

Additional Information about Reproductive Anatomy & Pregnancy

Responding to Questions

Youth are wonderfully curious, and when talking about reproductive and sexual health information, it is natural for questions to come up. Some questions will be directly related to the content being taught, while others may reflect personal experiences, things they have heard, or broader curiosity about bodies and development. Educators do not need to have every answer memorized. Instead, the goal is to respond in a way that is clear, medically accurate, and appropriate for the setting, while maintaining a supportive and respectful learning environment.

There are many ways to categorize the types of questions you may be asked when talking about these topics. We'll talk about four different categories of questions, what they might sound like, and general guidance on how to respond.

Question Category	Explanation and Examples	Responses
Content-based	Questions directly connected to the material being taught. How does pregnancy happen? What's a sperm cell?	Provide answers that are medically accurate and age appropriate. It's okay to say when you don't know an answer. Write down the question, research, and respond later.
Normative Development (Am I Normal?)	Questions that aim to assess a youth's personal development in context of their peers'. When is someone supposed to get their period? What if you have armpit hair in third grade?	Reiterate that everyone's body grows, develops, and functions at different rates. There is a very wide range of what is typical. Reinforce that most people are curious about their bodies, and the best person to talk to about their body specifically is a caregiver/parent and their medical provider.

Responding to Questions continued

Question Category	Explanation and Examples	Responses
Personal Experiences/Behaviors	Questions that ask about personal experiences or behaviors. Have you ever had a baby? Do you like oral sex?	It can be helpful to think about personal questions in two ways: low-risk personal questions and private/boundary-crossing questions. If a question about a common life experience such as marriage or family structure feels low-risk for you, you might choose to answer it. Private/boundary-crossing questions, however, are about personal relationships, behaviors, or preferences. These questions are not appropriate to answer in a classroom setting and should be redirected.
Belief/Value-Oriented	Questions that ask if something is “right,” “okay,” or “normal” based on personal, family, cultural, or religious beliefs about relationships, bodies, or behavior. Is it okay to have sex before marriage? What do you think about surrogacy?	An educator’s role is to provide medically accurate, age-appropriate information and to encourage youth to have open conversations about values related to this content with their caregivers or parents. It is important to acknowledge that people may hold different values about relationships, bodies, and behaviors, and to support respectful dialogue that helps youth explore and understand those differences.

Sources

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