan secretariat was reviewed to bring about the required change in the key issue at hand.
- It was settled to conduct a one-question questionnaire directed to a sample of adolescents, in which they are asked to put ten questions related to their health and development during the stage they are going through (adolescence) and are reluctant to ask their families about.
- The questionnaire was circulated in cooperation with The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, the Institute for Family Health, the Association of Islamic Charitable Centres, and Save the Children, through their centres that implement programs for adolescents.
- The responses of (164 male adolescents and 277 female adolescents) were collected from ten governorates that included refugee camps, as shown in Figure (1).
- The terms of reference for the preparation of the guide were identified and explained to the local team; the Tenders Committee called for technical and financial proposals to prepare the guide.
- Three groups of the local team submitted proposals to prepare the guide; one group was selected based on the evaluation of the technical and financial proposals.
- The group of experts from the local team studied the questionnaires, categorised the questions according to main topics, and monitored the repetition of questions.
- The group of experts answered the most frequently asked questions.
- The guide was presented to the technical team from the Higher Population Council, the Share-Net Jordan core team, and the SHIRIM local team, who provided their feedback to the expert group.



How to use this guide



- The adolescents' questions were categorized into three main areas (general and reproductive health, self-knowledge, and the relationship with the other 'family and society'). Questions and corresponding answers were developed according to the classification, in addition to some educational applications that help parents answer similar questions of adolescents. The answers also included scientific sources for reference.
- The Higher Population Council and Share-Net Jordan prepared a video worthy of viewing that highlights the effectiveness of dialogue between parents and their adolescents via the following link (<https://share-net-jordan.org.jo/?v=5.20.9.3.1&url=ar/VideoGalleryDetails?ID:38>) Should you or your children have a question or inquiry for which the 'guide' has given no answer to, you can refer to (DARBY) platform designed by the Higher Population Council on the following link: <https://www.drhpy.org.jo> and post a question which will be answered by a team of specialized experts.

General concepts to use in this guide



■ adolescents

Any individual who goes into the second decade of their life within the age group between 10 and 19 years, and undergoes a stage of psychological and physical changes that ends with reaching adulthood⁽¹⁾

■ Adolescents' health

A state of complete physical, mental, psychological, and social wellness and not just the absence of disease or disability. In this stage, an individual can build strong and productive relationships, face the challenges and pressures of life efficiently to achieve their best potential, and serve their community.

Adolescents' health is no different from the concept of general health, but there are certain considerations pertaining to the sensitivity of adolescence as a period of high physical activities in which they are more inclined to impulsiveness, which may expose them to physical problems related to accidents or health problems associated with unsafe sexual behaviour⁽²⁾

The right to health

<https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/human-rights-and-health>

adolescents' health

<https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescents-health-risks-and-solutions>

■ Reproductive health :

It is a state of physical, mental, and social wellness and not simply the absence of disease or infirmity in all matters related to the reproductive system, its functions, and operations. It also means people's ability to enjoy a satisfactory and safe sex life within the framework of societal values, the laws in force, and the psychological, cultural, and social factors that surround them.

To maintain a healthy sexual and reproductive life, people need access to accurate information and safe and effective methods⁽⁵⁾

■ Adolescents' mental health

Mental health is an integral part of health in general, and it does not mean the absence of mental disorders only, but rather it is a state of wellness in which the individual can adapt to normal types and levels of stress and work effectively to achieve the best of their potential in serving and contributing to their community⁽³⁾



The World Health Organization WHO reports that one out of every six people is between the ages 10 and 19

Adolescence is a unique and formative period in life. Multiple physical, emotional, and social changes, including experiencing poverty, abuse, or violence might make adolescents more vulnerable to mental health problems.

Protecting adolescents from adversities, promoting social and emotional learning, and psychological well-being, and ensuring access to mental health care are all critical factors for health and wellness during adolescence and adulthood⁽⁴⁾

Adolescents' mental health

<https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>

General guidelines

for dialogue and addressing questions of adolescents



When answering adolescents' questions, we kindly ask you to consider the following:

- Be well-prepared for the questions: The adolescent's questions may seem very sudden and surprising and sometimes even disturbing, but good preparedness and searching for appropriate ways to answer their questions and build a sound relationship with them in the different stages of their life will ease matters and make you always ready to deal with such situations.
- Find a space for communication: It is necessary to pave the way for adolescents from the very beginning by giving them an open space for dialogue, as this will help them a lot as they become more mature, to feel safe and trust you in asking about any topic that concerns them such as sex and puberty. Doing all of the aforementioned, adolescents will trust you and be confident that you will answer them with honesty.
- Make it easy for them to ask: Fear of provoking problems or creating any embarrassing situations may prevent them from coming to you and force them to resort to outer sources. Hence, you need to make it easier for them to ask by being considerate of their thoughts and feelings.

You may consider making use of the following methods when answering their questions:

Standardization of answers: Parents need to agree in advance on unified responses to certain questions, especially those related to general morals and values, as it is essential for adolescents to have a sense of stability and constancy.

An adolescent may surprise you with a totally unexpected question. In this case, it is necessary to consider why they are asking about this particular topic now. Could it be that they are going through some difficulties? Or has they been exposed to a situation that raised these questions in their mind? Knowing the reason will help you give them the correct and appropriate answer.

An honest reply : you need to deal with the adolescent with complete honesty; adolescents have low tolerance and understanding in such situations. If they find out that they have been deceived or underestimated even once, it will take them a long time to trust you again.

- Be open, attentive, and let them know that you are there for them to talk to and are open to all their questions.
- Validate your information and if there are any questions you are unable to answer, seek assistance from another reliable source.
- Maintain confidentiality and do not tell others what they have asked you about.
- Find out what and how much they know about the answer before you give them your own.
- Use the questions they ask to give them boundaries and solid, sound information.
- Do not discuss your own experiences and history for the sake of comparison.
- Make them feel that their question matters and that many people ask the very same question. Also, link their question to ethics and values.

The frequently asked questions by adolescents as stated in the questionnaire distributed to a sample of them



Questions related to general and reproductive health

Questions about puberty:

1. What is puberty? How do I know that I have reached puberty?
2. Why is there a difference between me and my friends in physical appearance?
(Height and size, appearance and growth of hair, breast size, and shape)
3. Is there a difference between males and females with regard to puberty?

Questions about the menstrual cycle

1. How do I ensure that my menstrual cycle is regular?
2. Is it normal to have menstrual pains?
3. How do I maintain personal hygiene during menstruation?
4. What is polycystic ovary syndrome PCOS? How do I know if I have it?

Questions about general health and care

1. Do genitalia secretions indicate the presence of gynecological infections?
2. What are sexually transmitted diseases?
3. What is AIDS?
4. Does masturbation cause any health problems?
5. How do I take care of my personal hygiene?
6. What is a healthy balanced diet?
7. What is the right and appropriate age for marriage?
8. How do I deal with acne?



Self-knowledge questions :

1. What are the emotional changes during puberty?
2. Why does my mood change quite so often?
3. How do I deal with my oversensitivity?
4. Why do I have bouts of sadness?
5. How do I deal with feelings of anxiety?
6. Why do I prefer to be alone in my room?
7. Why am I overcome with shyness?
8. I feel as if I have a depression.
9. Why do I feel anxious about the future?
10. I suffer from a sleep disorder.



Questions related to the relationship with the other (family and society)

1. I am being bullied, what should I do?
2. Why did I start feeling attracted to the opposite sex?
3. Why don't my parents understand me?
4. Why do my parents discriminate between me and my siblings?
5. Why am I being constantly criticized by my parents?
6. Why do my parents tend to use intimidation when dealing with me?
7. Why don't I feel loved by my parents?
8. Why can't I tell my parents what goes on in my mind?

9. Why is the dialogue between me and my parents interrupted?
10. Why does my family interfere in my choice of friends?
11. Why does my family prevent me from having a cell phone?
12. Why do my parents keep fighting?
13. My father beats me, what should I do?
14. I feel resentment towards my father/mother?
15. Why do we have to attend school when we can get a job without a degree?
16. Why my parents don't allow me to smoke and why do they get angry if they find out that I do?
17. What do I do if I get harassed?

Answers to questions

related to general and reproductive health



General health is one of the things that must be well taken care of in the life of adolescents. Here are some educational applications that help parents talk with their children about this important stage in their lives and the ideas, practices, emotions, and changes that revolve around this period of their life.

Answering questions promptly satisfies the adolescent's natural curiosity and helps them understand healthy and reproductive life in the context of family values, develop healthy feelings about the changes they are going through appropriately, and get to know what is acceptable and what is not.



