

# 8. THE HUMAN BODY AND DEVELOPMENT

## Key concept 6

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## 1 - INTRODUCTION

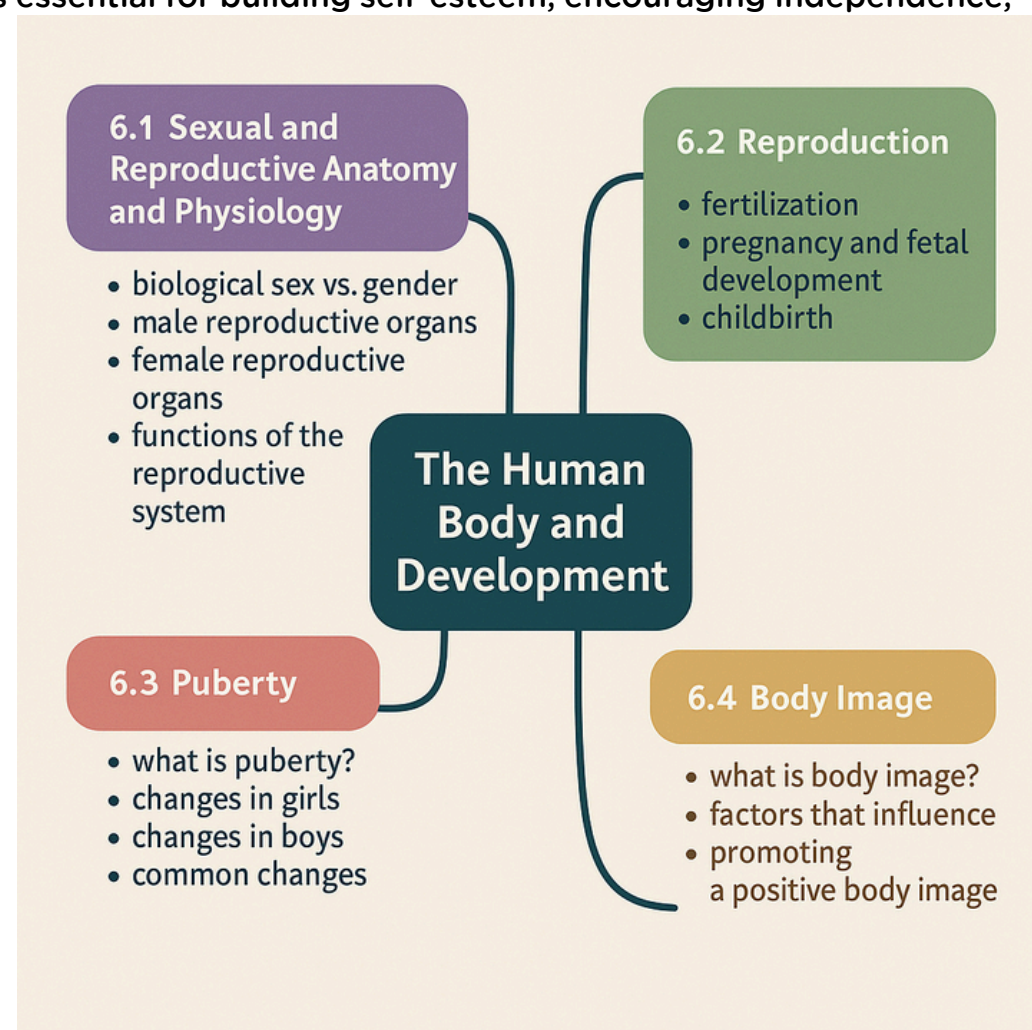
This unit focuses on the human body and its development, with an inclusive and accessible approach tailored for young people with disabilities. Its goal is to support students in recognizing their own bodies, understanding how they function, and learning about the natural changes that occur throughout life—especially during adolescence.

Learning about the body goes beyond identifying parts or systems; it also involves understanding emotions, setting personal boundaries, and practicing daily self-care.

Understanding how the body works and changes over time is essential for building self-esteem, encouraging independence, and fostering safe, respectful relationships with others.

It is divided into the following topics:

- Sexual and Reproductive, Anatomy and Physiology
- Reproduction
- Puberty
- Body Image



### RECOGNITION AND RESPECT FOR THE BODY AND SEXUALITY

It is essential to clearly explain to young people that:

#### Curiosity and Learning

It is completely natural for people, especially young people, to feel curious about their bodies and sexual functions. Comprehensive sex education is key to addressing questions in a healthy and informed way.

