

# Puberty: The Wonder Years

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Students arrive at Pierce Middle School coming from four different elementary school communities. This, coupled with the awkwardness of the beginning of the adolescent years, makes it important to focus on developing and maintaining healthy friendships. The sixth grade student is also exposed to a tremendous amount of sexual messages through television, music, movies, gaming, and other print media. Some are becoming interested in developing intimate relationships and many are confused about how to handle feelings of attraction. Given all this, we feel that the “Puberty: The Wonder Years” curriculum is developmentally appropriate in addressing these health topics.

“Puberty: The Wonder Years” is a health education curriculum for upper elementary and early middle school students. It focuses on healthy relationships, communication and decision making skills to help support the new social expectations these students will encounter in middle school and beyond. It encourages children to talk with their parents about their beliefs and family values. Below is a list of the units/topics that are covered in this curriculum:

- Communication
- Limit setting
- Refusal skills
- Getting help
- Friendship
- Analyzing media messages
- Distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources of information

<u>Essential Questions</u>	<u>Skills</u>
1. What does a healthy relationship look like?	1. Distinguish between different types of relationships (including intimate relationships)
2. How do I make good decisions that will keep me safe and healthy?	2. State 3-5 qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships
3. What do I do if I find myself in an unhealthy relationship?	3. Develop strategies for getting help for yourself or a friend
4. How do I communicate to get my message across?	4. Identify an adult you can talk to about sex and sexuality
	5. Demonstrate assertive communication skills and refusal techniques
	6. Practice steps in a decision-making process

(Source: [http://www.emc.cmich.edu/EMC\\_Orchard/puberty-the-wonder-years](http://www.emc.cmich.edu/EMC_Orchard/puberty-the-wonder-years))

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### **Lesson 1:** Students will:

- Test what they already know about puberty.
- Read and understand guidelines for discussions during the puberty lessons.
- Plan ways to initiate communication with their parents/guardians regarding growing up.

### **Lesson 2:** Students will:

- Define and describe 'puberty.'
- Identify social and emotional changes occurring during puberty.
- Describe normal variations in individual rates of change during puberty.
- Examine case studies and plan ways to respect a peer who is going through an awkward stage of puberty.

### **Lesson 3:** Students will:

- Identify additional changes that occur in females during puberty.
- Define the structures and function of the female reproductive system.

### **Lesson 4:** Students will:

- Identify additional changes that occur in males during puberty.
- Define the structures and function of the male reproductive system.

### **Lesson 5:** Students will:

- Describe ways such as developing good personal hygiene habits to reduce or prevent injuries and other adolescent health problems.
- State a health-enhancing position on a topic (puberty and hygiene) and support it with accurate information.