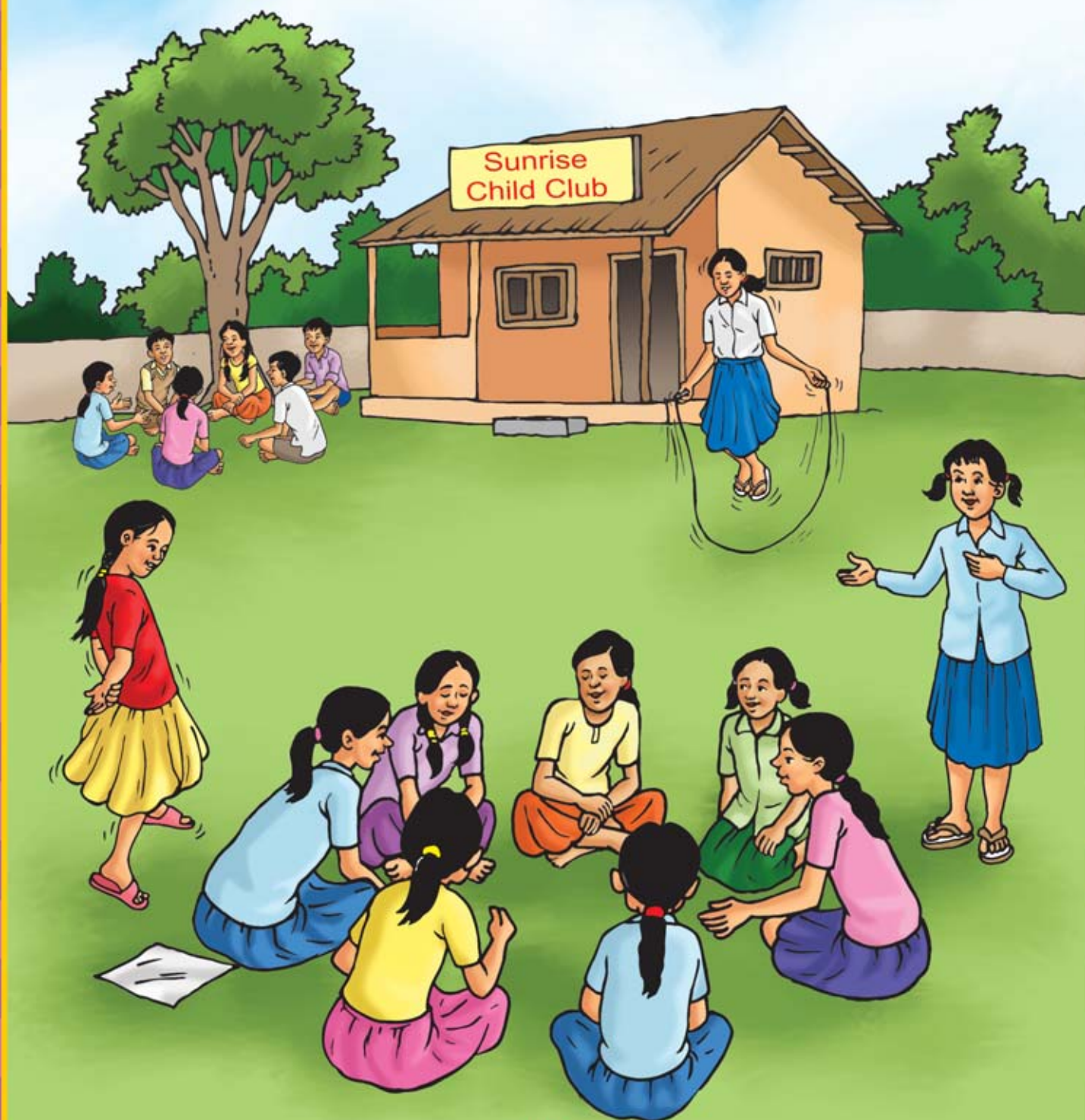


# KISHOREE



Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Health and Population  
National Health Education Information and Communication center

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all contributors who have made this book possible but most importantly the voices of boys and girls who shared their personal stories and questions about puberty. Much thanks to the Ministry of Health and Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health sub-committee. This book would not have been possible without adaptations from three evaluated books for very young adolescents:

- 1) Growth and Changes (Tanzania) by Marni Sommer
- 2) GEMS diary by the International Committee for Research on Women (ICRW)- India
- 3) Choices by Save the Children (Nepal)

Finally, this book was made possible by Protecting Futures by Always and Tampax.

Save the Children

## Booklet production advisors

Mr. Badri Bahadur Khadka  
Mr. Sagar Dahal  
Dr. Ashish KC

## Technical and content advisor

Brad Kerner (SC/USA)

## Booklet produced by

National Health Information Education and Communication Centre (NHIECC)

## Support

Family Health Division

## Writer

Srijana Sharma

## Illustrations and design

Raju Babu Shakya (Sarab)

## Date of production

December 2011

Copy right NHIECC



## Few words

An adolescent period is a distinct time of human development. Adolescents need specific support from health and behavioral communication programs. A majority of young adolescents do not have correct and complete knowledge about puberty. There are several social barriers to adolescents' access to correct information about puberty. Therefore, there is a crucial need of print, audio and visual materials about puberty. These materials can be informative tools to help adolescents adopt positive behaviors.

Boys and girls go through physical, mental and emotional changes during puberty. Adolescent behavior and interest also change during this period. All these changes are normal but adolescents may fall in trouble if they lack adequate knowledge about puberty.

This booklet “**Kishoree**” is meant for all girls of 10-14 years of age. It has tried to give answers to some of queries that often come in the minds of girls belonging to this age group. It also tries to give answers to several questions about reproductive health as well as gender and life skills.