#### Body Diversity

Every body is unique, with differences in size, shape, function, and features. There is no ideal model—every variation is normal and valuable.

#### Sexuality Throughout Life

Sexuality is part of human identity across the entire lifespan. From childhood to older adulthood, people experience emotions, changes, and situations related to their bodies and sexuality.

#### Respect and Dignity

Every person's body deserves respect, regardless of appearance, identity, or disability. Promoting consent, autonomy, and dignity is essential at every stage of life.

## 2. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE, ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

### SEXUALITY IS HEALTH .

Understanding the body–its characteristics, changes, and functions–allows young people to gain greater autonomy and make responsible decisions about their bodies, their sexuality, and their relationships.

### 2.1 MALE AND FEMALE SEXUAL ORGANS

There are both differences and similarities between male and female sexual organs. Similarities

- Both have reproductive and hormonal functions.
- Production of gametes: The testicles produce sperm in the male reproductive system, while the ovaries produce eggs in the female reproductive system.
- Hormonal regulation: Both the male and female systems rely on hormones such as testosterone, estrogen, and progesterone.

#### MALE SEXUAL ORGANS:

- **Penis:** An external organ involved in reproduction and the elimination of urine.
- **Testicles:** Glands that produce sperm and testosterone.
- **Scrotum:** A sac that protects and regulates the temperature of the testicles.
- **Prostate and Seminal Vesicles:** Responsible for producing part of the seminal fluid that helps transport sperm.

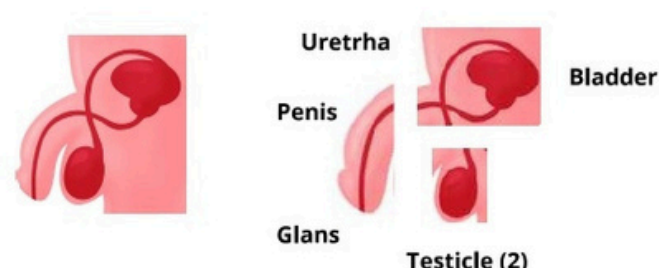
#### FEMALE SEXUAL ORGANS:

- **Vagina:** A canal that connects the internal organs to the outside of the body and serves reproductive functions.

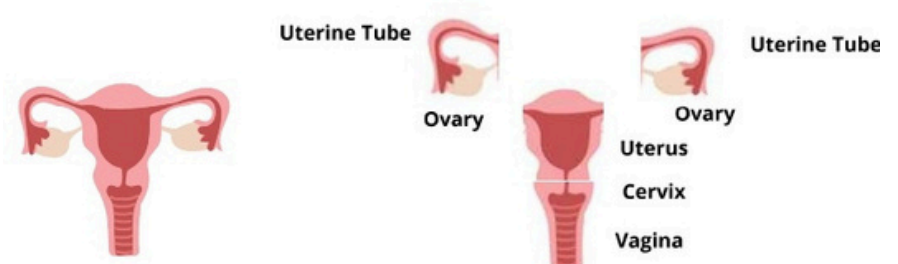
The vagina is part of what is referred to as the “external sexual organs”:

- **Outer and inner lips:** Located on the outside, they protect the entrance to the vagina.
- **Clitoris:** An organ dedicated to sexual pleasure and vaginal lubrication.
- **Urinary meatus:** The opening through which urine is expelled.
- **Vaginal orifice:** The passage through which menstrual blood exits and babies are born during childbirth.

- **Uterus:** The organ where pregnancy develops.
- **Ovaries:** Glands that produce eggs and hormones such as estrogen and progesterone.
- **Fallopian Tubes:** Ducts that transport eggs from the ovaries to the uterus.



| EN           | PT            | SP            | TR         |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Bladder      | Vexiga        | Vejiga        | Mesane     |
| Urethra      | Uretra        | Uretra        | Üretra     |
| Penis        | Pénis         | Pene          | Penis      |
| Glans        | Glande        | Glande        | Penis Başı |
| Testicle (2) | Testículo (2) | Testículo (2) | Testis (2) |



| EN           | PT           | SP           | TR                  |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Uterine Tube | Tuba Uterina | Tubo Uterino | Rahim Tüpü          |
| Ovary        | Ovário       | Ovario       | Yumurtalık          |
| Uterus       | Útero        | Útero        | Uterus              |
| Cervix       | Cérvix       | Cérvix       | Serviks, rahim ağzı |
| Vagina       | Vagina       | Vagina       | Vajina              |

(Didactic Material for ISAWP Project, created by FAJUB)

## SPERM PRODUCTION AND EJACULATION (MALE SEXUAL ORGANS)

Men can produce sperm continuously from puberty and release it through ejaculation.