1. How do I know if I have reached puberty?

The initial signs of puberty may start to appear among girls between the ages of nine and ten, and menstruation is considered the primary sign of puberty in females approximately two years following the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics. As for males, changes begin to appear between the ages of twelve and fourteen during which the appearance and emergence of secondary sexual signs occurs, and wet dreams are the main sign of puberty in males. Puberty is preceded by rapid physical growth, especially in height. This rapid growth is not a result of puberty, but rather a precursor to it. Overall, there are a number of factors that affect the date of reaching puberty such as the state of glandular activity, health status, individual readiness, and some other factors such as nutrition. The following table shows the differences in signs of maturity in both males and females:



Secondary sexual signs in females

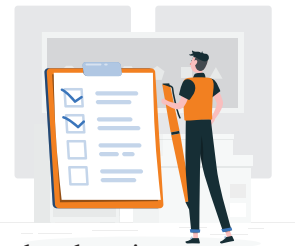
- Alterations and changes in the girl's physique, which appear in the protrusion of the breasts, in addition to an increase in height and growth in the limbs, and from there to the trunk. A noticeable increase in weight may occur in some girls.
- Appearance and growth of hair in certain parts of the body, with the build-up of fat in some parts.
- Menstruation happens for the first time, and it usually begins two years after the appearance of the secondary sexual signs.
- The appearance of acne and white and black pimples because of the increased secretion of hormones. A noticeable change in perspiration odors.

Secondary sexual signs in males

- Increased growth and development of the genitals, and the emission of semen during sleep (wet dreaming).
- Acne and white and black pimples start to appear due to the increased secretion of hormones. A noticeable change in perspiration odors.
- Vocal cords develop and grow which results in fluctuation of coarseness and roughness of the voice.

Educational applications

- Explain the manifestations of sexual puberty to the adolescent so that there is no feeling of embarrassment, confusion, or anxiety when they appear.
- Point out that the timing of these changes differs from one person to the other, but that everyone goes through them, though not at the same pace.
- Seek help from a trusted specialist (counsellor, physician) if you feel embarrassed to go through the explanation.



Parents should monitor the appearance of secondary sexual signs and refer them to the doctor to run the necessary examinations, tests and treatment, if necessary.

- In the case where menstruation begins before the age of 8, parents should monitor the appearance of secondary sexual signs and consult a doctor to conduct the necessary examinations and treatment.
- If menstruation is delayed up to the age of fourteen without any other signs of puberty (such as the breasts and pubic hair) or to the age of sixteen with other signs of puberty.
- If menstruation did not begin within 3 years of the appearance of the breasts.
- If the menstrual cycle dates are not regular after three years have passed since it first started.
- If there is an imbalance in the form and type of secondary sexual characteristics (rapid sexual development, i.e., rapid sexual growth: a boy may have sex organs as an adult man, some girls might also experience such rapid growth), but these are uncommon cases.
- Increase in the size of the testicles.

For more information, you can refer to the following link:

early puberty <https://fb.watch/iQrXtuPOgJ/?mibextid=2Rb1fB>

Puberty is a stage of growth and physical and psychological development that occurs before adolescence. It is the main determinant of the transition of the individual from childhood to adulthood, so that the male or female body becomes able to complete the process of reproduction. During this stage, the external secondary sexual signs appear. Normally, the puberty period takes two to five years to reach full completion from the time it first appeared.⁽⁶⁾

Wet dreams: one of the signs of puberty, which is the occurrence of an involuntary sexual orgasm during sleep; it occurs for both sexes and appears in the form of semen emission from the male and secretions from the female⁽⁷⁾

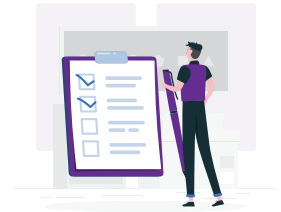


2. Why is there a difference in physical appearance between me and my friends? (height and size, hair appearance, breast size and shape)

The signs of growth and change associated with puberty differ from one person to another, especially with regard to the timing of puberty, acceleration of growth, changes in height, hair growth, etc. The emergence of these changes is affected by many factors, the most important of which are heredity, gender, race, climate, chronic diseases, and others.

Educational applications

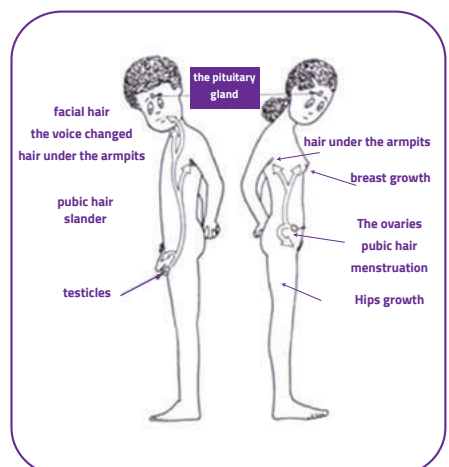
- Avoid comparison, sarcasm and making comments because of the negative impact they may have on mental health.
- Understand differences and support and promote self-confidence and a positive body image.
- Listen and understand feelings and affirm that feelings are real, important and that they matter.



3. Is there a difference between males and females with regard to puberty?

- Puberty begins in females between the ages of nine and ten, and for males between the ages of twelve and fourteen.

- The process of growing up in the physique (especially height) slows down (and often stops completely) in females when menstruation occurs, while in males the growth process in the physical structure continues until the age of eighteen. Figure shows signs of puberty in both males and females.



4. How can I be sure that my period is regular?

Having an Irregular menstrual cycle is not a serious problem and is common among girls. In general, irregularity in the menstrual cycle continues even after two to three years have passed since the beginning of menstruation, and it results from incomplete maturity of the ovaries. In order to ensure the regularity of the menstrual cycle, the date of menstruation must be monitored for a period of three months. If the cycle (from the beginning of the first day of menstruation to the date of the first day of the next menstruation) is between 21-35 days, then it is considered normal and regular. But if it is shorter than 21 days or longer than 35 days, it is considered irregular and requires consultation by a physician.

Among the most common reasons for the irregularity of the cycle are being underweight and below the normal range; unhealthy eating habits, vitamin deficiency, obesity and having excessive weight above the normal range; strenuous exercise, in addition to exhaustion, psychological tension, thyroid gland disorder, hormonal imbalance, polycystic ovaries PCOS.

Menstruation: It is the discharge of blood and tissue from the uterus as a result of the shedding of the endometrium in the absence of fertilization of a mature egg.

Menstrual cycle: It is the natural hormonal changes that occur to a woman's body every month in preparation for pregnancy, and it begins at puberty and ends at menopause.

Its duration reaches approximately 28 days, and may range between 21-35 days, as the first day of menstruation is the first day of the menstrual cycle, and ends with the beginning of the next menstruation



Educational applications

- Feel free to talk about the menstrual cycle whenever you think there is a need but do not wait for it to happen or to be asked about it.
- Start your dialogue at an early stage and seek reliable information.



5. Is menstrual pain normal?

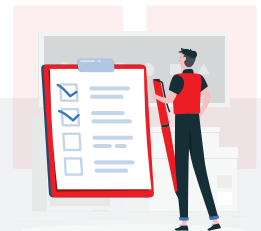
Some mild symptoms associated with menstruation occur due to the sudden drop in levels of (Progesterone and Estrogen), but they disappear within several days after menstruation and hormone levels start to rise again. Girls often feel lower back pain, pain in the lower abdomen, swelling and pain in the breasts, headache, and a change in appetite, and mood swings.



Primary dysmenorrhea, or what is known as menstrual pain, is a very common condition for girls in puberty, and it occurs due to the contraction of the uterine muscles. However, it recedes with age, but is more likely to occur if menstruation begins before the age of 11. Simple analgesics available at home may be recommended for relief of pain.

Do not hesitate to contact the doctor in the following cases:

- **If symptoms are severe and may hinder the practice of daily activities.**
- **Prolonged menstrual flow or more than the usual flow.**
- **If painkillers do not help relieve menstruation pain.**



Educational applications

- Explain and inform the adolescent about menstrual pain and point out that symptoms are normal and do not call for concern.
- Encourage the adolescent to practice usual daily activities.
- Follow up and watch the factors that might trigger menstrual pain, such as certain foods, the cold weather, or physical activity.
- Encourage exercising and taking hot baths.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

How does menstruation occur and how do I prepare for it <https://wp.me/per1bs-zs>

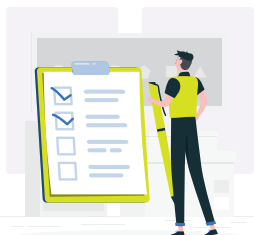
6. How do I take care of my personal

hygiene during menstruation?



