

SEXUAL HEALTH

Key messages	1) What is sexuality? 2) Sexual norms with gender. 3) What are sexual behaviors? 4) How to say NO?
Time	30 Mins.

👉 **Note to facilitator:** Dear facilitator, please follow the do's and don'ts while discussing sexuality:

1. Do not be judgmental or impose your own values while discussing sexuality with young people.
2. If you are hesitant about discussing this topic, prepare yourself with an in-depth understanding of the subject or please take a facilitator, who is more comfortable in dealing with sexuality.
3. Use respectful language with all the participants-adolescents or youth.
4. Feel free to use comfortable / more colloquial language. If you believe, young people may struggle to understand particular technical terms for sexual behaviors.
5. Be aware that while you are opening up the topic of sexuality, there will be participants who are not sexually active or are not yet ready to have sex. Or participants who feel uncomfortable communicating about it.



What is human sexuality?

According to the WHO, sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and it encompasses sex, gender identities, roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction.

Sexuality is experienced through feelings, thoughts and behaviors. This is an expression towards oneself and others. Sexuality includes the expression of desire and behaviors towards others who can be from the same or opposite sex.

👉 **Dear Facilitator,** you will now discuss the relationship between Family, Sexuality and Society.

1. Human beings grow up in an environment surrounded by family, friends, society etc.
2. There are some norms and laws related to sexuality which influence the way people experience sexuality and sexual life which vary from society to society.
3. These norms and laws can act in two ways i.e., they can promote healthy, satisfying, respectful relations, or they can undermine people's self-respect, sense of being connected and loved.

4. Imparting knowledge on SRHR is important because it covers important milestones in life, such as pregnancy, family planning and abortion, safe sex information, marriage, sexuality and gender and related topics.

☞ **Dear Facilitator, now you will discuss the norms that society expects and how the norms vary with genders.**

To make the adolescent and youth participate in the discussion, draw a table with a column of boys and another for girls and let the participants fill the table with the societal expectations of boys and girls.

Some of the social norms are given below in table:

Boys	Girls
It is generally perceived that boys can be sexually active and carry a 'macho' persona.	Girls are expected to be shy, cordial, submissive and containing.
Aggressive and risk-taking behaviors are mostly associated with boys/men.	Girls are preferred to be less adventurous and home-stay.
Good looks are not mandatory.	Keeping a good figure and beauty is mostly mandatory.

While writing the points down you will see that the adolescent and youth feel animated / excited about writing down the set behaviors and expectations by the society that is generally applied to a boy or a girl.

- As you do this exercise, the participants themselves will realize the existing norms in the society and if the boy/girl do not fit into these expected norms they can be misinterpreted within society. This will help the adolescent/youth realize that society programs us into accepting and adhering to these norms. People who do not confirm to these norms cannot be judged simply because they do not follow the norms.

The key messages for participants to take home with them:

- It is important for young people and adolescents to be aware of and question societal norms, and to nurture independent views.
- It is important for young people and adolescents to be open, accepting and non-judgmental of themselves and others.

☞ **Note to facilitator: Now please perform a small activity to help the participants understand that various factors influencing our knowledge of sexuality. Below are few sample questions that you can ask the adolescents:**

Have you ever been sexually influenced by?

- Media (films, television, advertisement etc.)? If yes, how?
- Family cultures? If yes, how?
- Society norms? If yes, how?
- School atmosphere? If yes, how?
- Friends? If yes, how?
- Internet- Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.? If yes, how?
- Gaming on the internet? If yes, how?

Adolescence is an exciting time when many young people try new experiences and explore who they are. It is also a time of change. Our bodies change rapidly, and we also face many emotional changes— growing into an adult, beginning to have sexual experiences or desires, having to make decisions about the future and having greater responsibilities and expectations placed upon us by adults.

👉 Dear facilitator, you can explain to participants that they should never feel obliged to have any sexual relationship/ act.

Below is a list of reasons they may wish to say “NO” to sex:

- Delaying sexual activity until one is ready.
- No sex means no STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases).
- No sex till marriage.
- No sex no unwanted pregnancy.
- Say no, if its peer pressure.
- Saying ‘no’ builds psychological strength and enhances self-esteem because one would not be bound to sexual desires.
- No sex does not mean you are not cool. The new mantra is one can channel the energy into productive activity such as sports, music, extracurricular activities, exercises, studies, swimming, dance etc.
- Beware of being taken advantage of.
- Firmly Say no to casual sex or a one-night stand.
- Say no to unprotected sex.
- One will be sure that they wish to continue with the relationship with the person who respects their decision to say “NO” and not get treated as a sexual object.



