

Growing with Confidence: In-School Session

45 minutes · Girls, upper elementary through middle school · Girls only · No cost

THIS SESSION COVERS

- ✓ Normal puberty changes, and why every girl's body follows its own order and timeline
- ✓ Why two girls the same age can be on completely different timelines and both be developing normally
- ✓ What a period is and what to expect with a first one
- ✓ Menstrual products and how they are used
- ✓ What to do if a period starts during the school day

THIS SESSION DOES NOT COVER

- × Sexual activity
- × Contraception
- × STI prevention
- × Pregnancy prevention

Nothing gets dismissed. A question outside this scope is still a good question, and she is told so. She is told it is not what we are covering today, and pointed toward a trusted adult who can help — a parent, the school nurse, or her counselor.

0:00

5 MIN

Welcome, ground rules, and the question cards

Index cards and pencils are on the tables before the girls sit down, or handed out while I introduce myself — a registered nurse, and the mother of two daughters.

The ground rules are said out loud: we use plain and correct words, and nobody has to say anything at all. Every question is worth asking — if you are wondering about something, someone else in the room probably is too.

Then the cards. Every girl is invited to write down any question she has. No names, and writing nothing is a perfectly acceptable answer. The cards are collected and answered out loud near the end of the session.

A girl who would never raise her hand in front of her class will write the question down. The cards come first for that reason, before any teaching begins.

0:05

11 MIN

What is changing, and why every body is different

The changes of puberty — breast development, body hair, a growth spurt, vaginal discharge, and eventually a first period — using correct anatomical terms. A short, plain explanation of what hormones are doing and why the whole process takes years rather than weeks.

Early development and late development are both addressed. Neither is wrong, and although they are different from each other, both are right on track.

The point repeated throughout: **every body follows its own order and its own timeline.** Two girls the same age may be on different timelines, following a different sequence, and both be exactly where they are supposed to be.

0:16

5 MIN

What a period actually is

What is happening inside the body, how many days a period usually lasts, and what is normal in the first year or two — including cycles that are irregular at first.

How much bleeding to expect, which is far less than most girls picture: generally only a few tablespoons across an entire period.

0:21

15 MIN

Products, and what to do when it happens at school

Pads, liners, period underwear and tampons — what each one is, how it is used, how often it is changed, and how a girl might decide between them. Products are passed around and handled, not just described, so the words match the objects, and there is time to look at them, compare them and ask about them.

That runs straight into the practical half: what belongs in a small kit for a backpack or locker, what to do about a leak, how to manage a product in a school bathroom, who to ask for help in the building, and what to do if a period starts in the middle of class.

This is the longest block for two reasons. It is hands-on — for many girls it is the first time they have held any of this — and it is the part that decides whether a first period at school is manageable or a crisis.

0:36

8 MIN

The question cards, answered

Read out loud, one at a time, and answered directly and accurately.

Anything falling outside the scope of the session is handled the same way every time: it is a good question, it is not one for today, and here is a trusted adult who can help with it.

0:44

1 MIN

Close

A short recap, and where to find accurate information later.

Questions before you schedule?

Timings adjust to the grade level and the group. If a class period runs short, the opening section compresses — the products block, the school-day practicalities and the question cards do not. A female member of school staff is present for the entire session.

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