Adolescent girls need to learn the basics of personal hygiene in general, especially during menstruation, by rinsing the genitals with water more than once a day during menstruation, and changing sanitary pads frequently to protect against infections and diseases. The number of times a girl needs to change the sanitary pad depends on the heaviness of the blood flow, taking care not to leave the same pad for a long time, which may cause unpleasant odours and infections.

myths about menstrual cycle: Avoid hot showers, do not make any effort, hot water increases menstrual pain, irregular periods harm fertility, menstrual blood is different from normal blood, avoid drinking soft drinks or eating fatty substances⁽⁸⁾



Educational applications

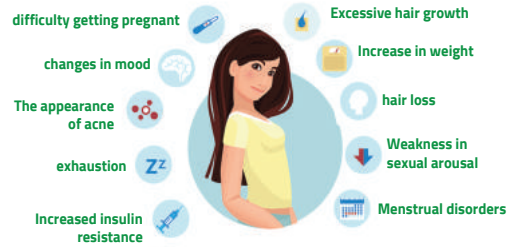
- Guide the female adolescent to deal with the menstrual cycle as part of her life.
- Encourage her to accept the accompanying health and social practices and to deal with these practices with confidence.
- Remind her of always having on her whatever is necessary if her period took by surprise, such as sanitary pads and an extra change of underclothing.
- Keep her well informed and not to heed to myths about the menstrual cycle, such as taking showers, drinking soft drinks, and eating certain foods with a high concentration of fat.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

Proper nutrition during your period <https://youtu.be/rhV-fQIs0EQ>

7. What is PCOS?

Symptoms of polycystic ovaries

Polycystic ovaries is not a disease in the known sense. Rather, it is a number of symptoms that occur due to an imbalance in the hormonal system in the body (pituitary gland, ovaries, and others) that leads to inhibition of natural ovulation and an increase in male hormone.



Among its symptoms are irregular menstruation (periods are spaced apart, that is, once every two months or more), weight gain, particularly in the abdomen area, acne on the face, more facial and bodily hair, and delay in pregnancy.

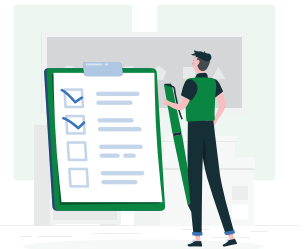
The presence of all or some of the symptoms is sufficient to diagnose this syndrome, and the diagnosis can be confirmed by running hormone tests and by ultrasound.

There is no known treatment to remove the cyst altogether, or to bring it back to its normal state. Therefore, the treatment is administered to the existing symptoms. Unfortunately, many girls resort to the use of certain unnecessary medications, or they follow what their friends do, which may lead to health problem later on.

Educational applications

- Ensure maintaining a normal weight.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle such as good eating habits, nutritional foods and exercising.
- Treat the symptoms according to priority, with topical or physical treatments such as combined oral contraceptive pills and others. Some cosmetic treatments, such as laser, can be used to treat acne and increased hair growth.
- Consult a family doctor or a specialist.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

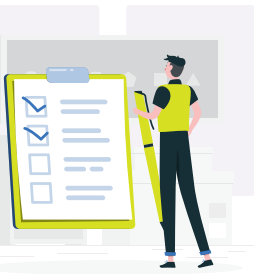
Polycystic ovaries www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXnEyjkuP50



8. Does genitalia discharge indicate the presence of infections?

It is normal to have discharges during puberty, as the secretions help maintain the cleanliness and viscosity of the female genitalia, and also keep it free from germs and bacteria. There are several natural characteristics for this type of secretion, such as being odourless, transparent or milky and dries on clothes; in certain cases, these secretions become thin and sticky, but some factors lead to a change in their characteristics, such as microbial infections, pregnancy, diabetes, and some beauty care products.

Genitalia discharge is normal if it is white in colour and not accompanied by any other symptoms. If discharge turns yellow or brown, it is an indication of infections that require medical treatment by a physician.



Educational applications

- Caution not to wear tight fitting clothes.
- Make sure to wear cotton undergarments.
- Refrain from using scented soap.
- Maintain personal hygiene at all times, and in particular during the menstrual cycle.
- Make regular visits to the gynaecologist.

For more information, you can refer to the following link:

genitalia discharge

<https://m.kwaiapps.com/photo/150001304542506/5254443495050254156?userId=15000130>



9. What are sexually transmitted diseases?

Sexually transmitted diseases or sexually transmitted infections are diseases transmitted from one person to another, generally through sexual contact, bacteria, viruses, or parasites causing sexually transmitted diseases that can be passed from one person to another through blood, semen, or genitalia and other body secretions.

In some cases, infection can be transmitted in a non-sexual way such as transmission from mother to foetus during pregnancy or childbirth, blood transfusions or use of shared syringes. Moreover, it may be transmitted from apparently healthy people who may not know of their infection.

Sexually transmitted infections STIs don't always show any symptoms but may cause a range of signs and symptoms. On the other hand, STIs may not cause any signs, which is why they may go unnoticed until complications develop or when diagnosed.

Symptoms that may indicate an STI include: Sores or blisters on the genitals, mouth, or rectal area, pain or burning during urination, discharge from the male genitalia, unusual or foul-smelling genitalia discharge, unusual female genitalia bleeding, lower abdominal pain, rash on the abdomen, hands or feet.

Signs and symptoms of illness may appear several days after infection, but it may be years before any noticeable problems appear, depending on the organism causing the sexually transmitted infection.

In the event of the appearance of the previous symptoms, you need to consult your doctor immediately⁽¹⁵⁾

Sexual transmitted diseases

[https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-\(stis\)](https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sexually-transmitted-infections-(stis))

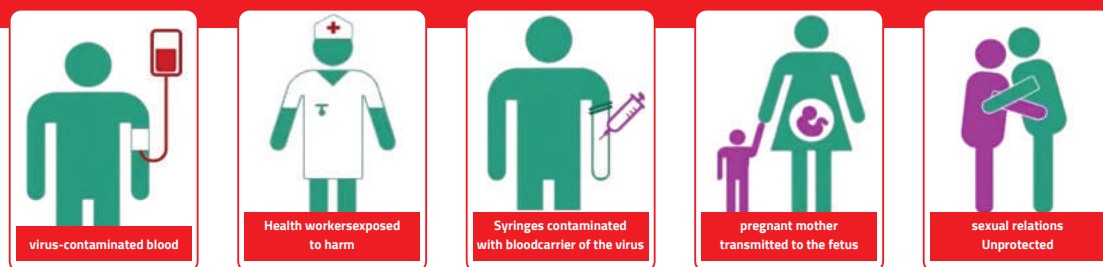
www.mayoclinic.org/ar/diseases-conditions/sexually-transmitted-diseases-stds/symptoms-causes/syc-20351240

10- What is AIDS?

AIDS is a chronic disease caused by a virus called the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) that infects and destroys CD4 cells, a type of white blood cells responsible for the immune system.

Symptoms of the disease vary according to the stage of infection, but the following common symptoms are observed in all stages: high fever, muscle pain, rash, headache, ulcers in the mouth and genitals, swollen lymph glands, diarrhoea and difficulty in breathing.

HIV infection is transmitted through blood and bodily fluids such as semen and female genitalia discharge. HIV is also transmitted through sexual contact and sexual fluids and secretions from an infected person to a healthy person. The virus is also transmitted through blood transfusions and syringes, as well as from a nursing infected mother to her child during breast feeding.

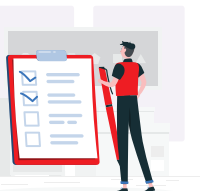


Although the virus exists in other bodily fluids such as saliva, sweat, tears, and urine, it is not transmitted through any of them, nor is it transmitted through hugging, kissing, shaking hands, or using toilets and towels.

People most at risk of contracting ‘acquired’ HIV: are people who have sexually transmitted diseases, and inject drug users, and males who have sex with males.

Complications: its effect on the immune system, making it easy for people to develop diseases and different types of cancer.

There is no definitive cure for AIDS to date, but some treatments are used to discourage it



Educational applications

- Do not share with others syringes, piercing tools, or shaving tools.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

How do people contract AIDS <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/aids.html#catstds>

AIDS <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hiv-aids>



11- Does masturbation cause health problems for male and female adolescents?

Onanism, or commonly known as masturbation does not cause any physical health harm or damage despite the many superstitions associated with it. It does not lead to sterility, blindness, reduction in sperm count, nor does it lead to loss of virginity (if violent means are not used.) Masturbation is a natural behavioural practice related to adolescence, and is not limited to one gender only without the other.

However, constant repetition and its practice as a means of pleasure and escape from reality, leads to falling into behavioural addiction as it takes control of the person, leading to a decrease in the ability to focus when studying, working, carrying daily activities or social life. Such a practice deprives one from becoming a social and productive person. Additionally, this addiction prevents people from engaging in work, school, or social events, as well as responsibilities.

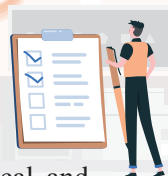
Those who practice masturbation may feel guilty because of religious, cultural, and personal beliefs of those who oppose it and describe it as an immoral or bad habit.

