

Information for Families

You play an important role in teaching your child about bodies, keeping healthy and staying safe. *The Growing Up Program*, by Family Planning Tasmania (FPT), will help you give your child the correct information at the right time.

Your family and culture may have beliefs and values that you want to teach your child. FPT educators will encourage your child to talk to you, but you might need to start the conversation.

What is *The Growing Up Program*?

The *Growing Up Program* is an age-appropriate, evidence based relationships, sexuality and protective behaviours education program for primary school students. The program addresses the learning outcomes of the Australian Curriculum (Health and Physical Education) and the Respectful Relationships Teaching and Learning Package developed by the Tasmanian Department of Education.

Grade 3/4

Overview

The Growing Up Program for Grades 3-4 builds upon students' prior knowledge and skills. Students explore the concept of growth and change over time with a particular focus on puberty; understanding the most common changes young people can expect to occur during this time, and establishing skills and strategies to manage these changes. A strong focus is taken to ensure students are using respectful and appropriate language, including the correct names for private parts of the body, whilst gaining a greater understanding of how their body works and why changes occur as they grow older.

The content provides students with the opportunity to begin to develop an understanding of conception, and enables them to dispel common myths and misinformation. In doing so, students discuss the stages of pregnancy and investigate the needs of a baby prior to and after birth.

The program provides students with the opportunity to explore their identity and in doing so they learn to respect and value diversity in others. This understanding and acceptance provides students with the basis and skills to establish respectful relationships, and enables them to identify and evaluate their rights and responsibilities. Building upon this, the content allows students to further develop protective and help-seeking behaviours and to critically analyse and respond to scenario situations where help may need to be sought.

Focus Areas

- Identity
- Growth and Change
- Respectful Relationships
- Protective Behaviours
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Respecting Diversity

My child is growing up. What can I expect and how can I support them?

Puberty can begin around this age

- Particularly for girls, puberty can begin from around 8 years old. You may notice breast budding, growth spurt, underarm hair, and pubic hair.
- Talk with your child about the changes they can expect to occur.
- Some children may not be interested or may not want these changes to happen. If your child is particularly worried or anxious about puberty, you can talk to your GP.
- Read books about puberty. A booklist and order form will be provided to your school.
- If you believe your daughter may have started puberty, have a purse containing pads and clean underpants in her school and overnight bags.

Interest and curiosity about pregnancy, babies and relationships

- Answer questions simply and honestly.
- Children are learning about sexuality from an early age. Help your child choose clothing, tv shows, movies, music and computer games that are appropriate for their age.
- Discuss your family beliefs, values and expectations about relationships.

Children are likely to want to become more private

- Respect requests from your child for more privacy.

Friends and peers can become more important, 'ganging up' or 'gossiping' can become more common

- Talk about how things make you feel and how things may make others feel.
- Give your child the opportunity to sort out friendship troubles by themselves, but be there to help them to make healthy respectful decisions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will the classroom teacher attend *The Growing Up Program*?

Yes, FPT requests that classroom teachers attend all sessions of the program with the students so that they are aware of what has been taught and are familiar with the wording that has been used. This enables the classroom teacher to show support for the students, and enables them to answer any questions that you may have about the program.

Can I meet with the educator delivering the program?

A parent/carer information session will be held with the educator delivering the program. During this session the educator will go over course content and explain how the program addresses the requirements of the Australian Curriculum and other curriculum documents. Questions are always welcome during this session.

What if another child in the class asks a question that my child is not necessarily ready for?

Educators are prepared for questions to be asked by children throughout their sessions. These questions will be met with respectful, age-appropriate answers.

How can I support the program from home?

The Growing Up Program educators will encourage your children to talk with you about what they have learnt, however you may need to start the conversation for them. Keep lines of communication open with your children; it is ok to take time to consider your response to a question rather than feeling you must answer straight away.

Are there resources that I can use to support my child's learning?

Yes, the school will be provided with a booklist and order form that outlines a range of books for different ages and stages of learning.

Talk Soon, Talk Often is a fantastic resource for parents/carers and can be accessed at http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/talk_soon_talk_often