There are, of course, some Information/Education and Communications (IEC) materials prepared for adolescents belonging to the age group of 13-19. However, there is a lack of audio and visual materials that target this particular age group on Reproductive Health (RH) issues. We hope that this book will fulfill the requirements of this age group.

This booklet is the result of several months of hard works of many people. Mr Sagar Dahal, senior public health administrator at FHD, Dr Ashish KC, Ms Srijana Sharma, Ms Sangeeta Paudel of Save the Children and artist Raju Babu Shakya (Sarab) are highly acknowledged for their contributions to this book.

Special thanks to Mr. Brad Kerner, adolescent program advisor, Save the Children USA, for his technical guidance while preparing this booklet.

We would like to thank all students and teachers who shared their personal stories and experiences for this booklet.

National Health Education Information and Communication center  
(NHEICC)



# My Dreams



○ Everyone has **HOPES** and **DREAMS** for their life.

○ **What are your HOPES and DREAMS?**  
○ **What do you want to achieve in life?**

○ **Draw a picture or write a few words of your Hopes and Dreams. Share it with your friends, siblings and parents. They can help you make your Hopes and Dreams come true**



# Puberty

## What is puberty

Everyone goes through different phases in life. During our adolescent phase, from age 10 to 19, we start to see many changes in our body, thoughts and emotions. All of these changes together are called “puberty” and they are very normal. Everyone experiences these changes, but some girls start to experience the changes before others.

## You will see the following body changes during puberty:

- You will grow taller.
- Your hips get wider.
- Hair grows in and around your “secret parts” and armpits.
- Your breasts grow and become more sensitive.
- Your voice changes.
- Your face become oilier which can cause pimples.
- You start to sweat more which can make you smell bad (If you do not wash yourself!)
- Your menstruation begins.



Beside physical changes you may experience many emotional changes. You may feel happy one day, then sad the next day, outgoing with friends one day, then shy the next. These emotional changes are normal.



All of these emotional changes can lead to new desires in some girls, for example;

- The desire to please others and not feel different from friends
- The desire to want others to understand their feelings.
- The desire to form their own circles with just girls
- The desire to be successful in school and feel competitive with friends
- Sexual desires that make you feel attracted toward others.

## Sabina's Story

It had been a few months that I had experienced a white discharge coming out through my vagina. I was confused. Since there was no difficulty, pain or fever, I did not share this matter with anyone. After a few days, I was sitting in my room with my elder sister. Suddenly she saw red blood in my underpants and said, "Sabina you are menstruating". She told me that if girls who have already begun menstruating are physically close to boys, they may get pregnant. I could not understand what it all meant. I was confused. I assumed that if I touch a boy, I could get pregnant. I was worried that since there were boys in school, how would I be able to keep myself away from them?

But my sister explained to me that I can get pregnant only if I have sexual relations with a boy.

Looking back, I now wish I knew more about menstruation before it happened, but I know now that it is not something to be scared of and just like my mother said, all girls menstruate, it is normal. I also understand that my sister was trying to tell me that it does not mean that a girl's body is ready to give birth to a baby just because her body is able to get pregnant.



## Why do pimples appear in the face during puberty?

Puberty actually starts when extra chemical called “hormone” is produced in our body. It is these hormones that make our skin produce more oil which can cause pimples on our face.



## Do pimples disappear after marriage?

It is a myth (false belief) that pimples disappear after marriage. If you are worried about pimples, you should wash your face in morning and evening and keep it clean. We should not prick and squeeze pimples with our fingers. Instead, we should avoid eating too oily and fried foods, chocolates. We should always keep our face dry and clean to prevent pimples. But as much as you try to prevent pimples, you still might get some. It is a normal part of puberty.

## Why are adolescent boys and girls too inquisitive?

As a result of development of our body and heart during puberty adolescent boys and girls want to learn new things. They grow confident and want to become independent. But this independence can lead them into trouble with drugs and can lead to unsafe sex as well.

## How will you remain safe and free from peer pressure as you grow?

You can share your problems with parents or your senior friends. They can advise you how to be safe from all these unsafe behaviors.

## What is menstruation?

Menstruation is a special sign for a girl that her body is growing and preparing to have children in future. When you start to menstruate, it means that your body is able to get pregnant, but it does not mean that you are ready to have and care for children. Every woman has to pass through this process. During menstruation, blood trickles out from vagina for three to four days and this happens once a month. The amount of blood that flows out of vagina varies for each girl. Many girls are scared when they menstruate for the first time because they do not know what it is. It is not something to be scared of, it happens to every girl.



## When does menstruation start? And when does it stop?

It may start between 10-11 years of age and for other girls it may start a little later. Every girl is different. It generally stops when a woman turns 40 to 50.

## Time gap between menstrual periods

After about a year, menstruation repeats regularly, about every 28 days. But, among some girls, their periods can happen regularly every 22 to 35 days. This is normal and there is nothing to worry about.



## What kinds of symptoms appear before menstruation?

Many girls get pains in their lower part of their backs and abdomen. Some girls can start to feel irritated, too. Many girls do not suffer from any problems.

## What kinds of problems do girls face during menstruation?

Girls can have different symptoms but every girl's body is different. Some girls experience nausea, loss of appetite, tiredness, dizziness, headache, bellyache. But not all of them necessarily suffer from these problems.

There is no need to seek treatment for these problems but if girls are in pain, they can take a simple pain killer medicine so that they can continue in school.



## What to do if you suffer from abdominal cramp during menstruation?

- Warm your back with hot water bag. If you do not have a hot water bag, then use a bottle filled with hot water. You can use hot brick or stone also.
- You can also drink hot water with ginger or tamarind.
- Keep your feet in hot water
- Drink hot tea with ginger
- Instead of staying idle, you should walk a little while. If all these attempts do not work, you can see doctors. S/he may suggest you some medicine.



