

- Explain twins, dwarfs and siamese twins.

Research has shown that sexuality education does not promote sexual activity, but rather, the well informed child is more likely to delay sexual activity.

Teachers use lectures, discussions, videos and a student workbook for this unit. These materials are available for you to review.

Parents are encouraged to openly discuss the concepts covered in this unit with their children. Let your children share information with you, and welcome questions. It is not unusual for parents and their children to be shy or embarrassed discussing personal topics, such as these. However, if you do not talk with your children about certain subjects, they will feel that these are not open for discussion in your home. Your children might react by deciding not to discuss these subjects with you. It is best for you to be an “askable parent.”

If you do not want your child to receive instruction in this area, please notify your child’s teacher, in writing, prior to the start of the unit. Alternative health education activities will be provided.

Your child’s class will begin this unit on

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If you would like to review or discuss the curriculum with the school nurse, please contact her at

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Kurt S. Browning,  
Superintendent



**DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF PASCO COUNTY**

Kurt S. Browning, Superintendent of Schools

## **GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT** **Fourth and Fifth Grade** **AN OVERVIEW FOR PARENTS**



Your child’s class will be studying Growth and Development in the next few weeks. Although sexuality education is first and foremost a function of the home, it is most effective if done in cooperation with the school. This information is provided to you, so you will be prepared to communicate these concepts with your child, and discuss the material that your child will be learning. Adolescence is often a confusing stage of development for both boys and girls; your guidance at this time is very important to them.

The Growth and Development curriculum in Pasco County has been used successfully for many years. It was first developed by a group of teachers, clergy, school board members, nurses, administrators, and concerned parents, like yourself.

#### **Fourth Grade Concepts:**

- Unique personal characteristics
- Family celebrations & memories
- Changes occurring during puberty
- Girls: Menstruation / Hygiene
- Boys: Hygiene
- Germs and disease transmission & prevention (including HIV/AIDS)

#### **Fifth Grade Concepts:**

- Heredity
- Physical / emotional changes during puberty
- Menstruation
- Endocrine & reproductive systems
- Pregnancy, fetal development & birth
- Bloodborne pathogen disease transmission & prevention

The fourth and fifth grade units are each ten days. Ground rules are formulated on the first day of the unit, so students know what to expect and what will be expected of them.

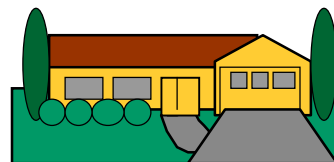
Teachers receive training at the district level prior to teaching the curriculum. They review and discuss the subject matter, as well as teaching strategies, and appropriate topics for classroom discussion. Some concepts involve areas that may reflect family values, religious beliefs, personal standards, and moral issues.

These topics are not part of the curriculum, but are deferred to parents and clergy.

Health educators feel that students should have an understanding of the physical and emotional changes taking place during puberty, learn correct terminology and receive accurate information.

The Growth and Development curriculum is taught in the regular classroom setting, just like math, language arts, or other health / science classes. Most students are comfortable discussing these topics in their regular class setting, with boys and girls together. When separated by gender, students often exchange information with each other outside of class time, resulting in less accurate information.

While questions are encouraged for classroom discussion, some students are uncomfortable asking them in front of others. Teachers are encouraged to have a question box for anonymous inquiries. The questions are screened and answered, if appropriate for classroom discussion. Those questions not answered in the classroom will be referred home for parental guidance.



To help you to be prepared for the questions your child might ask, there are many good resources in book stores and libraries. Children usually seek short, to the point answers, rather than lengthy ones. In the classroom, interest level varies; much depends on what the child already knows and his/her level of development at this time.

#### **What Do They Want to Know?**

Here are some actual student questions:

- Can four eggs develop at once?
- What happens in a miscarriage?
- Can a woman have a second pregnancy while she is still pregnant with the first?
- How does a baby come out of the mother's body?
- How does a baby eat and breathe before it is born?
- Does it hurt when the cord is cut?
- How old does a girl have to be to become pregnant?
- At what age do girls usually start to menstruate?
- How can you tell a wet dream from wetting the bed?