

GROWING



TOGETHER

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is a resource for the game facilitator to use during game play. As the game facilitator, you will walk the participants through the game and lead discussion. The guide includes instructions for each section of the game and a script to read aloud to participants, indicated by the  .

GAME OBJECTIVES

“Growing Together” is a game that creates a safe space for players to learn and discuss how to support their children during puberty, especially their daughters as they begin menstruation. The game allows parents to build their knowledge around the changes their children experience during this time and identify ways in which they can support their children’s health and wellbeing. It also helps them gain comfort discussing these topics, making it easier to have open conversations with their partners, family, and children.

GAME SETUP

Materials:

- ▶ 1 Die
- ▶ 300 Beads
- ▶ 4 Bowls
- ▶ Family discussion cards
- ▶ Game Cards which include:
 - *Gaining and Losing Cards*
 - *Quiz Cards*
 - *Life Event Cards*
 - *Quiz answer cards: “Yes” and “No”* []

Participants:

- ▶ Game supports 2-4 teams, or “households.”
- ▶ Game is intended to be played by parents who have at least one adolescent girl ages 8-15.
- ▶ Each “household” should include at least 2 participants. If more than 8 players are present, increase the size of each “household.” Limit game play to no more than 16 players.
- ▶ Any members of the same family should play together in the same “household”.

WELCOME



Thank you for coming to play Growing Together to celebrate being supportive parents.

As an introduction, we will go around in a circle and please share your children's genders and ages.

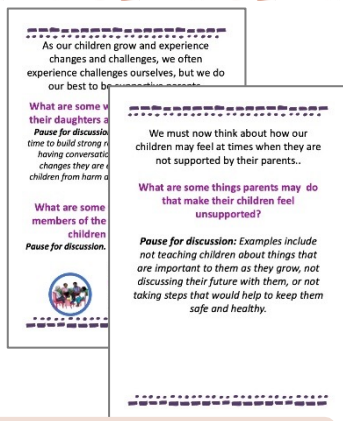
As we play the game, we'll learn about ways that mothers, fathers, and other family members can continue to support their children, particularly their daughters, as they grow up. Your children are growing, learning, and experiencing changes in their bodies. You can learn and grow as supportive parents together with them.

You will play in teams that represent a household. As you play, you will gain and lose beads that represent support. Each bead equals 1 Support Point. Your goal in this game is to collect as many Support Points as you can.

- 1. Select a banker** who will distribute support points to all the players during the game. The game facilitator can also act as banker.
- 2. Divide into households.** Each household should have at least 2 people. Encourage family members to stay in the same household.

Step 1 : Experience Changes in Support

1. Read aloud the card labelled “Gaining Support” and discuss.
2. The banker gives each household a bowl with 2 support points (represented by 2 beads).
3. Read aloud the card labelled “Losing Support” and discuss.



Thank you all for sharing! Throughout the game you will have opportunities to gain and lose support points.

Step 2 : Learn About Menstruation



Support from parents is especially important as our children experience puberty. Who can tell me what puberty is?

Puberty is a time when your sons and daughters experience a lot of changes, both mentally and physically. During this time, boys and girls are changing and maturing.

Boys grow hair in new places, their voices may change, and they may notice changes in their genitalia. Girls also start to get hair in new places, develop breasts, and begin to experience menstruation.



Menstruation is a natural and normal part of growing up for girls and women. When a girl starts menstruating, it means that she can become pregnant. But it does not mean that she is ready for marriage or to safely carry and deliver a baby, as her body is still growing and developing. For many girls, menstruation begins when they are from 9 to 14 years old, although some begin menstruating earlier or later.

Each menstrual cycle is about a month long, although it is shorter or longer for some girls. During each cycle, she will experience bleeding for a few days or up to a week. During this time, she will need to use a disposable or reusable pad or a clean piece of cloth to absorb the blood. These products must be changed regularly, and the cloth must be thoroughly washed and dried to keep her clean, safe, and healthy. Girls may also experience changes in their moods or physical changes such as aches and cramping around the time she bleeds, but in most cases, these do not need to interfere with her regular activities. If a girl's menstruation is not managed properly and safely, she can experience health problems.

Both mothers and fathers have a role to play in supporting their daughters as they grow and experience menstruation. One way to be a supportive parent is to learn about what menstruation means and how it can be properly managed.

Throughout today's game, you will have opportunities to learn more and to gain support points by sharing your knowledge.