☞ Dear facilitator, you could mention a few sexual acts:

Sexual acts can be as follows:

- **Masturbation:** It is a safe mode of sexual pleasure. It is not harmful to anyone and commonly practiced between males and females individually. Masturbation is touching and stroking one's own genitals and arousing oneself sexually till the orgasm is reached.
- **Oral sex:** This involves kissing and sucking the partner's genitals with the mouth.
- **Intercourse:** This involves the penetration of the vagina by the penis.
- **Anal sex:** Penetration of anus by a penis.

The practices involving unprotected sexual intercourse are risky and needs due precautions to prevent STI / HIV, pregnancy. Partner's consent must always be taken, and mutual desire should be considered to form a satisfying and respectful relationship.

☞ Dear facilitator, educate the participants on the existence of perversion in the society.

Such as:

☞ **Exhibitionism:** Some people derive sexual pleasure by showing naked bodies in public and evoking a reaction. They may also reach an orgasm while this happens. Such behaviors are illegal and need Psychiatric treatment.

☞ **Pedophilia:** Some people derive sexual behavior only by molesting or raping minors of an age. This behavior is illegal and also needs Psychiatric treatment.

S3 Physical and Mental/ Psychological aspects of sexuality.

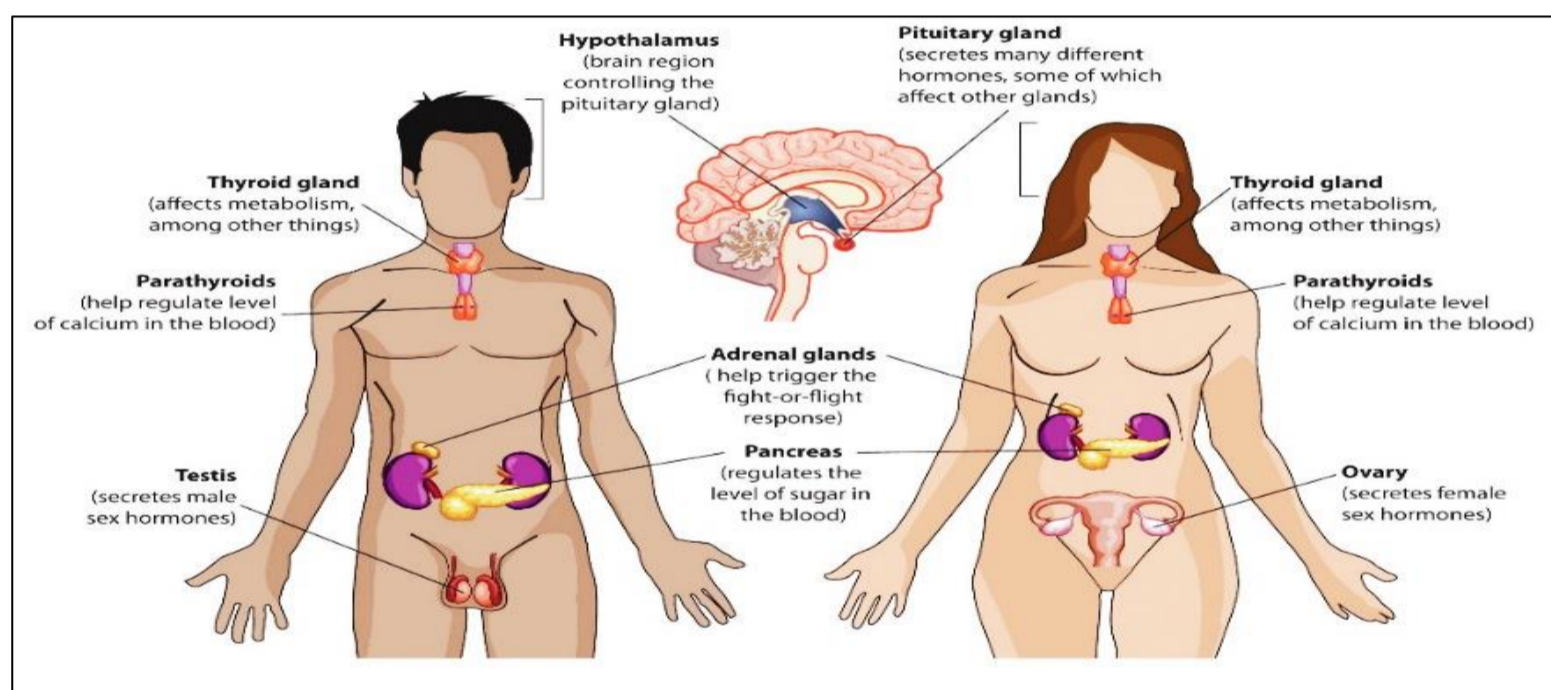
Key messages	1) Sexual organs. 2) Hormonal changes. 3) Biological facts. 4) Psychological aspects.
Expected learning Time	30mins.