Masturbation is the self-stimulation resulting from a person caressing their sexual organs with the aim of obtaining sexual pleasure to reach orgasm. Arousal may occur through such means to organs other than the sexual organs such as the breasts, the inner side of the thigh, or sometimes the anus.⁽¹³⁾



Educational applications

- Make it known to adolescents that this is a normal part of physical and psychological development, but it is not desirable and can be controlled.
- Supervise what adolescents follow and watch on screens or the Internet.
- Keep an open dialogue, talk to adolescents and help them overcome the feeling of guilt caused by this practice
- Keep them busy and have them use their free time and energy in sports, hobbies, and house chores.
- Always focus on moral values.



12. How do I take care of personal hygiene?

Taking care of personal hygiene has a major role in one's physical and psychological health and wellness, as it keeps away many diseases, such as skin diseases, digestive system diseases, and protects against many psychological problems, such as stress.



Some of the most important ways to maintain personal hygiene :

- Taking a shower when necessary and depending on physical exertion, the weather, or changing clothes instead; washing areas that are more likely in need of daily care; using antiperspirants for body odour.
- Brushing the teeth after every meal; changing into clean clothes daily; using absorbent undergarments made of cotton and avoiding synthetic material like nylon and polyester, especially in summer; wash (and keep dry) sensitive areas with water only and avoid scented soap or cosmetics of non-reliable sources.

Maintaining the cleanliness of the inner and outer clothes and changing them daily.

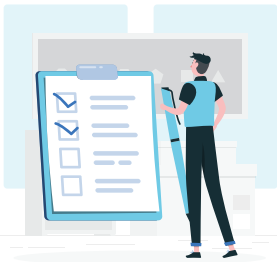
Brushing teeth at least twice a day.

Bathe regularly with soap and water.

Trimming the nails of the hands and feet regularly and in a safe and sound manner.

Drying the ears after bathing: to protect them from infections.

Not to use the personal tools of others.



Educational applications

- Be a real life role model and set an example in personal hygiene.
- Avoid criticism, negative comments and sarcasm, and focus on the positive aspects of cleanliness.
- Assure them that cleanliness is encouraged by religions.
- Emphasize the importance of hygiene in preventing diseases

13. What is healthy balanced food?

Eating a healthy, varied diet supplies the body with many important nutritional elements to maintain good health and energy; the most important of these elements include: fats, proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins, and water.

Micronutrients of a balanced and healthy diet differ from one individual to another according to gender, age, physical activity, lifestyle, and other factors.

There are several steps that help make the diet healthier:



- ✓ Increase the intake of protein-rich foods as these foods help increase the feeling of satiety, and help burn calories more quickly.
- ✓ Drink sufficient amounts of water.
- ✓ Replace deep fried foods with grilled foods.
- ✓ Eat vegetables and stay away from ready-made meals.
- ✓ Eat whole fruits rather than fruit juices.

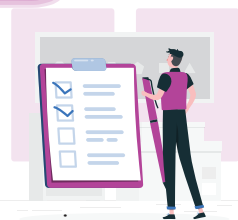
Young people in this age group are greatly influenced by peers and influencers on social media leading to unhealthy eating habits and practices, such as unhealthy dieting, taking medications and others.



Educational applications

- Be a positive role model and adopt a proper healthy diet at home.
- Seek help from specialists when problems related to eating disorders arise.
- Have an open dialogue with adolescents on what they see on the media on how a perfect body image is portrayed.
- Encourage them to obtain information from people specialized in their field.
- Allow them to prepare healthy meals and share in their preparation.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

malnutrition <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malnutrition>



14- What is the right age for marriage?

At this age, adolescents reach the stage of their ability to reproduce, their sexual feelings towards the opposite sex develop, bonding between the sexes heightens, sexual feelings deepen, and feelings of sexual desire are mixed with love, appreciation, care, and kindness.

Feelings and emotions imposed by this stage are often dominant and affect the adolescent's ability to make a sound, logical decisions. Adolescents need to be shown reason on how to make rational and sound decisions by explaining to them clearly the basis on which marriage is founded and the consequent financial, moral and social responsibilities.

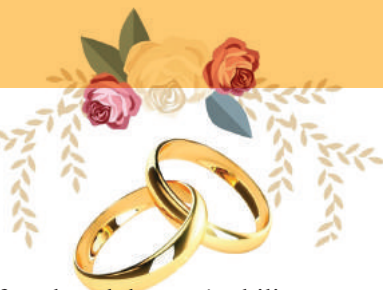
There is no set rule to be applied to males and females to determine the right age and time to go into matrimony. There are many aspects on which the eligibility of a man or woman for marriage depends on, such as reaching a certain level of maturity, and the ability to deal with the radical changes that follow the transition into married life in a positive manner, in addition to individuals' aspirations for academic achievement. Moreover, the determining factors of the right age for marriage differ according to lifestyles, the environment and communities where individuals live.

Marriage before eighteen, according to the law in countries parties with the Convention on the Rights of Woman and Child, is considered 'early marriage', where most countries have established strict laws and regulations for this 'early marriage' for many considerations, the most important of which are: the psychological, social and health impact on spouses, such as depriving the girl of the opportunity and the right to continue her education leading to her inability to form her own independent personality; exposing the girl to many health crisis because of her frail young body; immaturity of the spouses where they will be unable to hold responsibility, start a family, raise children and bear the psychological and economic burdens; undermining their prospects and potential, deprivation of the right to development and building a well-balanced personality as a result of the violation of the right to education, denial to the right to protection, as the girl may be subjected to abuse or exploitation. Lastly, the negative impact of early marriage on family relations in the future, as the chances of divorce increase and the multiplicity of family problems spike⁽¹⁰⁾

"When a girl, still a child herself, is coerced into marriage, she faces immediate and long lasting consequences. Chances of continuing her studies diminish while the odds of being abused by the husband and complications during pregnancy increase."

According to UNICEF evidence indicates that girls who marry at an early age drop out of formal education and more often than not end pregnant.

Also, childbirth and pregnancy-related deaths are important factors of deaths of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 worldwide, in addition to the risk of death of babies born to young mothers, or their exposure to several diseases if they survive.



UNICEF recognises that ‘child marriage separates them from family and friends, and curtails their freedom to participate in community activities, which can have significant impacts on girls' mental and physical wellness.’

The Jordanian Personal Status Law (No. 36 for the year 2010) stipulated provisional completion of eighteen years of age, and kept the exception for those who have completed fifteen years of age. For the eligibility of marriage, the Law stipulated that the engaged couple be of sound mind and that each of them had completed eighteen years of age. The Law, however, allowed the judge, with the approval of the Chief Justice, to authorize in special cases the marriage of a person who has completed fifteen years of age 'According to instructions issued for this purpose, if the situation necessitates marriage for the general interest, and according to that, whoever gets married acquires full capacity in all what is related to marriage and separation and their effects ⁽¹¹⁾.'



Educational applications



- Be attentive to the feelings of adolescents and accept them without passing on judgment.
- Explain to them that physical/sexual needs are only one part of marital life, but they are not sufficient to make a decision to get married.
- Make them understand that marriage is a great responsibility and that it entails economic and social obligations and responsibility towards the children, and that both parties must be ready for this responsibility, otherwise, problems will spike.
- Explain to them that marriage must come at the right time, and that during adolescence boys and girls must continue their education, build skills and enjoy hobbies and activities.
- Equip them with essential information on married life, and the emotional features of both sexes in general and of the partner in particular.
- Emphasize the necessity of their involvement in work and creating the suitable settings for marriage.
- Make sure they continue their academic achievement to control school dropouts.
- Explain the disadvantages of early marriage
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

Early marriage <https://youtu.be/JuzjaoTX47c>

family-planning <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/family-planning-contraception>

abortion <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abortion>

adolescent-pregnancy <https://www.who.int/ar/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>

15. How do I deal with acne?

Acne: It is a chronic skin disease resulting from clogging of the hair follicle with dead skin cells and skin oil. Acne is characterized by the appearance of blackheads or whiteheads, pimples, oily skin, and potential scarring. Acne primarily affects areas of the skin where there is a relatively large number of sebaceous glands, including the face, upper chest, and the back.

Most adolescents suffer from acne during puberty as one of the effects of growth. At most times, effects are minor and can be dealt with by following healthy lifestyles, such as personal hygiene and a balanced diet.

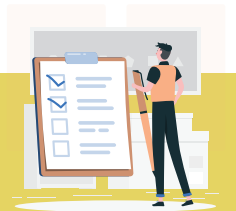
There are several ways to prevent the re-emergence of acne, including washing the affected areas twice daily, using anti-acne medications that can be acquired without a prescription so as

to reduce excess sebum secretions in the skin. Another way is to avoid excessive use of cosmetics (make-up) and remove and cleanse the skin before bedtime. Also recommended is not to borrow or use beauty and healthcare products from others.