## Why do girls get scared when they menstruate the first time?

In our society, many girls do not learn about menstruation before it happens. So, they see blood coming out of their vaginas for the first time, they get scared. Some people in our society also think menstruation is something embarrassing and sinful. But, there is nothing to be embarrassed about it. All girls go through menstruation periods when they enter into puberty. All our mothers, elder sisters, aunts and female teachers have had menstruation periods.

## What to do after seeing your first menstruation?

It is good to tell your mother, sister, aunt, female teacher or whoever is nearby when you have your first menstruation. If you are at school, you have to tell your friends or teachers about it. They will tell you what to do or what not to do.



## What to do to keep yourself clean during menstruation?

When a girl sees her period, she should wash herself at least twice a day and keep herself clean around her vagina where the blood is passing through. So you should keep soft and clean cloths, cotton or sanitary pads in your panties to prevent blood from soiling your clothes. You should change these pads or clothes when they get drenched with blood. You should generally change these pads after two to three hours so that they will not smell bad.

- If you are using cotton cloths during menstruation, put them in the sun after washing them with soap. If you keep these clothes in dark and cold rooms, it may not dry up properly, and cause infections when you reuse them. Once these cloths are dried up, you can keep them safely in a polythene bag to use them again.
- If you are using sanitary pads (which have to be bought at the store), you should change them when they get wet with blood. You can not use the same pad again. The used pad should be disposed of safely.
- Taking a bath once a day during menstruation is necessary. If it is not practical, you should then clean the area around your vagina with soap and water every time when you go to the rest room.



# Mohani's story

When I was 12 years old, I had a stomach pain one day . I went to toilet. I saw my urine was red. I was afraid and wondered what happened to me. I told my problem to my elder sister. My sister laughed and told me that I had my first menstruation. She also told me, “Don't be afraid. Every girl experiences such thing”. She advised me to use a small cotton cloth piece inside my pants. I was closed in a room in my house by my mother. I was told that it was our tradition to not see boys and the sun. I was not allowed to go to school for 12 days. I hated missing school.

I did not know where to throw the used cloth piece. If I would wash it and dry it in the sun, every one would see it and know about my situation. I washed the cloth at night and kept it in the corner of the room. I began to get worried where I would go to the bathroom in the school during my menstruation. How would I change and wash my used cloth piece as there is no water in the school.



I now know how important it is to fully dry the cloths in the sun, so they are not wet when I start to use them since this can cause an infection. I also plan ahead and take extra cloths with me to school so I do not have to wash them there. I also carry a little sack so I can bring home the soiled cloths to wash. No one knows what is in my little secret sac.

## How do I deal with menstruation when in school?

Going to school will help you achieve all your HOPES and DREAMS. It is so important to continue to go to school when you have your menstruation so that you don't lag behind in your school work. Make sure that you carry a supply of cloths or pads with you to school just in case you get your period while in school. If you are using cloth and need to change it, you should put it in a polythene bag and wash them after coming to home. Make sure to check them often so they do not leak and soil your clothes. Many girls have started using sanitary pads when they go to school because they help you avoid soiling your clothes and feeling embarrassed in front of your friends. Some girls ask their parents for money for pads while other girls save a little money each month to buy them. If you are using a pad you then put it in a plastic bag and throw in the dump yard.

# What makes someone a boy or a girl?

In our community, there are different beliefs about how boys and girls should act. But are they all true?

1. Boys should have short hair. But here Raju has long hair. Isn't he still a boy?



2. Son supports his parents in their old age.

Here Sobha has brought her father to the hospital for his treatment. Isn't she still a girl?

3. Girls are responsible to do household chores.

Here Kamal is cooking meal for the family. Isn't he still a boy?





4. A school is headed by a male teacher.

Here Goma is the headteacher of the School. Isn't she still respected as a woman?

5. Boys are considered smarter than girls.

Here Sushila and Bhima have topped their respective classes. Aren't they still respectable girls?



6. Working for the army or police is a man's job.

But here Menaka is a police officer. Isn't she still respected?

Although our societies have created certain roles for men and women, there are examples of men and women living differently but equally. It proves that all these beliefs are not universal. As the time changes, all these types of beliefs can become outdated. Therefore, instead of forcing roles and responsibilities based on sex, boys and girls should get an equal opportunity to do work based on their interests and skills.

The truth is that anyone can learn to do anything and be successful if he or she is given an opportunity.

# Whose turn is it to wash the dishes?

## A quiz about roles of boys and girls.

Men and women and boys and girls have different roles and responsibilities in our society. Why is it so? Is it fair? Who made these rules? Can these rules be rewritten?

We have listed some statements and answers. Please tick  the one you consider most appropriate and write your answer.



### 1. Girls have hopes and dreams just like boys..

- and girls can achieve these hopes and dreams just as easily as boys!
- but girls have a harder time than boys achieving their hopes and dreams.

Do you think it is easier for you to achieve your hopes and dreams than boys your age? Why is it so?

.....

.....



### 2. Boys do not have to help cleaning the dishes because...

- They do not know the skill
- It's not their job
- They are not expected to help by their parents

What would happen if your brother helped you or your mother clean the dishes?

What would your family and friends say? Is it fair that girls have to do all the household work?

.....

.....



### 3. When compared to boys, more girls drop out of school because...

- their education is not given as much importance as that of boys
- they are not expected to go for higher education
- they are not naturally as smart as boys
- There are too many other chores and responsibilities for girls

Are boys born smarter than girls? Are there girls in your school who are very smart? What role do boys have in helping girls achieve success in schools?

.....  
.....