☞ Dear facilitator, lets now begin discussing the biology behind sexuality to educate the participants about their own body.

Hormonal changes and sexuality:

As sexuality develops within the physical body, glands present in human bodies secrete hormones (chemicals) into the blood which bring about several changes in human thoughts and behavior. Therefore, let's know more about these glands (endocrine glands).

☞ Dear facilitator, Show the chart as below as a visual or a printed chart.



Amongst these glands, the two glands which become important while discussing sexuality are:

- 🔥 **Ovaries in females:-** The ovaries are held by a membrane besides the uterus on each side of the lower abdomen in females.
- 🔥 **Gonads in males:-** The gonads are in the scrotum for males.

Gonads begin releasing testosterone at puberty while ovaries start releasing oestrogen and progesterone at puberty.

The Testosterone prepares the male body for reproduction by giving the body a structure, growth of the male sex organs, maturing the sperms etc. Oestrogen & Progesterone work like partners in the female body to contribute towards several changes in body and preparing the female body for reproductive purposes.

The key message for participants to take home:

- ☺ Healthy food, outdoor games and work-outs are very important for healthy glands and proper secretions. So, your sexual health is in your hands!

Psychological aspects of sexuality:

Sexuality is not just the intimate relationship between two people generally termed as “love”. Sexuality also includes understanding how certain behaviours of ourself are significant & affect others, how we feel; whether these behaviours make us feel happy or sad about ourselves.

Sexuality also includes understanding how we may adopt different behaviours in order to receive the pleasure, acceptance and bonding from significant others. Thus, forming a pattern of behaviours which are repeated to gain pleasurable experience, which are necessary for the holistic development of our personality.

Activity: Sexuality, Love and Emotions:

☞ Dear facilitator, divide the board into two sections and ask each participant to name one positive emotion and one negative emotion alternatively. In one section all the positive emotions are written and in the other section, all the negative emotions are written.

- The participants are then asked to share some happy moments in experiencing love with parents, friends, siblings, partners etc., and they are also asked to name the emotion that they associate with the moments.
- Following this, the facilitator also asks participants to share negative emotions associated with relationships with parents, siblings, friends etc. and note these *negative emotions on the board*.
- Positive Emotions include e.g.- Love, Security, Acceptance, Happy, Laugh.
Negative Emotions include e.g.- Isolation, Rejection, Hate.

☞ Dear facilitator, you will now discuss some common myths and misconceptions related to sexuality.

- **Myth:** You can use a condom more than once if you wash it properly.
- **Fact:** A condom should be only used ONCE under any circumstances.

- **Myth:** Only Men experience orgasm or sexual pleasure.
- **Fact:** False, both men and women experience orgasm or sexual pleasure.

- **Myth:** Girls don't masturbate.
- **Fact:** Girls, in fact, are curious about their bodies and do masturbate. However, on average, guys are more likely to report that they masturbate than girls. Girls might be afraid to engage in or admit to masturbating to the same degree as guys do.

- **Myth:** It's easy to tell if someone is gay.
- **Fact:** Despite what you may have heard about being "gay," you can't tell whether someone is gay, lesbian or bisexual simply by how they look, talk or act.

- **Myth:** A virgin girl will bleed the first time she undergoes sexual intercourse.
- **Fact:** Not necessarily. The virgin knot can break due to strenuous activities such as sports, physical works, cycling, sometimes stress, anxiety, injury can tear up the hymen naturally.

- **Myth:** Only a man can initiate sex.
- **Fact:** False, initiating sex can be done by both women and men. Both have equal desires and can act accordingly.