Educational applications

- Educate adolescents on why pimples and acne appear.
- Help adolescents boost their self-confidence by highlighting their positive points and strengths.
- Help them accept their looks and physical appearance through listening attentively to how they feel and together, find healthy solutions.
- Keep reminding them gently of the correct, healthy habits and of the importance to continue with the treatment.
- Point out to them not to tamper with pimples and irritated areas as that would leave marks and blemishes behind.
- Be supportive at all times and remind them that you are there for them.





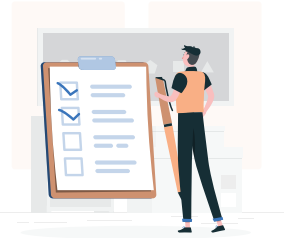
**Answers to
questions
related to
knowing
oneself**

1- What are the emotional changes that occur during puberty?

Emotional changes are among the normal occurrences accompanying puberty in adolescents resulting from hormonal changes and fluctuations. Adolescents tend to become moody, show a sense of belonging and understanding towards friends more than to family, and show less empathy towards parents and more towards their peers and what they think of them. This is why they care about their appearance and what they wear, and are more likely to spend most of their time by themselves in their rooms. Adolescents are also known to be emotional and sensitive during this period with sudden and abrupt reactions.

Educational applications

- Allow for a personal, private space and share preferences.
- Listen to them when they talk about their feelings.
- Talk to them about the effect of hormones on mood swings.
- Help them find ways to deal with stress.
- Compliment their looks and how they take care of their appearance and point out the positive sides.
- Look at the relationship with friends with regard and observe the nature of this relationship by agreeing on clear set rules.
- If changes in daily routine appear and persist for more than two weeks, it is recommended to consult a psychology specialist.





2- Why does my mood change so much?

Mood swings are quite normal; a change in mood is usually related to the way adolescents perceive the situations they are going through. Adolescents' reactions to these events may seem extreme, but that does not necessarily indicate that there is an underlying problem.

Mood swings come as a result of a number of factors, such as hormonal changes as well as the way certain situations are perceived and interpreted. All of this when put together makes an adolescent's feelings seem volatile, unexpected or unpredictable.

Educational applications

- Leave a personal space for the adolescent to test their mixed feelings.
- Always make it known to them that you are there for them at all times and are prepared to help when they need.
- Do not overdo it by following the simple changes in mood because they will not last long.
- It is not helpful and of no use to keep asking adolescents why they are sad or angry because more often than not, they themselves do not know the reason.
- consult a specialist/ psychologist if changes in daily habits and routine continue for more than a week.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

<https://youtu.be/TssvARe1-d8>





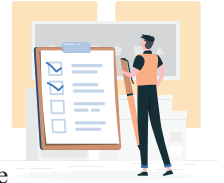
3- How do I deal with my excessive emotional sensitivity?

Emotional sensitivity is one of the most significant features of this stage, and it may surface in the form of bouts of sadness, anger, or other uncomfortable feelings. It may also not be fitting for the current situation, and it varies in intensity and strength, fluctuating between rising up or falling down.

Emotional sensitivity can be confusing, especially if motives were unclear, but when realized in time, this sensitivity can be harnessed to benefit oneself and others as well and manage reactions in a better, more effective way.

Educational applications

- Understand the sensitive nature of adolescents to direct criticism; instead, substitute it with open dialogue such as, 'I noticed how sensitive you were to what your friend said, would you like us to talk about that?'
- Help adolescents practice useful exercises in these such cases, such as deep breathing and relaxation.
- Ask the adolescent to take a break from things or change the place they are in.



4- Why do I have sadness attacks?

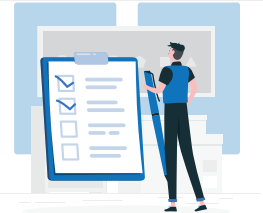
Sadness is a normal feeling experienced by all individuals and results from the loss of an important person or thing. The reasons for this feeling vary according to individuals and their cultures. Although it is an uncomfortable feeling, it is an indication of the individual's need and cry for help.

Reasons for the occurrence of bouts of sadness in adolescents vary, as they are either due to emotional oversensitivity, or because of immature interpretations of situations and happenings that they experience, resulting from the nature of the age stage they are going through.

Educational applications

- Talk to adolescents about their feelings and identify them.
- Allow them to experience these feelings so that they can deal with and overcome them.
- Encourage them to interact with supportive and positive people.
- Encourage them to maintain their daily routine of usual activities.
- Allow for opportunities to practice activities, sports and hobbies which they are more likely to enjoy.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Comz0RMooj7/?igshid=MWMzM2Q4ZmE>



5- How do I deal with feelings of anxiety?

Anxiety is an uncomfortable feeling, but it serves a purpose as it is associated with achievement. A little anxiety can somehow be beneficial, but if it exceeds its limits, it could hinder performance. Anxiety is associated with a feeling of helplessness in facing daily life challenges.

Anxiety manifests in certain physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat or palpitations, a feeling of suffocation, stomach pain, headaches, and sweating.



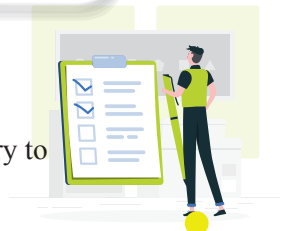
It is expected that adolescents will experience these feelings as a result of a group of psychological, social and ideological struggles imposed on them during this phase.

Deep breathing technique is one of the best techniques for solving many psychological and physical problems because of its ability to give the individual a sense of comfort and relaxation. Deep breathing is often recommended by psychologists, and it can be learned and practiced easily and almost everywhere.



Educational applications

- Anxious families, more often end up with anxious offspring, so try to eliminate anxiety within the family.
- Encourage them to relax through breathing techniques.
- Encourage them to keep their limbs in motion through various exercises and activities.
- After a while, discuss with them the triggers of their anxiety.
- Teach them how to do away with points of tension and anxiety, especially overthinking.
- Encourage them to build relationships with positive, successful and distinguished peers.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:
deep breathing exercises (mawdoo3.com)





6- Why do I prefer to stay alone in my room?

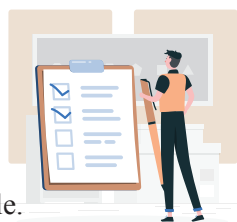
A certain degree of loneliness in adolescents is quite normal, and is associated with the adolescent's tendency to lethargy, which is also a characteristic of this stage.

The adolescent's feeling of loneliness may be attributed to not being understood and not being a part of the adult world. Adults' recourse to criticism and continuous and persistent instructions increases their sensitivity and failure to express themselves appropriately because of lack of proper life skills. Moreover, the adolescent's quest for independence as a way to find an identity of his own would create feelings of loneliness.

Educational applications

- Try to reduce the use of instructions and orders as much as possible.
- Set an example to teach them social skills.
- Give them simple responsibilities and chores around the house.
- Engage them in practicing various sports.
- For more information, you can refer to the following links:

Loneliness and isolation in the adolescent https://youtu.be/s8N_kVuLEKQ



7- Why am I shy?

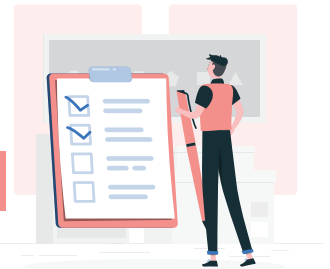
The sensitive developmental stage and physical changes the adolescent goes through affect the way they perceive their body image, especially if accompanied by some comments from parents or the surroundings. It is common knowledge that adolescents are embarrassed with the physical changes.

This feeling of embarrassment could be generic i.e. within and outside the family, or it could be associated with certain situations, such as social situations, for example.



Educational applications

- Involve them in social and group activities, such as school clubs, and ask teachers, if possible, to involve them in group work.
- Be understanding and considerate to the age and developmental stages that they are going through. Make them feel that these are natural changes which all people go through and that they are temporary and related to the stage of growth, and that the body will take a different and more harmonious shape once it reaches adulthood.
- Take note of the situations that cause them a feeling of shyness and deal with them wisely.



8- I feel depressed

Although mood swings and emotional over sensitivity are among the most noticeable features of this stage, parents still need to monitor these changes.

If sadness, irritability, anger or other negative feelings persist for more than two weeks, it may be a cause for concern.

If the adolescent cries a lot for no apparent reason, if they express feelings of hopelessness or unworthiness, if they experience intense guilt or fixates on what they perceive as past failures, these are all possible symptoms of depression. Signs of depression can also be manifested by difficulty going through the usual daily routine, such as waking up in the morning on time, going to school or finishing homework. Changes in sleep pattern and appetite changes, lack of energy, problems concentrating or making decisions, and neglecting one's appearance are all signs of depression as well.