- **Spermatogenesis:** The formation of sperm cells in the testicles, regulated by testosterone and FSH (follicle-stimulating hormone).
- **Maturation and Storage:** Sperm mature in the epididymis before being released.
- **Ejaculation:** During sexual arousal, sperm travel through the male reproductive system and mix with seminal fluids to form semen.
- 
- ◆ **Key Function:** The production and ejaculation of semen allow for the transfer of sperm into the female reproductive system.

## MENSTRUAL CYCLE AND EGG RELEASE (FEMALE SEXUAL ORGANS)

Women can release eggs during the menstrual cycle, allowing for the possibility of fertilization. This cycle includes several stages:

- **Follicular Phase:** A follicle develops in the ovary, and estrogen levels increase.
  - **Ovulation:** Around day 14, the ovary releases a mature egg.
  - **Luteal Phase:** Progesterone is produced to prepare the uterus in case of pregnancy.
  - **Menstruation:** If fertilization does not occur, the uterine lining is shed and expelled as menstruation.
- ◆ **Key Function:** Ovulation makes eggs available for fertilization.

**Both female and male bodies play essential roles in reproduction, as fertilization can only occur through the contribution of both.**

## SEX HORMONES

Sex hormones play a fundamental role in growth, development, and the regulation of reproductive organs. They also affect the body in various ways throughout life.

They are mainly produced in the testicles (in males) and ovaries (in females), with additional support from other glands such as the pituitary gland and adrenal glands.

### MAIN SEX HORMONES:

- **Testosterone:** Present in both men and women, but in higher levels in men.
- **Estrogen:** More prevalent in women; essential for the development of female secondary sexual characteristics.
- **Progesterone:** Key in regulating the menstrual cycle and supporting pregnancy.
- **FSH (Follicle-Stimulating Hormone) and LH (Luteinizing Hormone):** Regulate the maturation of eggs in females and sperm in males.

## HORMONES DURING PUBERTY

Puberty is a period when hormones trigger the development of the reproductive system and initiate noticeable physical changes in the body.

- **Onset:** There's an increase in testosterone production in boys and estrogen production in girls.
- **Physical Changes:** Rapid growth, the appearance of body hair, and the development of sexual organs.
- **Reproductive Maturation:** Sperm production begins in males, and ovulation starts in females.

## 2.2 MENSTRUAL CYCLE: PHASES AND HORMONAL CHANGES

### Menstruation Is a Natural Part of Life

Menstruation is a natural process that occurs in the lives of women and people with a uterus. It involves bleeding from the vagina that usually lasts between 3 and 7 days.

- The first period (menarche) typically occurs between the ages of 10 and 14, and continues monthly until menopause, which usually happens around the age of 50.
- The menstrual cycle can begin and end at different ages for each individual, and the duration and flow may vary.

### EVERY PERSON AND EVERY BODY IS UNIQUE!

It's important to understand and respect these differences—there is no single “normal” way to experience menstruation.



#### THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE HAS SEVERAL STAGES:

- - Follicular phase: A follicle develops in the ovary and estrogen production increases.
  - Ovulation: Around day 14, the ovary releases a mature egg.
  - Luteal phase: Progesterone is produced to prepare the uterus in case of pregnancy.
  - Menstruation: If fertilization does not occur, the uterine lining sheds and is expelled as menstruation.
- ◆ Key function: Ovulation makes eggs available for fertilization.

# IMPORTANT!

#### IMPORTANCE OF EXPLAINING MENSTRUATION

- Understanding what happens in the body helps prevent fear or embarrassment when the first period arrives.
- Knowing the cycle helps detect irregularities or menstrual problems that may require medical attention.
- Empowerment: Menstrual education promotes self-esteem, bodily autonomy, and the right to make decisions about one's health.
- Combating myths and stigma surrounding menstruation.
- Improved self-care: Girls learn how to manage menstruation hygienically and comfortably, using pads, tampons, menstrual cups, etc.