### 4. Boys do not cry because...

- They do not know how to cry
- They are told not to cry by their families and society
- They lack emotions and never feel sad or hurt

Have you ever heard someone say “Act like a man !?” What are they really trying to tell boys? Isn't it OK for boys to cry just like girls? Have you ever hear someone say to you “Act like a girl !”

.....  
.....



### 5. Girls should not play football because...

- They need to spend their free time cleaning and doing chores
- It is not biologically possible for them to play football
- It's not the girls' game.

Are girls not able to play sports? Is it fair for boys to have free time to play but not girls? What can families do to make life more fair and equal for boys and girls at home?

.....  
.....



## 6. Boys can not look after children because...

- Biologically men are not care givers
- They should not look after children
- It is not considered a man's responsibility

Have you ever seen a man caring for his children? Why does society think men can not be caregivers?

.....

.....

**Boys and girls are different but not unequal.**

**All people have the choice to act in ways that help both boys and girls achieve their HOPES and DREAMS. Is it fair to treat boys and girls unequally?**



# Snake and ladder Game

|     |    |    |    |    |
|-----|----|----|----|----|
| 100 | 99 | 98 | 97 | 96 |
| 81  | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 |
| 80  | 79 | 78 | 77 | 76 |
| 61  | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 |
| 60  | 59 | 58 | 57 | 56 |
| 41  | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 |
| 40  | 39 | 38 | 37 | 36 |
| 21  | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 20  | 19 | 18 | 17 | 16 |
| 1   | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |

Follow others easily

Making hope and dreams of

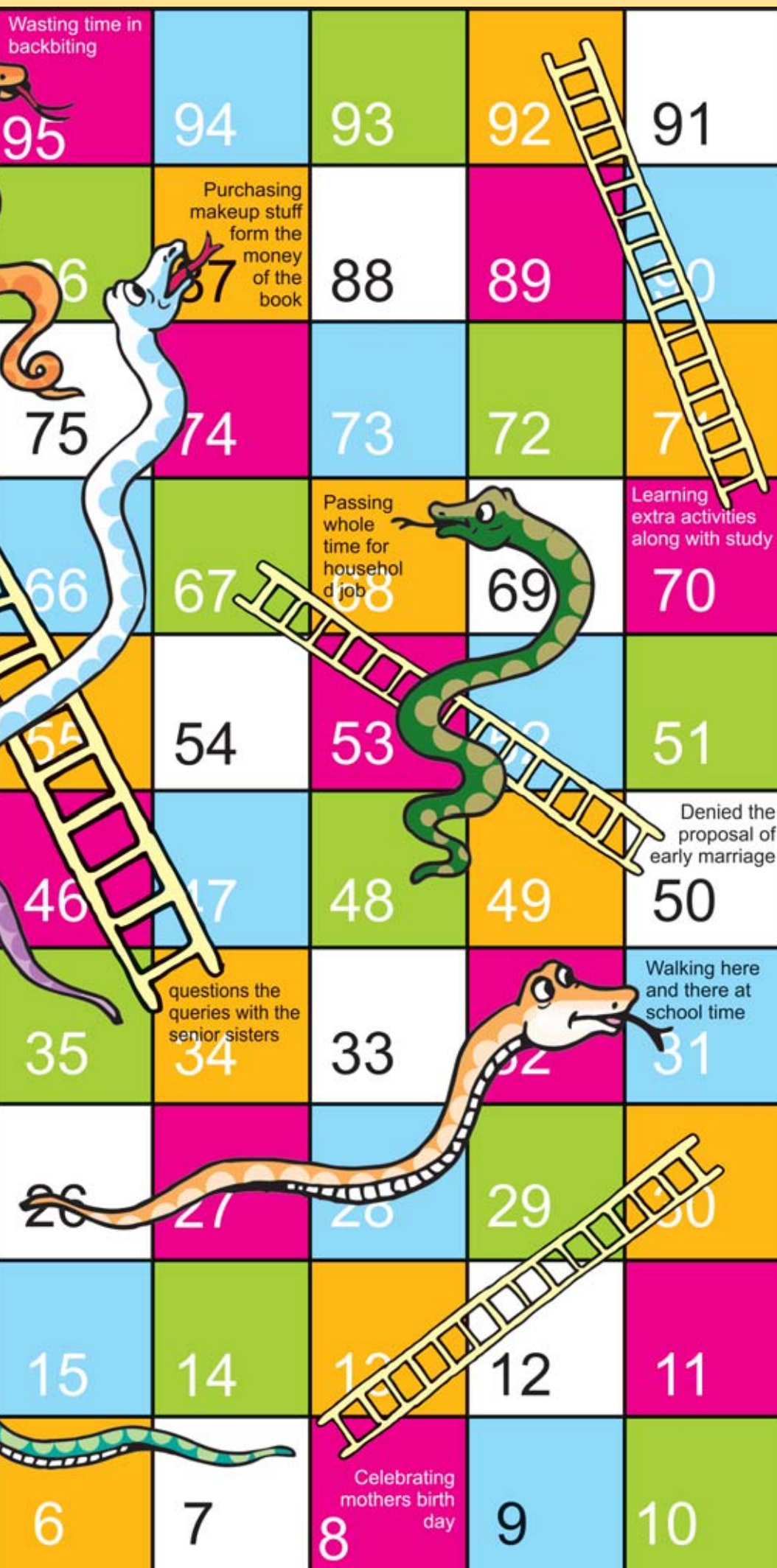
Drop out the school

Going to walk from school

Enthuse for learning new skills

Tolerating Sexual abuse





## How to play Snake and Ladder game ?

- This game needs at least two players. More than two players can also play this game together.
- Before beginning the game, each of the players needs to choose a token with specific colour. All the selected tokens with different colours are placed aside on the game board.
- Which of the players will start the game can be decided by themselves in mutual understanding. The first player needs to throw a die rolling on the board.
- The die stops rolling itself with a particular number. Now, the player can move forward his token across as many rooms as the number shown by his die.
- If the token reaches a room where there is a ladder, the player is allowed to move his token up to the top of the ladder.
- If the token reaches a room where there is the mouth of a snake, the player is forced to put his token down to the tail of the snake.
- All the players should roll the die turn by turn. And, whoever first takes the token to the room number 100 wins the game.