If symptoms of sadness, irritability, or anger persist for more than two weeks in such a manner that deter the adolescent from carrying out their usual tasks, then this is an indication of depression, and a specialist or psychiatrist should be consulted. You may also want to refer to the school counsellor



Educational applications

- Talk to them about their feelings.
- Assure them that you are there to listen, help and show love.
- Show a lot of patience and kindness.
- Maintain a calm manner when you communicate with them.
- Spend some fun time together, like going on a picnic, playing games or reading; you may want to watch a comedy film.
- Arrange for a visit to a psychiatrist, if necessary.

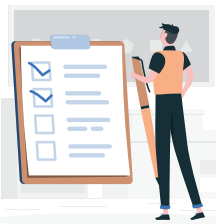
For more information, you can refer to the following links:

What is depression

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/CoNJAvkI9Re/?igshid=MWMzM2Q4ZmE=>

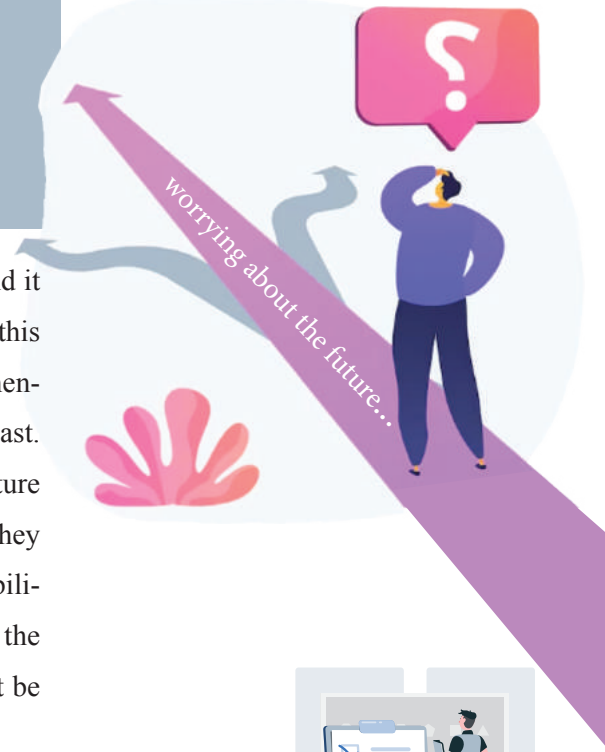
Symptoms of depression in adolescents

https://fb.watch/iQsEiYl_gX/?mibextid=2Rb1fB



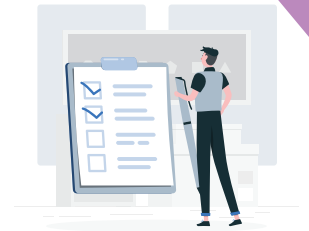
9- I feel anxious about the future

Thinking about the future is a sign of maturity, and it is natural for feelings of anxiety to accompany this way of thinking. Anxiety becomes more intense whenever there are failures and setbacks in the past. In the early stages of an adolescent's life, the future does not mean much to them, but in later stages they feel that there are many challenges and responsibilities they will have to face soon, so anxiety about the future appears because they feel that they will not be able to cope with these responsibilities.



Educational applications

- Train them to plan for the future by developing simple and sequential steps that start from now.
- Tell them about real life examples from their culture of accomplished people and success stories.
- Help them to identify their interests and potential.
- Teach them that failure is a learning experience.





10- I suffer from sleep disorder

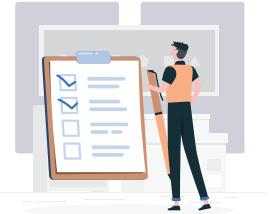
Adolescents need eight to ten hours of sleep a day; it is important to adjust their biological clock by going to sleep and waking up at the same time.

Many factors may affect good quality sleep, such as anxiety, fear, and lack of achievement, in addition to not following healthy sleep habits. Some adolescents may resort to sedatives to help them sleep, but that would worsen the problem as they may become dependent on them in future.

Educational applications

- Observe their sleep patterns so as to maintain regular sleep hours even on holidays.
- Provide a diet that helps them sleep well.
- Encourage them to exercise during the day.
- Create an environment to help bring about a healthy sleep such as moderate heating, not eating at night, not watching screens before going to sleep especially checking the mobile phone, quietness, appropriate lighting, no caffeine or other stimulant drinks.
- Explain the dangers of being dependent on sedatives and drugs to help sleep.
- Encourage them to reduce the intake of energy drinks and coffee.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

Sleep techniques <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-hygiene>





Answersto questions

related to the relationship with others, family, and society

Family, as well as society, has a great influence in shaping the behaviour of adolescents as well as the ways of social upbringing which play a role in displaying or limiting some behaviours in adolescents. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to the manner and approach in which the family and society deal with adolescents.



1- I am being bullied, what should I do?

Adolescents may be subjected to bullying by one or more members of their community, be it at school, the club, or even through social media sites.

Most adolescents tend to cover it up, but when you hear of it, you must take immediate action to stop it.

Bullying : intentional repeated abuse in physical, verbal or psychological ways, and it can range from hitting, pushing, insults, threats and ridicule to extorting money and property, neglecting others and spreading rumours about them directly or through social media and electronic messages.

Educational applications

- Listen to them calmly and be supportive.
- Do not pass judgements as saying, ‘You are weak,’ or, ‘You’re a coward.’
- Do not talk about your heroic stories. Most often adolescents are reluctant to report bullying to adults as they feel embarrassed and ashamed for being weak and feeble, or they worry that you won't accept them, or that they are the reason for your disappointment, disturbance, anger, or any other reaction you might show.
- Say, ‘It's good that you told me. Bullying happens to most people at some point. There will always be some people who act badly towards others. Let's see what you can do to stop the harm you're facing. But first, tell me what you did earlier.’
- Try to find out whether they can stop the bullying through open and strong communication away from violence.
- Discuss the benefits of disregarding verbal harassment.
- Encourage them to report to the school/club official about what happened to them.
- Involve and enrol them in clubs, sports, or other activities that build confidence, strength, and friendships.



2- Why did I start feeling attracted towards the opposite sex?

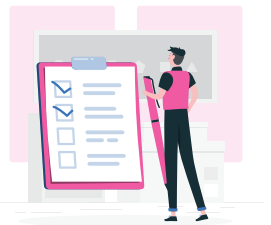
At this stage, real contact with the opposite sex begins, and each side begins to realize the difference and similarity with the other sex. With puberty and the onset of adolescence, come bursts of sexual energy. It is quite normal for a male and female adolescent to feel attracted to one another whom they see regularly.



Admiration here is based on appearance and the fun in playing and sharing. At this stage, having mutual feelings, loving and being loved are of great relevance to adolescents. Also, as important are learning from mistakes of making poor choices, developing self-confidence and dealing with the opposite sex, knowing the difference between physical attraction, friendship, closeness, love, and commitment to another person.

Educational applications

- Do not deny it! Adolescence love is real, painful and confusing...
- Do not ever say that this is not love.
- Do not insult nor ridicule the way they expresses their feelings. During this stage, the adolescent is at the epitome of sensitivity, and harsh comments will be very painful.
- Do not expose them. Do not reveal the secrets of young lovers just to show off.
- Do not suppress them and donot stand in the way of your children's psychological growth and development.
- Make use of this stage to get closer to adolescents and let them talk about their feelings, dreams, fears and pains. Try to be a friend to them, get to know their friends, and open your heart to everyone so that you can be their number one safe place and advisor.
- You need to draw the line for the relationship, but you also need to explain why and give your reasons.
- Teach them the importance of mutual consent, respect, openness, honesty and responsibility at this stage.
- Do not disregard educational books and scientific references relevant to their age group. In addition, do not impose on them a discussion that they do not accept and are not comfortable with.





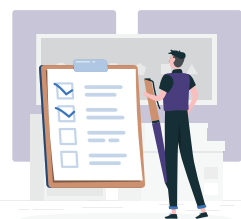
3- Why doesn't my family understand me?

The age difference makes it difficult for the adolescent to be convinced that their parents can understand the experiences they are going through, especially if the parents are the type who order others around and pass judgments.

In addition, the adolescent at the time is going through a phase where they want to be independent and to articulate their own opinion about society. Furthermore, they tend to rebel against the figures of authority in their life.

Educational applications

- Try to have empathy with the adolescent and try to understand their feelings and thoughts.
- Do not use assertive, final statements, but rather accept others' opinions.
- Do not turn differences into conflicts.
- Consult the adolescent and take their opinion on family's daily life matters.
- Take the opportunity to discuss a wide-range of cultural matters.





4- Why does my parents show bias and treat me differently from my siblings?

Methods of communication between parents and children differ according to the age stage children go through.

However, it is noteworthy to emphasize that the feeling of injustice and inequity is a disturbing feeling and causes frustration. It is also important to note that siblings differ from one another in interests, skills, and hobbies, which leads to different parental care methods. Also, age and personality play an important part in the child getting less or more attention from their parents than their siblings. Adolescent traits at that stage of their life make it difficult to have a smooth and easy rapport with those around them, leading parents to avoid communicating with them because of the age-related mood changes, while at the same time they communicate better with their younger and older siblings.