### 3. REPRODUCTION

#### 3.1 FERTILIZATION: UNION OF THE SPERM AND THE OVUM

Fertilization is the process in which a sperm cell merges with an egg, beginning the formation of a new being. It occurs in the fallopian tubes after ovulation.

A complete genetic set is required (half masculine, half feminine). The resulting cell (zygote) starts dividing and travels toward the uterus.

#### PREGNANCY AND FETAL DEVELOPMENT

Pregnancy is divided into several essential stages:

- Fertilization: Takes place in the fallopian tubes.
- Implantation: The embryo attaches to the uterus and begins to develop.
- Fetal growth: In the following months, organs, limbs, and bodily functions form.

#### PREGNANCY LASTS AN AVERAGE OF 40 WEEKS:

- ✓ First trimester: Formation of major organs.
- ✓ Second trimester: Rapid growth and brain development.
- ✓ Third trimester: Lung maturation and preparation for birth.

#### CHANGES IN THE WOMAN'S BODY DURING PREGNANCY

During this time, the body undergoes various transformations to support the baby's development:

1. Physical changes: Abdominal growth, weight gain, skin changes, swelling, etc.
2. Hormonal changes: Increased production of estrogen and progesterone.
3. Emotional sensitivity: Mood changes may occur due to hormonal fluctuations.
4. Changes in internal organs to adapt and allow the baby's growth.

#### INFERTILITY

Sometimes, people who want to have children discover that they cannot conceive naturally. This is called infertility, and it can affect both men and women.

There are medical alternatives to conceive as well as other options to form a family.

#### Medical Options

- In Vitro Fertilization (IVF): Eggs and sperm are combined in a laboratory, and then an embryo is placed in the uterus.
- Artificial Insemination: Sperm is introduced directly into the uterus during ovulation.
- Gamete Donation: Donor sperm or eggs can be used if one partner is unable to provide their own.

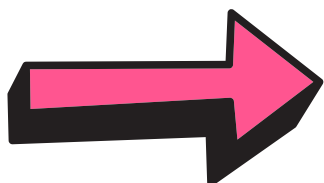
#### ADOPTION:

Many people form families by adopting children who do not have families or whose families are unable to care for them.

Adoption is not only an alternative for those who cannot conceive—single individuals or couples can adopt children regardless of whether they have biological children. Each country's laws set the requirements for adoption.

### **3.2 REPRODUCTIVE FUNCTIONS VS. SEXUAL FEELINGS AND DESIRES**

The reproductive function is related to the body's biological ability to conceive, carry, and give birth to a child, while sexual feelings and desires involve attraction, desire, and the expression of sexuality.



**A PERSON CAN  
EXPERIENCE SEXUAL DESIRE  
WITHOUT THE INTENTION OF  
REPRODUCTION**

### **3.3 CHANGES IN SEXUALITY AND REPRODUCTIVE FUNCTION THROUGHOUT LIFE**

Sexual and reproductive functions evolve over time due to hormonal, psychological, and social factors.

- In adolescence: An increase in sexual desire and physical changes are common.
- In adulthood: Emotional maturity develops, along with the possibility of family planning.
- In old age: Hormonal changes occur, but sexuality remains present and meaningful.

**SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL DESIRE DO NOT DISAPPEAR WITH AGE.**

## **4. PUBERTY**



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**WHAT IS PUBERTY?**

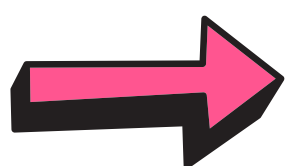


**IT IS A STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT IN WHICH A  
PERSON'S BODY BEGINS TO MATURE AND  
TRANSFORM INTO AN ADULT BODY.  
THIS PROCESS MARKS THE BEGINNING OF  
REPRODUCTIVE CAPACITY AND USUALLY STARTS  
BETWEEN AGES 8 AND 14, ALTHOUGH IT CAN VARY.**

## **4.1 ADOLESCENCE VS. PUBERTY**

Puberty and adolescence are related but not the same:

- Puberty is the biological process, as defined earlier. It includes physical changes such as growth, development of sexual organs, and the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics (like body hair and voice changes). It usually begins between ages 8 and 14.
- Adolescence is a broader stage that includes the emotional, social, and psychological changes that accompany growth. It generally spans from about 10 to 19 years of age (according to the WHO).