# Manita's Story

I was 14 years old and was studying in class 7. Once I went to the toilet and saw a blood spot in my underpants. But I could not think that I had menstruation. There was a chapter in my course book about menstruation, but I never had read it out clearly. I was living with my grandmother. I told this matter to my Aunty. She said "You have started menstruating. You cannot stay at home, because you have not to see the roof of parents house. Let's go to aunties' house."

I followed my mother to auntie's house.

There, in the ground floor room, auntie made a bed for me with hay and said, "This is for you. Don't go here and there. Lay quietly in this bed. Don't touch anything else. Also, don't see sun light or any males. It will be a sin if you do so."

The hardest thing when I first menstruated was all the changes I had to deal with. I was not allowed to go to the school, not to touch, not to hear the voice of the male, not to eat certain foods and not allowed to play. I became unhappy. Why did I have to start menstruation? I was completely sad.

Now, I advise my younger sister about the meaning behind the traditional taboos when a girl menstruates. We

talk about which ones are good for our health and which ones are too traditional and harm our development. I also talk with my grandmother about the importance of keeping girls in school and explain that girls have hopes and dreams of what they can achieve in life.



# Should I worry if...?

## Should I worry if I do not have menstruation at the same time every month?

No. There is nothing to worry about. Generally, menstruation happens in 28 days. In some women, it happens in 22 to 35 days.

## Should I worry if I have my first menstruation at 9 or 10 years of age.

This is also normal. Menstruation starts at different times for every girls. It can start anytime from 9 to 18 years of age.

## Should I worry if my menstruation is irregular?

No. Especially in the first year, girls' menstruation can often be irregular (It does not come at the same time each month).

## Should I worry if thick blood flows during menstruation?

It is absolutely normal. Especially shortly after waking up from sleep, thick blood flows out. Each girl has a different amount of blood that flows out during menstruation. You will get to know your body and what to expect.

## Should I worry if blood flows only for three days?

No need to worry! Blood flows normally for 3-5 days. It is alright if it stops in three days or continues for five or six days.

## Should I worry if white water flows out before menstruation starts?

This is also normal. As girls physically develop, white and sometimes even thick water like milk can flow out of their vaginas.

## Should I worry if I suffer from pimples during menstruation?

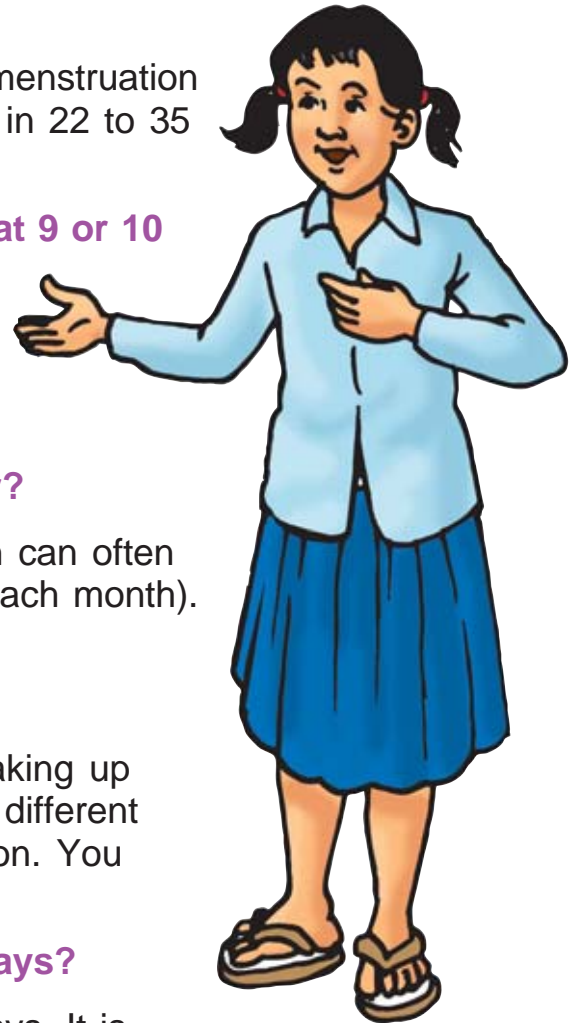
It is normal. Pimples appear during or before menstruation. It is just a normal part of puberty. Even boys worry about getting pimples.

## Should I worry if I have a bellyache during menstruation?

It is normal. Most of the girls have bellyache during menstruation But if this is unbearable to you, then it is advisable to go to doctors.

## Should I worry if I suddenly feel sad or happy during menstruation?

It is normal to have quick changes in your moods and emotions during puberty.



While girls and boys can worry so much during puberty, most of the things they worry about are normal and happening to everyone. So no need to worry, talk to your friends, siblings and parents. They all have experienced the same worries!

### Who should I talk to if I still feel confused or worried?

There may be several things which may be confusing to you. Girls in their adolescence hide their curiosity within their mind or share with friends of their own age. But the friends of the same age may not have adequate knowledge in the matter. So it is good to ask queries with the senior sisters or senior friends who love you much. They may answer your queries better.