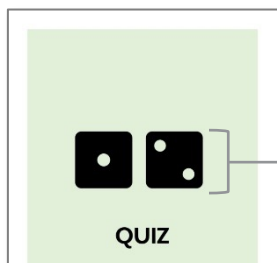
Step 3: Live and Learn

1. Place **QUIZ** and **LIFE EVENT** cards face down in separate piles.
2. Hand each Household “yes” and “no” **QUIZ ANSWER CARDS** [✓ ✗].
3. Give die to the household with the youngest daughter to start.
4. Based on the die toss, select the top **QUIZ or LIFE EVENT** card from the pile. Read the instructions on the card. Card types are detailed below.

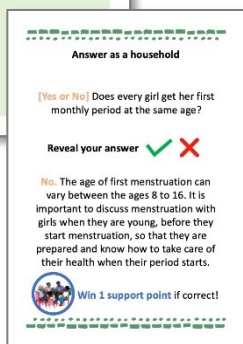


The game ends after 1 hour. We'll start with the household that has the youngest daughter!

CARD DESCRIPTIONS

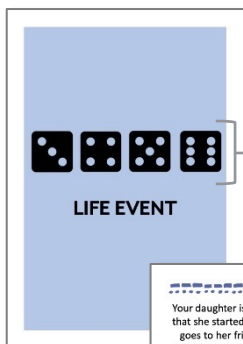


Household rolls a 1 or a 2:
All households play



Household places an
answer card [✓ ✗] to
answer the question in
secret

Households with the
correct answer receive
support points



Household rolls a 3,4,5 or 6:

Only household that draws card participates



Household gains or loses points in response to the event

Sometimes, they are asked to share an answer to a discussion prompt, and earn points for each household member who shares

Note: If a household loses all their points, they can continue playing with zero points. If they draw a card that says to lose points, they will just remain with zero points. They will have zero points until they play a card that allows them to gain more points.

Note: If a card type runs out, continue playing the game with the remaining card type.

Step 4: Celebrate the Winners!



Everyone count how many support points your household has and share it with everyone. Which household has the most support points? Let's congratulate the winning household!



We know that being a supportive parent means helping your children to be prepared and understand the changes their bodies are experiencing as they mature. The winner is the household that was able to grow and support their children most.

[Ask the winner] Why do you think your family gained so many support points during the game?

[Ask the other households] What could your households do in the future to continue to grow and support your children?

Note that the winner was able to accumulate more support because they discussed menstruation with their daughter, encouraged their siblings to support their sister and helped their daughter get the information and supplies she needed to manage her menstruation safely.

Wrap Up: Discussion Card



During this game, we talked about menstruation. Let's review what we learned.

- 1. Menstruation is natural and normal part of growing up for girls.*
- 2. Girls and women can safely manage their monthly period with their families' support.*
- 3. When parents speak with their sons and their daughters about the changes their bodies are going through and how to manage those changes, they are providing important support for their children as they grow.*

1. Give a family discussion card to each couple (family members can share one card).



Having conversations with your daughters and sons is important, but it might be hard to know where to start. These cards can help you decide and remember what to discuss with your children.

Remember that these topics should be discussed more than once, and you don't need to cover everything at once.

2. Review each of the topics on the card and answer any questions participants have.

Wrap Up: Discussion Card



Now we will take a few minutes for you to plan together with your spouse or other family members how you will discuss with your sons and daughters. Use the Family Discussion Card and decide:

- ▶ When will you speak with your daughters? Who will be involved in the conversation, and what will you say to them?
- ▶ When will you speak with your sons? Who will be involved in the conversation, and what will you say to them?

After all couples or family members have had time to share. Ask them to share their answers to the following questions with the whole group.



- ▶ *What did you learn today?*
- ▶ *What will you discuss with your children?*
- ▶ *When will you discuss with your children?*

Example **LIFE EVENT** Responses

INITIATING CONVERSATIONS ON MENSTRUATION

- ▶ To help their daughters feel comfortable coming to them with questions and concerns, parents can have repeated conversations about menstruation and ask their daughters what kind of support they need.
- ▶ When parents share their own experiences and listen to their daughters' worries and frustrations about menstruation, girls may feel freer to confide in their parents.
- ▶ Parents can make their daughters and sons feel comfortable about menstruation by telling them menstruation is natural, healthy, and not a cause for shame.
- ▶ Parents can encourage their children to ask them questions they have about menstruation and other changes they are experiencing.
- ▶ Parents can advise their daughters on how to manage their monthly bleeding safely and help them obtain menstrual products. Doing this before menstruation begins will help girls feel prepared and confident.

MENSTRUATION AND MENSTRUAL HYGIENE INFORMATION

- ▶ Parents can help their daughters prepare for their monthly period by purchasing or making menstrual products before she begins menstruating.
- ▶ Menstruation is a normal part of growing up, and girls who start menstruating can continue to do all the same activities as before.
- ▶ When a girl starts menstruating, it means that she may be able to get pregnant, but it does not mean that she is physically or emotionally ready for pregnancy or marriage.