**PUBERTY IS PART OF ADOLESCENCE,  
BUT ADOLESCENCE INCLUDES MUCH MORE THAN JUST PHYSICAL CHANGES**

## **4.2 PUBERTY PROCESS AND MATURATION OF THE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM**

During puberty, the brain (through the hypothalamus and pituitary gland) sends hormonal signals that activate the ovaries in girls and the testicles in boys. These sex glands begin to produce estrogen and testosterone, hormones that cause various physical and emotional changes in the body.

The bodies of girls and boys change:

- Growth of the genitals: development of the testicles, penis, ovaries, uterus, and vagina.
- Physical changes: overall growth, muscle development, and fat distribution.

### **PHYSICAL CHANGES IN GIRLS**

- Hair growth on legs and underarms
- Hair growth in the pubic area and vulva
- Hips widen
- Genitals grow
- Acne
- Breast development
- Increase in body fat
- First menstruation (menarche)

### **PHYSICAL CHANGES IN BOYS**

- Hair growth on legs and underarms
- Hair growth in the pubic area and on the scrotum
- Increased muscle mass and broader shoulders
- Genitals grow
- Acne
- More frequent erections
- First ejaculations (spermarche)

**THIS PROCESS DOES NOT HAPPEN IN THE SAME WAY OR AT THE SAME PACE FOR EVERYONE.  
IT IS COMPLETELY NORMAL TO EXPERIENCE PUBERTY IN A DIFFERENT WAY**

## 4.2 MENSTRUAL HEALTH IN GIRLS AND ADOLESCENTS

Menstruation is a natural process and a fundamental part of the development of girls and adolescents. However, many face barriers to experiencing it with comfort and dignity, such as limited access to menstrual hygiene products, adequate sanitary facilities, and the persistence of stigmas that hinder their well-being.

As educators, it is key to promote inclusive, taboo-free education, ensuring that all girls have the necessary resources and support.

Menstrual taboos exist in many cultures worldwide and can negatively affect the health, education, and self-esteem of menstruating individuals.

Therefore, it is essential for girls and young people to learn about the menstrual cycle and how to care for their bodies.

### SOME STRATEGIES:

- Promote improvements in school sanitation facilities, such as private bathrooms, clean water, and access to soap, encouraging school policies that guarantee these resources.
- Challenge myths and stigmas surrounding menstruation by ensuring open and respectful conversations.
- Create safe spaces: Encourage classroom discussions about menstruation without judgment, allowing girls to express their concerns and receive support.
- Teach self-care management: Provide information on managing menstruation, from proper product use to healthy habits like personal hygiene.
- Promote empathy: Raise awareness among all students (including boys and adolescents) about the importance of respect and understanding regarding menstruation.

#### PRODUCTS USED DURING MENSTRUATION:

- SANITARY PADS
- TAMPONS
- PANTY LINERS (SALVASLIP)
- MENSTRUAL CUP

#### INTIMATE HYGIENE HABITS

- Wash the vaginal area well with warm water.
- Dry the area thoroughly with a clean towel without rubbing.
- Wash your hands before and after each change.

#### SYMPTOMS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

- General discomfort
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Headache
- Fatigue, sleepiness
- Abdominal pain
- Cravings for certain foods
- Some pimples on the face
- Nausea (feeling like vomiting)

Some women experience certain symptoms before, during, or at the end of their menstruation. Not all women have these symptoms, and they may not be the same every month.