Educational applications

- Empower and encourage the adolescent's performance in their areas of strength.
- Take the adolescent's remarks about discrimination seriously and do not try to justify your actions.
- Take heed of your behaviour and try to give equal attention to all children, as you are their role model and a source of their happiness.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

Discrimination between siblings https://youtu.be/_hXynOOr67g



5- Why am I being constantly criticized by my parents?

Parents criticise their children in the hope that children will mend their ways, thinking this is a way to help and overcome the problems they suffer from, and to teach them the necessary skills to succeed in life and help them build a sense

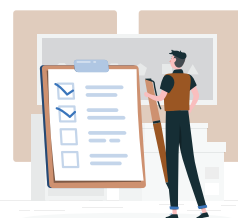
of responsibility of their own. Thus, parents may use disparagement, blame and comparison, and express their dissatisfaction with their children's accomplishments. Assuming parents have good intentions, criticism in this way, however, results in negative outcomes and has significant effects on the psyche of the adolescent and on the relationship between parents and children. Although criticism does not work well with everyone in general, it is particularly non-beneficial with adolescents. Adults respond well because they may be able to understand what is required, while the adolescent has not developed the necessary skills of perceptions to do that.



Educational applications

- Stop negative self-talk as it becomes a habit to you and others.
- Focus on positive points only and points of agreement rather than on differences.
- Do not take behaviour of adolescents personally.
- Provide feedback using the 'sandwich approach'. In this tactic, give a piece of negative feedback 'sandwiched' between two positive ones, thus easing the blow of the critique. It is the talk by reinforcing or emphasizing the positive aspects of the adolescent.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

love and acceptance <https://paradigm-treatment.com/teens-need-to-feel-loved-and-accepted/>



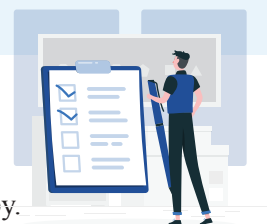


6- Why do my parents prefer bossing me around?

Normally, parents tend to impose restrictions on their children for fear they might behave in ways away from values, or that they might hurt themselves and others. There is a difference between involving adolescents in setting rules and applying them firmly, and imposing rules and applying them strictly and harshly. Firmness and control need to include setting boundaries for adolescents and supporting them to adhere to them.

Educational applications

- Involve them in setting clear identifiable rules they can abide by.
- Ensure that the rules are practical (noticeable behaviour that can be measured) and appropriate to the age group such as:
 - Instead of saying, ‘Respect your brother,’ say, ‘Don’t interrupt your brother while he’s talking.’
 - Reinforce positive behaviour rather than focusing on negative behaviour.
 - Instead of, ‘Be organized,’ say, ‘Keep your room tidy.’
 - Discuss with them the results of their behaviour. Be aware that human behaviour is purposeful. Find out what the goal of the adolescent's behaviour was and show them how to get there in a positive manner.
 - Be fair and treat your children, boys and girls, equally.



7- Why don't I feel my parents' love?

Quite often, the way parents express their love to their children might not touch them, as their way of expression may differ from their expectations or even beyond their comprehension.

Undoubtedly, parents do love their children, but not all what you think is an expression of love reaches the adolescent as feelings of love. It is difficult for the adolescent to distinguish between your criticism of them or your criticism of their behaviour and actions. Adolescents need to feel they are loved as this is closely connected to their feeling of safety which enables them to build solid relationships in future.

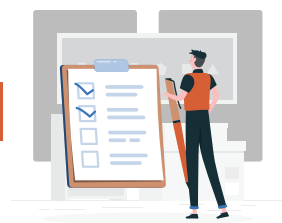


Educational applications

- Always say, 'I love you.'
- Focus on the positive.
- Care for and show interest in the adolescent's life.
- Give them tender love; hug and embrace them.
- Spend quality, fun time together.
- Be there for them as much as you possibly can.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

befriend the adolescent

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=pfbid02HQ6yyEsCKDjBHRaiGJSW6euzSWKaK9hMHmZmxjmx41upVsGbeopJhPwG7NL2J8NI&id=100052160178149&sfnsn=mo&mibextid=VhDh1V



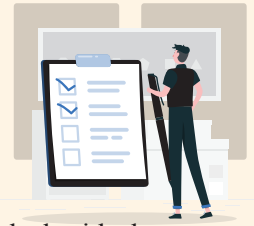
8- Why can't I

be open up and tell my parents what's on my mind?

Adolescents do not take the initiative to open up to parents about what worries them out for fear they might upset them as they know of the many responsibilities parents have. For one thing, they do not want to add more worries to what they already have. Also, they dread their reactions of anger and anxiety. Added to that, they expect their parents won't be as understanding as expected, and that they would try to fix matters in their own way which, from the adolescents' point of view, may not seem the right way.

Educational applications

- Always take good care of yourself and keep a nice appearance so that your children feel that you are in control and able to deal with the pressures of life appropriately.
- Listen to them and do not try to give ready-made solutions.
- Do not jump into conclusions.
- Take a deep breath and do not rush into sudden reactions.
- Show empathy: empathy is trying to understand how they feel and think and why they act the way they do.



9- Why is there no dialogue between me and my parents?

Communication skills are one of the most important tools in building good relationships, and the continuation of clear and open dialogue.

Adolescents are sensitive by nature, and their reactions are emotional and sudden leading parents to pass judgments or criticise them. This ends up making adolescents think they are not understood, and thus the dialogue between adolescents and parents is cut off. In addition, the authoritarian parental method leads to conflict, which may result in severing communication and dialogue altogether.

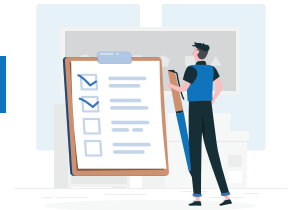


Educational applications

- Listen more and advise less.
- Avoid being aggressive, ridiculing or belittling.
- Avoid blame and giving them a feeling of guilt.
- Help them verbalize their thoughts
- Teach them problem solving skills.
- Avoid escalating the discussion.
- Make it is easy for them to communicate with you (sympathy)
- Walk away from threatening.
- Be honest.
- Use a calm tone of voice.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

dialogue methods with children

<https://www.teenline.org/post/why-teens-don-t-talk-to-their-parents>

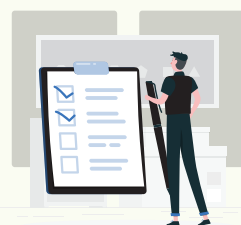


10- Why do my parents interfere in my choice of friends?



Friends constitute the reference group for adolescents, as they find in them what parents don't, and through friends, they satisfy a number of their emotional needs.

Some friends may be looked upon as role models, and by nature, at this stage, the loyalty and affiliation of adolescents to their group of friends is stronger than their loyalty to their family.



Educational applications

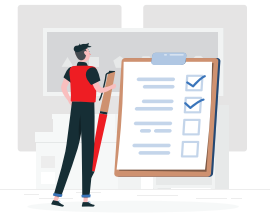
- Never attempt to criticize the adolescent's friends; adolescents are so closely connected to their friends that they feel any criticism towards their friends is a personal criticism of them.
- If you know that your children are befriending people with behavioural issues, the best you can do is have an open dialogue with them to show them the wrong behaviours and risks of this friendship in a calm voice and manner that does not indicate your rejection of the person in particular, but rather your rejection of their manners and practices.
- Do not hesitate to seek professional help to find out the best way to protect them.
- If possible, try to build friendly relations and friendships with the parents of their friends.

11- My family prevents me from having a cell phone/electronic devices?

Banning the use of electronic devices and preventing adolescents from using them is no more a reality but a fantasy. To them, it is part of their maturity and their initiation into the adult world. Also, it is their way of communicating with friends, a matter of great significance to most of them. Moreover, owning and using electronic devices has become a teaching tool in educational institutions and part of students' duties and responsibilities.



Educational applications



- Think through before taking the decision to forbid the use of electronic devices and take a holistic view at the matter. If the children are progressing well in school and in performing their duties at home and are not completely separated from family life, it is better than not to deny them the use of their electronic devices.
- Set some rules, such as: a specific time to use them, not being preoccupied with these devices during meals, and stopping at least one hour before bedtime.
- Supervise what they do when they are online, especially social media sites, and check your internet controls and parental program to monitor the use of any questionable sites.



12- Why are my parents constantly fighting?

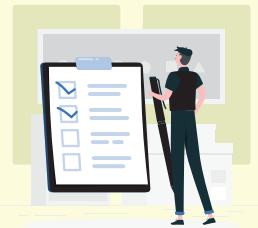


Parents are the safe place for their children and the living proof of the family. It is natural for people to disagree and have arguments. The basis for resolving disputes is a calm, logical dialogue away from emotion, based on clarifying points of view and moving towards a solution to reach an agreement. If, however, the dispute escalates, children are faced with fear and an image of an unhealthy model of the family and marital relations in future.