AVOID FEELINGS OF FEAR, SHAME, AND EMBARRASEMENT

- ▶ Parents can have frequent conversations about menstruation and reassure their daughters and sons that it is healthy and normal.
- ▶ Parents can discuss with children the importance of thoroughly washing and drying reusable pads, and encourage girls to feel comfortable doing what she needs to to safely manage her monthly bleeding.

Example **LIFE EVENT** Responses

AVOID FEELINGS OF FEAR, SHAME, AND EMBARRASEMENT

- ▶ Family members can signal their support by providing the girl with soap and hygiene products.
- ▶ Households can also set a discreet place in the house or outside where the girl feels comfortable drying reusable pads.
- ▶ Girls might feel hesitant to bring up the topic of menstruation because it is considered a taboo especially if they notice that their parents are shy about discussing it.
- ▶ By starting conversations about menstruation, parents can reassure their children that it is OK to discuss. Multiple, casual conversations will reinforce that menstruation is a part of normal life that can be discussed.
- ▶ Girls might hesitate to discuss menstruation with their parents for fear that they will keep them from going out with friends and engaging in regular activities as they did before.

SUPPORT DURING MENSTRUATION

- ▶ Parents can support their daughters by reporting harassment to relevant authorities in the community.
- ▶ Parents might choose not to share widely that their daughter has begun menstruating, if it might bring unwanted attention.
- ▶ Parents can ask their daughters about what fears and worries they are facing so that they can decide as a household how to address them.

EDUCATING SON ON MENSTRUATION

- ▶ Parents can start by discussing puberty and the changes their son is going through (growing hair, voice changing, etc.).
- ▶ Parents can explain to their sons that menstruation is natural and that it's important to be supportive to girls during menstruation.
- ▶ Parents can discuss the effect that teasing could have on girls: It could lead them to feel embarrassment and shame, to miss school, or to miss out on other everyday activities.
- ▶ They can ask their son how he would feel if he was teased for the changes he is experiencing.

Example **LIFE EVENT** Responses

YOUR DAUGHTER'S FUTURE

- ▶ If girls miss too much school, they may fall behind in their studies and have trouble catching up.
- ▶ Keeping girls out of school might also cause them to feel that school is no longer important for them, leading them make less effort in their studies.
- ▶ If girls are kept out of school, they might be more likely to end up in unsafe environments.
- ▶ When girls begin menstruation, their bodies are not ready to safely carry a child. A pregnancy could be risky for her and the unborn child.
- ▶ When young girls first begin menstruating, they are still children in their hearts and minds. They may not be ready to take on the responsibilities of marriage.
- ▶ If a girl is married early, she may not be able to finish the schooling her family has worked hard to provide for her.

FATHER'S ROLE

- ▶ Fathers can conversations with their children about menstruation.
- ▶ Fathers can teach their sons not to tease or to respond negatively if they notice a girl's clothes are stained.
- ▶ Fathers can provide money for sanitary pads or soap.
- ▶ Fathers can encourage sons and daughters to come to them with questions.
- ▶ Fathers can have conversations with their wives about what other support they can both provide.

FAQS

MENSTRUATION

1. Can you explain a woman's cycle?

A woman's cycle typically lasts about 28 days. This is the time between one monthly bleeding to the next. However, this can vary from 21 days to 35. When a girl first start gets her period, it may be irregular and it is normal for her not to bleed every month.

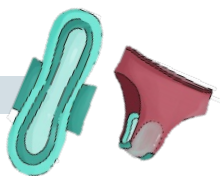
2. Is a women's monthly period painful?

Some women experience pain during their monthly period, while others do not. Some women may experience slight pains below their navel and in their lower back. Women can manage their pain by using medicine, placing a water bottle with hot water on your abdomen or exercise. If a woman experience more extreme pain, she may want to see a doctor.

3. Should a girl stop her normal activities when she has her monthly period?

A girl can continue her normal activities during her monthly bleeding. This includes going to school and preparing food. She only needs to ensure she continues to practice good hygiene as usual, including washing her hands before food preparation.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS



4. How can reusable pad or cloth be cared for?

Reusable pads and cloths need to be properly cleaned and dried in order to be safely reused. The materials should be washed in cold water using laundry soap and the dried out in the sun.

5. How do women and girls wear a pad or cloth?

A pad or cloth should always be worn outside the vagina and never placed inside. Women and girls should wear underwear and place the product on the underwear. After the material is saturated with blood it should be replaced with a new one.

6. Are disposable pads better than reusable pads?

No, both reusable and disposable menstrual pads are safe and healthy options to manage a women or girls' monthly bleeding.