## MYTHS ABOUT MENSTRUATION AND REALITIES

1. "Menstruation is dirty or unclean."  
☒ Reality: Menstruation is a natural and healthy biological process. It is not dirt, but blood and tissue that the body normally sheds.
2. "You shouldn't bathe during menstruation."  
☒ Reality: Bathing is completely safe and recommended. It's important to maintain good hygiene during those days.
3. "You cannot get pregnant during menstruation."  
☒ Reality: Although less likely, it is possible to get pregnant if you have unprotected sex during menstruation, especially if the cycle is irregular or short.
4. "You can't use tampons or menstrual cups if you're a virgin."  
☒ Reality: Being a virgin means not having had penetrative sex. Using tampons or cups does not change that. They are safe hygiene products for anyone who menstruates.
5. "Women are emotionally unstable during menstruation."  
☒ Reality: Hormones can influence mood, but this does not mean all menstruating people are unstable or incapable. This is a sexist stereotype.
6. "Sanitary pads should be hidden; menstruation is shameful."  
☒ Reality: There is nothing shameful about menstruation. It's part of reproductive health and should be treated with normality and respect.
7. "Talking about menstruation is not appropriate in public or with men."  
☒ Reality: Everyone, regardless of gender, should be informed about menstruation. Menstrual education is the responsibility of society as a whole.

## 4.4 PHYSICAL RESPONSES IN YOUNG MALES DURING PUBERTY

During puberty, adolescents may experience new physical responses such as erections and wet dreams, which are completely normal.

### ERECTIONS

Adolescents can have spontaneous erections (without any obvious reason) or erections due to sexual arousal. It is important to teach that this is neither embarrassing nor bad, but a natural reaction of the body. The topic should be discussed using respectful and simple language, helping to dispel fear or guilt.

### NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS (WET DREAMS)

Some adolescents will experience what is known as wet dreams – the release of semen during sleep. This is a normal part of sexual development and does not mean they are doing anything inappropriate. Explaining this naturally can help reduce anxiety or confusion they might feel.

### NORMALIZING THESE EXPERIENCES

Remind them that these changes don't mean they are "doing something wrong" or that they should feel guilty. It's important they understand that every body develops at its own pace and these responses are signs that the body is growing and maturing.

#### **4.5 EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES: SEARCH FOR IDENTITY, GREATER INDEPENDENCE, AND NEW EMOTIONS**

During adolescence, many important changes occur, especially on an emotional, mental, and social level. Emotions can become intense or fluctuate frequently.

These emotional changes accompany the physical transformations of puberty, which prepare the body for adulthood. During this period, adolescents begin to build their identity, accepting their new body image and adapting to an appearance that may feel different from childhood.

It is also a key stage for developing independence. As they mature, adolescents learn to think more complexly, make plans for the future, and make decisions.

For young people with disabilities, these processes may present specific challenges, requiring an educational and emotional approach that promotes their autonomy and well-being.

##### **SEARCH FOR IDENTITY**

During adolescence, young people explore who they are and what place they occupy in their environment. For young people with disabilities, this search may be influenced by factors such as social acceptance, self-concept, and how they perceive their own abilities.

##### **GREATER INDEPENDENCE**

The need for independence intensifies during this stage, and young people with disabilities may require personalized strategies to strengthen their autonomy.

##### **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is another central aspect of adolescence. Managing emotions such as frustration, anxiety, or excitement may require additional support.

#### **EMOTIONAL ASPECTS: MOOD SWINGS, IDENTITY, AND SELF-ESTEEM**

During adolescence, young people experience intense emotional changes. They may quickly shift from happiness to anger or sadness. It is essential to:

- Validate their emotions without minimizing what they feel.
- Promote activities that strengthen self-esteem, such as recognizing achievements, encouraging autonomy, and giving specific praise.
- Help them explore their identity by respecting their tastes, style, and personal needs.

Young people with intellectual disabilities may require more time or visual support to identify and manage these feelings.



## TIPS FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

### IDENTITY EXPLORATION

Young people with disabilities may face added challenges related to social acceptance, self-concept, and how they perceive their own abilities. It is essential to:

- Foster an inclusive and respectful environment where everyone feels valued.
- Reinforce self-esteem through activities that highlight their skills and achievements.
- Support building a positive identity by emphasizing potential rather than limitations.

### GREATER INDEPENDENCE

Youth with disabilities might need personalized strategies to strengthen their autonomy. Recommendations include:

- Designing activities that encourage decision-making and problem-solving.
- Implementing adaptations that help develop practical life skills.
- Facilitating access to technological tools that promote autonomy in learning and communication.

### NEW EMOTIONS

Managing emotions like frustration, anxiety, or enthusiasm may require additional support to recognize and understand feelings. Some strategies:

- Teach emotional regulation techniques through mindfulness exercises or artistic expression.
- Promote social skills development to improve peer interactions.

### SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE FOR FAMILIES

Many families may feel unsure about how to handle changes in their children, and for families of youth with disabilities, these challenges can increase.

**It is important to maintain communication with families, providing support, guidance, and education.**



**Personalized support is key, tailored to each individual's needs, without becoming overprotective.**

## 5. BODY IMAGEN

### WHAT IS BODY IMAGE?

Body image is how a person sees, thinks, and feels about their body. It is not always related to how they actually look, but rather to how they believe they look.

During adolescence, physical changes can make young people feel insecure or uncomfortable with their bodies. It is normal to experience doubts, but it is important to guide them toward a positive self-image.



### 5.1 INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL PRESSURE AND THE MEDIA ON BODY IMAGE

The world of fashion and the media significantly influence how people see themselves. Through advertisements, digital platforms, and audiovisual content, images are spread that often perpetuate unrealistic beauty standards. This can cause feelings of insecurity and affect young people's confidence in their appearance.

#### HOW DO THE MEDIA AND FASHION INFLUENCE BODY PERCEPTION?

Establishment of unrealistic beauty ideals

- The media (magazines, social networks, television, advertising) and the fashion industry promote a narrow beauty ideal (extreme thinness, flawless skin, tall stature, etc.) that does not represent the real diversity of bodies. This can cause body dissatisfaction, especially among young people.

- Hypervisibility of certain bodies and exclusion of others

The idea is reinforced that only certain types of bodies (white, thin, without disabilities, cisgender) are "desirable" or "successful," making other body types invisible.

- Excessive use of digital retouching

Image editing on social media and advertising campaigns (Photoshop, filters) distorts reality, leading to unfair comparisons and low self-esteem.

- Social pressure about self-image

Fashion dictates which body types "look good" with certain clothes, excluding those who do not fit that mold. This can cause anxiety, body shame, and eating disorders.

- Social media and culture of comparison

Instagram, TikTok, and other platforms encourage constant comparison, which increases the risk of body image disorders, especially in adolescents.

#### ACTIVITIES TO ANALYZE THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA

- Analyze how advertising campaigns highlight bodies that conform to specific standards, excluding body diversity.
- Social media: the influence of influencers and trends. Discuss the role of influencers and the pressure to follow certain aesthetic models on digital platforms.
- Encourage the search for role models who represent real diversity in bodies and styles.
- Compare edited images with real photos to highlight how technology alters the perception of beauty.
- Develop activities where students analyze advertising messages and discuss their effects.
- Create spaces where students can express their concerns about aesthetic pressure, reinforcing the importance of self-acceptance.



## 5.2 ♥ ACCEPTANCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

### How to Foster Body Acceptance and Pride

Remind young people that every body is different and special, with unique characteristics that make it one of a kind.

- Explain that feeling proud of their body means accepting and valuing it for everything it allows them to do, beyond appearance.
- Emphasize that physical appearance is determined by genetics, environment, and health habits, helping students understand that their development is natural.
- Recognize that physical appearance does not define a person's worth. Activities can be done where students highlight personal qualities that make them valuable beyond their physical looks.
- Encourage acceptance of the diversity of physical appearances by promoting positive role models who represent different body characteristics.
- People have different standards of what is physically attractive. Even over time, the perception of beauty has changed.
- Beauty standards vary across cultures and historical periods.



## 5.3 IMPACT OF BODY IMAGE ON HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR

How people feel about their bodies—the image they have of themselves—significantly influences their physical and emotional well-being.

Social pressure, beauty standards, and constant comparison can lead to unhealthy behaviors that put their health at risk.

### GENDER-BASED BEAUTY STANDARDS

Beauty standards are social constructs that vary over time and across cultures, but they are often strongly influenced by gender.

**For women**, these standards often promote thin bodies, flawless skin, eternal youth, and a highly feminized appearance.

**For men**, on the other hand, muscularity, height, physical strength, and virility are exalted. These rigid expectations can lead individuals to feel that they are not attractive or “acceptable” enough, motivating them to change their appearance through extreme diets, cosmetic surgery, or the use of dangerous products and medications.