## Sani's story

I was 11 years old. Once I had severe cramp in my lower abdomen. I went to toilet. There was blood in my urine. The pain was unbearable. My friend said it may be an evil curse of *boxi* (witch). I went to my mother and reported my problem. She said, "you have menstruation. Some girls have this type of problem during menstruation." She gave me a bottle with hot water and suggested to place it in the backbone. Also, she gave me boiled water with ginger to drink and advised me to take a deep breath and lie in the bed. All these methods made me feel relaxed. Still, there was little pain for 2 days. In the third day, I was fine.

I now know that cramps is not a disease nor is this an evil curse of any *boxi*.

Some girls have such type of cramps during menstruation due to the ovulation. The traditional treatment that my mother taught me was quite good for my pain relief. Hence, I advise my younger sisters to apply this method. If the pain still persists, I suggest they go to the health personnel.



# Keeping a menstrual calendar



After the first menstruation, it will continue every month (although it is normal if it is not regular). If you keep a track of your menstruation dates, you will be better prepared for when it will arrive again and keep pads or cloths in your school bag if it will arrive when you are in school. To keep a track of your menstruation date, you can make a menstruation calendar.

Here is an example of a calendar you can draw yourself and use.

When you get your menstruation Circle the date it starts and draw an X through each day the bleeding continues.

## Menstruation Calendar

| Month 1 |              |              |              |              |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|         | 1            | 2            | 3            | 4            |
| 5       | <del>6</del> | <del>7</del> | <del>8</del> | <del>9</del> |
| 10      | 11           | 12           | 13           | 14           |
| 15      | 16           | 17           | 18           | 19           |
| 20      | 21           | 22           | 23           | 24           |
| 25      | 26           | 27           | 28           | 29           |
| 30      |              |              |              |              |

| Month 2      |    |    |              |              |
|--------------|----|----|--------------|--------------|
|              |    | 1  | <del>2</del> | <del>3</del> |
| <del>4</del> | 5  | 6  | 7            | 8            |
| 9            | 10 | 11 | 12           | 13           |
| 14           | 15 | 16 | 17           | 18           |
| 19           | 20 | 21 | 22           | 23           |
| 24           | 25 | 26 | 27           | 28           |
| 29           | 30 | 31 |              |              |

| Month 3      |              |               |               |               |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|              |              |               | 1             | 2             |
| 3            | 4            | 5             | 6             | 7             |
| <del>8</del> | <del>9</del> | <del>10</del> | <del>11</del> | <del>12</del> |
| 13           | 14           | 15            | 16            | 17            |
| 18           | 19           | 20            | 21            | 22            |
| 23           | 24           | 25            | 26            | 27            |
| 28           |              |               |               |               |

| Month 4      |              |              |    |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|----|--------------|
|              | 1            | 2            | 3  | <del>4</del> |
| <del>5</del> | <del>6</del> | <del>7</del> | 8  | 9            |
| 10           | 11           | 12           | 13 | 14           |
| 15           | 16           | 17           | 18 | 19           |
| 20           | 21           | 22           | 23 | 24           |
| 25           | 26           | 27           | 28 | 29           |
| 30           |              |              |    |              |

## Sama's story

I was in class 7. My final examination had just started. I went to toilet with my friends. There I saw blood in my underwear and noticed that my school uniform was soiled. I guessed I had menstruation. I was shocked what to do? How could I sit in the exam hall? I will fail. I started weeping because I was afraid that all the boys would make fun of me when I left the toilet. My friends waiting in queue started shouting at me as I had taken long time to come out from the toilet. Then, I came out and shared my problem with my friends.

My friends accompanied me to our class teacher Ms Sobha and told her about my situation. She asked me not to cry. It happens to all girls. She gave me a sanitary pad, which I had never seen before! She asked me to sit in exams without worrying about soiling my cloths. She taught me how to place the pad in my underwear. After doing this, we went to the class room and I appeared for my exam.



Now I am 16. I realized that even at the age of 10 or 11 girls can start menstruation. I advise my sisters not to be afraid and cry when they menstruate, but I also advise my aunties and mothers that girls need to learn about menstruation before it happens. Even though sanitary pads cost money, I ask my mother to buy some for my younger sisters since this will help them be more confident at school during menstruation period.

I also advise my younger brothers to help girls reach their hopes and dreams and understand the challenges girls face when they begin puberty. I am so proud of my younger brothers who stand up to other boys in school when they hear them teasing girls about menstruation. He is really a respectable boy!

### Menstrual Myths... True/False

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Stress can cause you to miss a period                                     | True  |
| Eating cold food while you have your period can give you cramps           | False |
| It is good to do light exercise during your period                        | True  |
| A menstruating girl has to eat green vegetable and sprouts                | True  |
| If a menstruating girl touches a green plant, it will become dry          | False |
| If a menstruating girl see the face of a boy or man, it becomes seen      | False |
| Cramp during menstruation will be over only after marriage or child birth | False |
| It is good to drink cow milk daily during your period                     | True  |

# Journey of Respect



Below are some behaviors. Tick one of the two of each behavior you respect more.

## 1. Who is more respectable?

- Girls who enjoy the household work only
- Who loves to go to the school daily



## 2. Who is more respectable?

- Girls who give up when their hopes and dreams seem like they won't come true
- Girls who struggle hard and never give up on their hopes and dreams



## 3. Who is more respectable?

- Girls who always seek a way to gain new skills to help her in the future
- Girls who think being out of school means she can not learn new skills

#### 4. Who is more respectable?

- Who asks brothers to clean their utensils and dress by themselves
- Who feels odd to ask brothers for helping them in household work



#### 5. Who is more respectable?

- A girls who confides in a trusting adult when she experiences sexual advances or harassment
- A girls who is afraid to tell a trusted adult about harassments she is experiencing

#### 6. Who is more respectable?

- Who always wants to be in the front to get opportunity
- Who is afraid to try new things

#### 7. Who is more respectable?

- Who makes all decision by her self
- Who depends on family and friends

**The Journey of Respect continues throughout our lives. During puberty, we are confronted with so many situations and decisions. As we gain independence, some of our decisions will gain us respect while other will not. How do you define respect?**



# What are boys experiencing during puberty?

Boys experience so many of the same things as girls during puberty.

