Puberty Grab Bag

Audience: 4-8th grade

National Health Education Standards:

1. Core concepts
2. Self-Management

National Sexuality Education Standards:

* Explain the physical, social and emotional changes that occur during puberty and adolescence
* Identify medical accurate information and resources about puberty and personal hygiene
* Explain ways to manage the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty

Rationale:

Puberty is a time of rapid growth and body changes. Many of these changes require additional personal hygiene and self-care habits. The grab bag serves as a stimulus for discussions about changes in males and females and good hygiene and healthy habits.

Materials:

a bag containing the following items (or laminated pictures of items)

* deodorant
* boys’ sports cup
* sports bra
* sunscreen
* testicular self-exam handout
* bar of soap
* acne cream and/or gentle face cleanser
* toothbrush, toothpaste and floss
* shampoo
* picture of a bed (or anything representing sleep: 9 hours!)
* picture of healthy foods
* water bottle
* clean white socks (and foot odor inserts)
* pair of clean underwear
* tampon
* menstrual pad
* razor and shaving cream
* any other age-approriate items or pictures

Activity:

Have student volunteers reach into the bag (without looking) and pull out an item. Then tell what the item has to do with puberty, hygiene and taking care of your body. There will be a LOT of giggling but they still like the suspense of pulling something out of the bag. Use each one as an opportunity to explain how it’s used IN DETAIL.

* Deodorant: put in on in the morning, after shower and before OR after getting dressed, swipe once or twice across your underarm. Try not to get it on your clothes. Rub off with damp washcloth or sponge if it does get on clothes. You MAY want to bring a small one with you and re-apply at lunch time. Stress that smelling like a human is perfectly OK, but it’s considered more polite, at work or school, to not be smelly.
* boys’ sports cup: discuss protecting testicles during contact sports and dangers of testicular damage and testicular torsion (if a testicle injury hurts for more than an hour, go to the ER) Make sure your students know slang words for testicles.
* sports bra: Can be worn instead of regular bra. Should be worn for running or other sports activities
* sunscreen: very important to protect skin when outside, especially between 11:00 and 3:00pm
* testicular self-exam handout: self-check for testicular cancer, very common among young men. Note there is a natural lump where epididymis connects to testicle.
* bar of soap: explain active showering (not just standing there) and what parts of the body deserve extra cleansing.
* acne cream and/or gentle face cleanser: discuss acne and prevention. Acne is OT caused by dirt but by stress and hormones. Gentle cleansing.
* toothbrush, toothpaste and floss:
* shampoo: while in the shower put quarter sized amount of shampoo in hand, rub between hands, massage into scalp (you are washing the scalp, not the hair) then rinse thoroughly under shower water. Same with conditioner if desired. Rinse.
* picture of a bed (or anything representing sleep: 9 hours!)
* picture of healthy foods
* water bottle: stay hydrated. Try to drink 8 glasses of water a day
* clean white socks (and foot odor inserts): teenage feet can be very smelly. Change socks regularly . keep feet/shoes clean and dry
* pair of clean underwear: clean underwear in the morning. Every day. No exceptions. Change in the middle of the day if they get dirty or damp.
* Tampon: unwrap. Explain applicator vs. tampon itself. Insert applicator until your fingers are against your vulva. Press inside. Remove and throw away applicator int eh trash. Make sure tampon is far enough in or it will be uncomfortable. Pull out after 4 hours (or sooner if it leaks), wrap in a tissue, and throw it away (some people throw it in the toilet. Ask your people if this is ok)
* menstrual pad: pull off strip on the back. Pull down underwear. Stick onto your underwear right under where your vagina would be. Pull up underwear
* razor and shaving cream: shave after a shower when the hair is softer. Put a small amount of cream/gel into your hands and rub on face where hair grows. shave off cream/gel and hair. (also discuss that some people shave legs, armpits etc. this is a choice that some people make)
* any other age-appropriate items or pictures