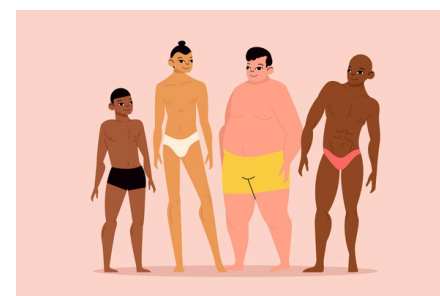
It is essential to critically question these models, understanding that they are artificial and heavily influenced by the fashion industry, advertising, and the media. These standards do not reflect the natural diversity of human bodies and contribute to a culture of body dissatisfaction that affects people's mental and emotional health.

**Many young people resort to different methods to change their appearance without considering the adverse effects. Some of the most concerning include:**

- Use of slimming pills: They can cause malnutrition, cardiovascular problems, and dependency.
- Use of steroids: Affects hormonal balance, causing liver problems and psychological issues.
- Use of skin whitening creams: Contain harmful ingredients that can damage the skin and overall health.
- Extreme diets: Can lead to eating disorders and affect metabolism.

The use of these medications and products can have serious side effects, such as:

- Heart problems
- Liver or kidney damage
- Dangerous hormonal changes
- Psychological dependency



## **5.4 DISORDERS RELATED TO BODY IMAGE**

### **EATING DISORDERS**

Eating disorders are serious illnesses that impact both physical well-being and emotional health. These disorders involve a conflicted relationship with food, body weight, and self-image, as well as unhealthy eating patterns. Such manifestations can harm your health, emotional state, and your ability to function in key areas of daily life.

**The most common types of eating disorders are:**

- Anorexia nervosa
- Bulimia
- Binge-eating disorder

#### **• ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION: CAUSED BY BODY IMAGE DISSATISFACTION**

These illnesses can arise as a consequence of dissatisfaction with body image.

Internal and social pressure can trigger anxiety – characterized by excessive worry, nervousness, or fear – and depression, which manifests as persistent sadness, loss of interest in daily activities, and feelings of worthlessness.



#### **• BODY DYSMORPHIC DISORDER:**

Body dysmorphic disorder is a mental illness in which a person becomes obsessed with one or more aspects of their physical appearance that they perceive as flawed, even though these flaws are minimal or imperceptible to others.

This constant worry can lead to intense feelings of shame, insecurity, and anxiety, to the point that the person may avoid social interactions or public situations for fear of judgment or criticism.

#### **• CAN EATING DISORDERS AND BODY IMAGE-RELATED DISORDERS BE PREVENTED?**

There is no certain way to prevent eating disorders, but it is important to educate children in healthy habits and acceptance of their own bodies.

The family and educational institutions play a fundamental role in the prevention of these disorders.

## **KEYS TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

A healthy body image is not only based on appearance but on overall well-being.

To promote it:

- Encourage healthy habits: good nutrition, regular physical activity, and rest.
- Foster emotional self-care: teach how to identify emotions and seek help if needed.
- Avoid comments about weight or appearance in the classroom.
- Create an environment where everyone feels accepted and respected.



## 6. ISAWP PROJECT TEACHING MATERIALS : Inclusive Sexuality: A World of Possibilities

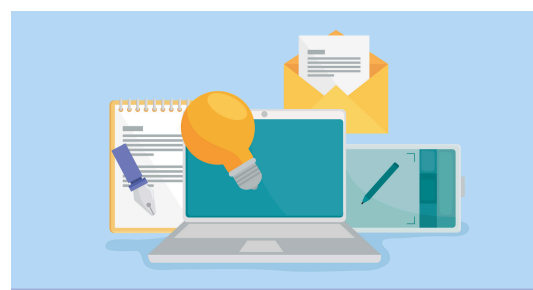
After the theoretical explanations, we now present the teaching materials developed within the framework of the ISAWP project: Inclusive Sexuality: A World of Possibilities. These materials will serve as the foundation for delivering the workshop.

Affective-Sexual Education for Young People with Disabilities which will be held in each of the project's partner countries.

These materials have been created specifically for the ISAWP project, following the key concepts recommended by UNESCO, and taking into account the necessary adaptations to ensure accessibility and suitability for the target group.

The teaching materials for Key Concept 6 have been developed by by FAJUB, partner in the ISAWP project.

You can find the materials in "Unit 8 in Classroom".



## 7. BIBLIOGRAFY

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