- They will grow taller
- Hair will grow on their chest, armpits and around the penis
- They will start to see signs of a moustache and beard
- Their voice will deepen
- Their chest will become wider
- They might experience ejaculations in your dreams (“night-fall”)
- They will start to sweat more which can make you smell bad
- Their face becomes oilier which can cause pimples.



## What is a night fall?

A “night fall” is when semen (the fluid containing sperm) is discharged from the penis during ejaculation while a boy is asleep. Usually, night fall occurs during dreams that have sexual images. Sometimes boys wake up from a night fall, but sometimes they sleep through it. Night falls begin during puberty when the body starts making more testosterone, the major male hormone. (Many boys are embarrassed or confused about these but it is completely normal)



## Is having a night-fall bad?

Although some boys feel embarrassed or even guilty about having night falls, they can't be controlled and you can't stop them from happening. Most boys experience them at some point during puberty and even sometimes as adults. So night falls are normal and do not harm you physically.

## Surendra's story

I was 14 years old. All my friends were tall and healthy but I was short and lean. They had beards and moustache on their faces and were very proud of their physical changes. But, I was different. I did not have a beard or moustache like them. My friends would make plans to tease girls. They would talk dishonorable things about them and laugh at the girls by saying that "some one has very big breasts and some one has small ones". I used to find it difficult to hear those comments and would feel embarrassed about it. My friends would tease me saying I was like a girl or still a child.

I would sit and wonder if I was really like a girl or a child? Why had my physical structure not changed like my friends? Why did hair not grow on my face or on my body? I knew I was different from my friends and wondered what I should be doing to be more like them. I always worried about my situation but could not count on anyone to share my thoughts with. I would be upset thinking of my situation and it would cause me to panic.

Now that I am 17, all of these worries have gone away because my body changed quickly when I was 15 and I am just like the other boys. I advise my younger brothers that everyone's body changes at a different pace and that girls develop quicker than boys. I also tell them that teasing girls is dishonorable and that real men treat girls with respect.



# Nutrition for adolescent girls

**Jamuna-** Laxmi, why do you always bring home made snacks in the school? Let's have good things in Tiffin time.

**Laxmi -** But, junk food is not good for our health.

**Sarala-** I don't believe you Laxmi. We can see several advertisements in the television and hear from radio about a variety of foods available in the market. If they are really not good, it would not have come the media.

**Laxmi-** Advertisements in media are for their business. They do not have much concern about our health. My aunty is a health professional. She always suggests me not to eat such junk food. She rather advises me to take nutritious food made at home.



**Sarala-** Why does she suggest like that? Is it true?

**Laxmi -** My aunt says our body growth is fast between the ages of approximately 10- 19 years. So girls and boys require much nutritious food during this age. We should eat lots of food from all three food groups containing carbohydrate, protein, vitamins and minerals for proper growth and development. Locally available foods like Dal bhat, fish, meat, green vegetables seasonal fruits, egg milk and beans are nutritious meal.



**Jamuna -** But, most of the adolescent girls and boys like to have junk food like noodles; chocolates, biscuits from the market. And they look healthy

**Laxmi –** The result of any food item may appear later. Junk foods are not very healthy because they contain chemicals to preserve it.

**Laxmi-** My aunty says, if we do not have adequate nutritious food, we may feel weak. Our body can not grow properly. In addition, we should also drink a plenty of safe water and exercise regularly for our good health.