Educational applications

- Make sure that the dispute resolving is as far away from the children as possible.
- Resolving differences is through dialogue aimed at reaching an agreement.
- Assure them that they will always be well taken care of and give them solace and a sense of security.
- Should there be a fight or argument, priority is to calm down the children and confirm your love and care.
- Seek the help of a specialist in the event that differences are recurrent and out of control.
- It is important for children to know that any disputes, even if the issue is about them, is the responsibility of parents and not the children.
- For more information, you can refer to the following link:

effects of marital disputes on children <https://youtu.be/dYIOQiJrccY>



13- My father beats me, what should I do?

Resorting to beating is a clear violation of children's rights and their dignity. This includes physical abuse the damages of which cannot be predicted, in addition to psychological abuse leading to widen the gap between parents and children, developing inappropriate behaviours and feelings such as lying, stubbornness, self-harm and harm to others, fear, anxiety and hatred.



Educational applications

- Do not punish when you are angry, calm down and then choose the punishment that fits the behaviour.
- Reinforce positive behaviour first before punishing negative behaviour.
- Deal with your children showing love, care, kindness and firmness away from cruelty.
- Build a relationship of understanding, dialogue, care and respect.
- Use educational punitive methods away from violence and cruelty in reforming inappropriate behaviour of children.
- Take into account the characteristics and needs of the phase adolescents are going through.
- Seek the help of the educational counsellor or psychologist if children's inappropriate behaviour is extreme or repetitive.





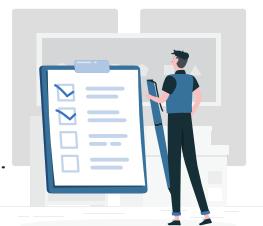
14- I hate my father/mother

No child hates their father/mother in reality. However, certain behaviours and practices of parents when attempting to discipline their children may lead to numerous mistakes and adverse consequences. The most important of these consequences are: children developing feelings of negative attitudes towards their parents, especially at this particular stage which calls for a lot of care and attention. So, if you feel unloved by your children, you need to reflect on your own behaviour and look at the way you treat them.

Cruelty, tension, lack of responsibility, authoritarianism, lack of appreciation, continuous fights in the presence of children, stinginess, discrimination between siblings and strict punishment are among the most key factors that lead to feelings of hatred towards one or both parents.

Educational applications

- Refrain from certain behaviours that may foster feelings of hatred.
- Discuss any step or action that concerns them.
- Explain actions taken against them.
- Set an example to your children and make sure to be a good and respected role model with a relationship characterized by intimacy, peace and love.
- Be sure to demonstrate such qualities as tolerance, respect and mutual trust.



15- Why do we need to go to school when we can get a job without a degree?

Why the school??

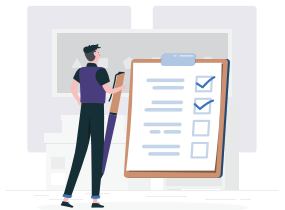


Adolescents see a number of accomplished models who have achieved a certain financial and social status without having had a degree or a good education. This gives them the notion that studying and a degree will not get them to achieve anything, but rather keep them away from fulfilling their ambitions.

This does not apply only to those who already suffer from problems in school, but also to distinguished students. It is a known fact that adolescents at this stage tend to copy models with a social influence or as is known ‘influencers’ in whom they see qualities of power, innovation and creativity.

Educational applications

- Expand the value of learning and getting a good education using different models.
- Help overcome study problems, if any.
- Help discover his/her professional inclinations.





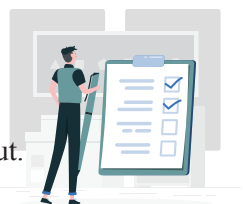
16- Why don't my parents allow me to smoke/hookah and get angry if they find out that I do?

Young adolescents are usually pressured by their peers to smoke. Adolescents encourage one another towards several wrong practices just because they think that makes them appear more appealing, attractive and sociable in front of their peers. Some, however, take on smoking thinking that it helps alleviating their anxiety and tension. Here also, the role of the media is not to be overlooked as it presents attractive models for young people to imitate.

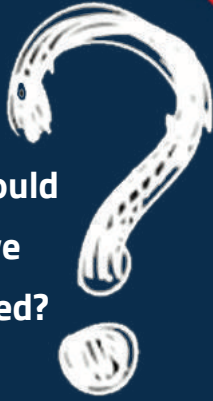
You, as parents, need to make it clear to your young adolescents of your strong desire for them to quit smoking because of the physical and psychological harm to them and to those around them. Parents also need to refute the ideas associating smoking and manhood, or smoking and freedom from problems and psychological pressures.

Educational applications

- Avoid giving orders, threats or getting outraged when you find out.
- Understand the reasons that prompted them to do so.
- Discuss with adolescents the many harms caused by smoking, such as: bad breath, bad odour to clothes and hair, poor athletic performance (as they are unable to compete with their non-smoking peers), and a very high risk of diseases, in particular cancer.
- Support them and encourage them to play sports and to exercise.
- Help them use their free time in more worthwhile and healthy matters, such as meeting friends, reading, writing, watching movies or matches, away from the atmosphere of smoking in cafes.
- Refrain from smoking in front of them (if one of the parents is a smoker.)



17- What should I do if I have been harassed?



Sexual harassment is often misunderstood, and has for a long time been considered a taboo for people even to use the word ‘harassment.’ But that does not justify ignoring harassment or pretending it does not exist. More importantly, sexual harassment is not uncommon or something that happens far away from us. We all see it happen every day in our streets and in our institutions.

Harassment results in many long lasting effects, as it affects the mental, physical and psychological health of the person being harassed instantaneously and on the long run, such as suffering from tension, anxiety, depression and difficulty in concentrating. Harassment also causes headaches, insomnia, sleep disorders and nightmares as well as eating disorders, fatigue and panic attacks. It may also lead one to having suicidal thoughts, lose one’s self-confidence and self-esteem and confidence in others. Feelings of anger, fear, humiliation, guilt and shame may very well result from harassment. Lastly, violence and helplessness, loss of control, poor academic performance, and recurrent absenteeism for fear of repeated harassment⁽⁶⁰⁾ are all the consequences of harassment.

Harassment is any form of unwanted words and/or actions of a sexual nature that violates a person's body, privacy, or feelings and makes them feel uncomfortable, threatened, insecure, afraid, disrespected, intimidated, insulted, or Abuse, intimidation, violation or it is just physical⁽⁶²⁾, and it can be confrontational or through the internet and social media.

Adolescents can be exposed to harassment from people within or out of the family or school. Because of several social and family considerations, they tend to cover it up, especially if the harasser was a family member or someone within the family circle. This is why parents should be always alert to signs indicating that their children have been subjected to harassment, such as:

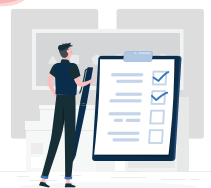
- ✔ Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- ✔ Eating disorders (loss of appetite or binge eating).
- ✔ Symptoms of contracting sexual diseases and the presence of infections.
- ✔ Symptoms of depression, such as persistent sadness, lack of energy, change in sleeping habits
- ✔ Neglecting personal hygiene or care for personal appearance as has been the norm.
- ✔ Intentional inflicting harm to oneself.
- ✔ Exhibiting suicidal tendencies.

Article 306 of the Jordanian Penal Code: Anyone committing immoral expressions or actions, or displaying an immoral act by word, deed, sign, hint, or statement by any means, shall be punished with imprisonment for a period of no less than six months⁽⁶³⁾



Educational applications

- Most adolescents do not have enough knowledge about the extent of actions that fall under harassment. You, as a parent need to explain to them clearly the concept of harassment and the actions that fall under it.
- Avoid uttering words of sexual connotations in front of male and female adolescents because even though they might not react momentarily about it, it remains stuck in their heads and they will use it later with their friends.
- Teach them to take note of and condemn offensive expressions and actions when they see or hear them.



In the event that an adolescent get harassed



- Make sure to reassure them that you are on their side.
- Make them understand that harassment is never the fault of the person getting harassed or abused and that harassing someone is a choice made by the harasser regardless of the person's style of clothing or behaviour.
- Offer help and support; tell them that if anyone ever harms them, they can always talk to you about it; show them that you are always ready to support and back them up.
- Encourage them to report the harasser so as to protect their peers or people they love.
- Encourage them to seek professional help.

In the event you know that an adolescent the mselves area harasser

- Discuss with them the reasons that prompted their commit to this act.
- Explain to them the seriousness of the act they has taken.
- Explain to them the psychological and social effects suffered by the other party.
- Explain to them the legal consequences of this act.
- Seek professional help.

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