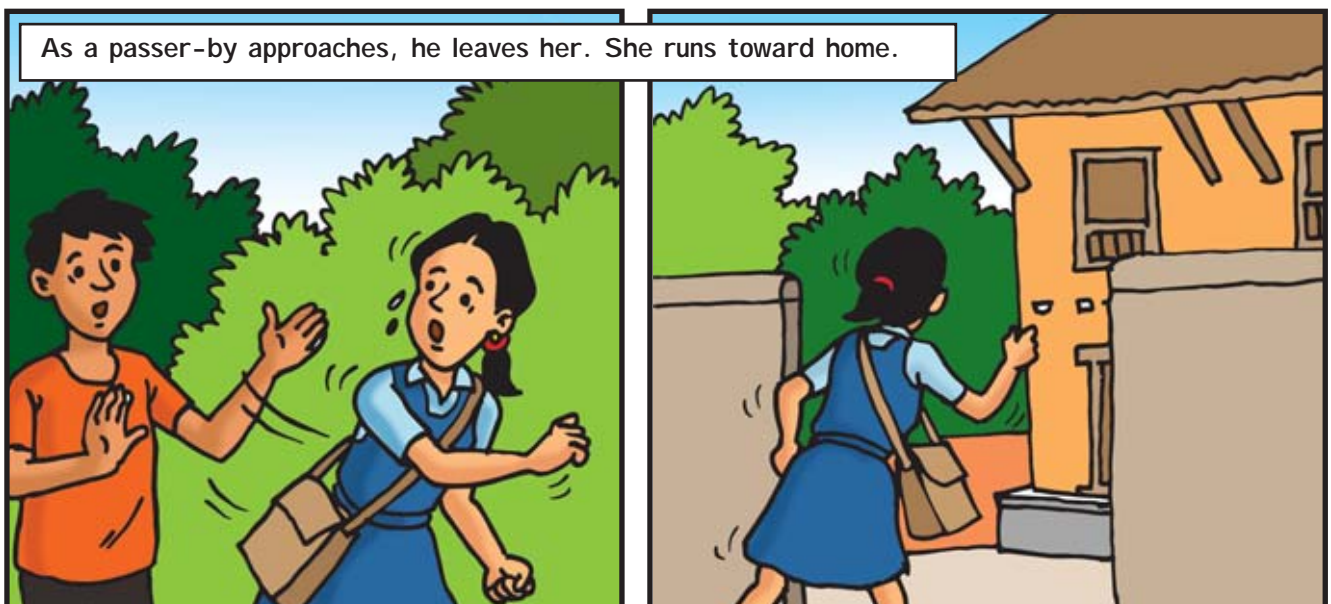
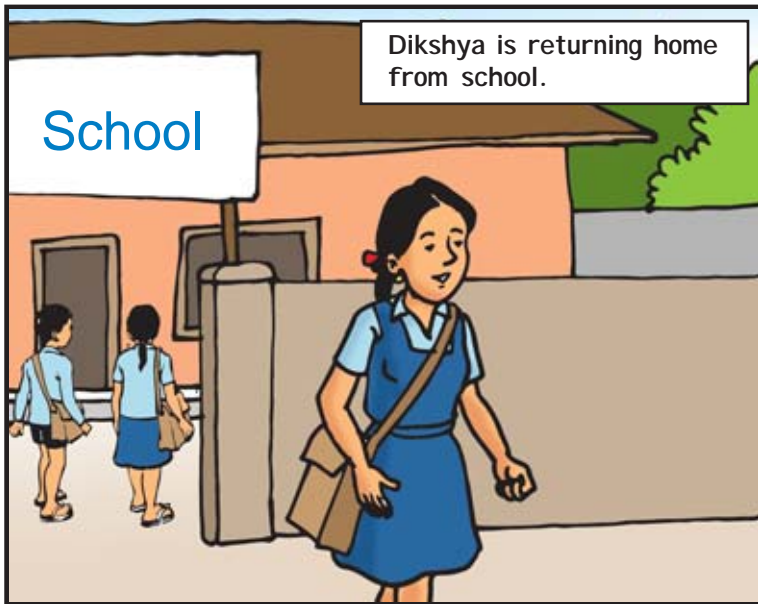
**Laxmi -** Adolescence is an age for girls to have menstruation. They need more iron rich food like colocasia leaf (Karkalo), Millet (kodo) etc. They should take vitamin C rich food like lemon at the same time for good absorption of iron. We should not miss the opportunity to take every 13 weeks a supplementation of iron tablets and de-worming tablet through regular school health program



**Jamuna -** I remembered now Laxmi, our health teacher has also told these things some time.

**Laxmi-** Yes you are right. I suggest to all my friends to bring home made tiffin in the school like bread, flat rice, beans and peanuts etc. They are healthy food. Also we can eat seasonal fruits like guava, banana, orange and mango etc.

# Cartoon story



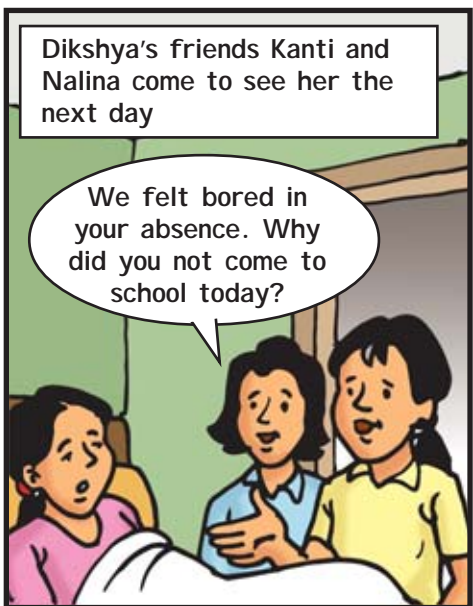


Why are you sleeping, Dikshya?

I am not feeling well, mom.



I will not walk that way from tomorrow. I will not go to school, either. He (The unknown man) may kill me.



Dikshya's friends Kanti and Nalina come to see her the next day

We felt bored in your absence. Why did you not come to school today?



I will never go to school.



What happened to you? Is everything alright?



A man always follows me while returning home from school. He does nasty things to me.

!?

!?



Why did you not cry for help?



How could I cry? It would embarrass me.



If you tolerate whatever a stalker does, he feels more encouraged to annoy you.

I fully agree with Nalina. We should frankly report it to our mothers, sisters, teachers and close-friends. They will help punish such stalkers.

Yes, we should not tolerate sexual advances. We should stand up for ourselves and make a voice against it.

If you are getting sexual advances from men, here is what you can do:

- If you are unhappy or uncomfortable with the advances, than you do not have to go along with it!
- Always tell a trusted adult about what is happening
- Make sure to walk to and from school with a group of children, not alone.

# Advice for preventing sexual abuse



Adolescent boys and girls can fall victim to sexual abuses. They may face sexual abuses by strangers, but more likely by friends, neighbours or relatives. They touch the girls as if they love to them. But their intention may be bad. If they touch in your private parts, you should be cautious. Their intention may be bad.

Sometimes they do bad things and ask the young girls to keep quiet what ever happened. In such cases, don't be silent. Disclose this to a trusted adult like mother, sister, female teacher or any one who you are comfortable with.

## Here are some tips that you have to keep in mind for your safe guard from sexual harassment and abuse

- No one should touch you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable. This is sexual harassment.
- Be cautious about physical closeness with peers, older individuals close relatives or neighbors.
- Avoid being alone with people whose behavior or attitudes make you uncomfortable
- You should not go out with any one alone. Rather go in a group.
- Think carefully before accepting gift from any one.
- If you fall victim to sexual abuse or rape or fear this should be informed to parents, trusted adult or friend rather than remaining silent.

This booklet tells  
girls' stories about  
puberty and growing up.



Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Health and Population  
National Health Education Information and Communication center