

Lesson Four – Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts



Lesson Overview

Adolescents are seldom fully aware of what changes, general or specific, occur during pregnancy physically, socially, emotionally and visually. When a women’s body reaches full development during a 9 month pregnancy, major changes have occurred from the pre-pregnancy state. Often these changes affect one’s self esteem, which affects one’s emotional state of mind. The following lesson is designed to get participants to think about how pregnancy would impact not only their body physically but also their life dreams, goals and expectations.

Lesson Objectives

After completing this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Describe the physical and emotional changes that occur during pregnancy

Lesson at a Glance

Activity	Materials	Preparation	Approximate class time
FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts</i> worksheet (one per participant) • <i>Presentation Slide 6 Physical Changes Month-by-Month</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy <i>Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts</i> worksheet 2. Prepare to display <i>Presentation Slide 6 Physical Changes Month-by-Month</i> 	10 minutes
LEARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How Would I Feel if I (or my girlfriend) Were Pregnant Now?</i> worksheet (one per participant) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print/photocopy <i>How Would I Feel...</i> worksheet 2. Invite guest speakers to class if desired 	15-30 minutes
REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts</i> worksheet (one per participant) 		10 minutes

National FACS Education Standards: Reasoning for Action 1-4, 6.1, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 13.1, 13.2, 13.6, 15.4

National Health Education Standards: 5.12.5

Lesson Four – Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts

FOCUS: Pregnancy Symptoms – Positive or Negative?

10 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will have the opportunity to identify pregnancy symptoms and consider the impact that each would have on the participant's life.

Materials:

- *Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts* worksheet
- *Presentation Slide 6 Physical Changes Month-by-Month*

Facilitation Steps:

1. Have participants brainstorm symptoms or changes that a pregnant woman may experience.
2. Give them the *Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts* worksheet and have them add any that are not already listed on the sheet.
3. Have participants personally evaluate whether each of these would be a positive or a negative effect in their life right now.
4. Have participants identify which symptoms or discomforts would be most upsetting, pleasant, or hardest to deal with at their age and why.
5. Call on a participant and ask them to choose one of the symptoms or discomforts on the worksheet. Ask them to identify which month they believe that symptom would be present.
6. Display *Presentation Slide 6 Physical Changes Month-by-Month* and discuss the physical changes that occur month-by-month to the pregnant woman.

Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts

The following are physical and emotional conditions that can occur during pregnancy. Most women experience these in varying degrees at different stages throughout the pregnancy.

Directions: For each symptom or discomfort listed below, write your feelings or thoughts as to why it might be a positive or negative factor in your life right now. Be prepared to give reasons for your response.

Symptom/Discomfort	Reactions: Feelings or thoughts, positive or negative
Monthly period stops	
New wardrobe due to increased size	
Sweating due to higher body temperature	
Frequent urination or leaking urine	
Gain of 20-30 pounds	
Blemishes may disappear or become noticeable	
Hair becomes thick and healthy	
Breasts get larger and may be sore	
Appetite increases	
Craving strange foods or combinations of foods	
Constipation	
Stretch marks	
Varicose veins	
Navel flattens or pops out as belly grows	
Increased tiredness	
People make a fuss and try to be more helpful	
Crying for no reason	
Lower back pain	
Trouble sleeping	
Can feel the baby move	
Worrying about the baby	
Worrying about your parenting abilities	
Swelling feet and hands	
Reliance on others increases	
Braxton-Hicks contractions	
Center of gravity shifts, causing unsteadiness	
Fainting or light-headedness	
Nausea and possible throwing up	

Lesson Four – Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts

LEARN: How Would I Feel if.....

15-30 minutes

Purpose:

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on how they would feel if they or their girlfriend were pregnant now. Guest/parent speakers may be invited into the classroom to address physical and emotional challenges of being pregnant.

Materials:

- *How Would I Feel if I (or my girlfriend) Were Pregnant Now?* worksheet

Facilitation Steps:

1. Activity: How would I feel if I (or my girlfriend) were pregnant now?
Have participants complete the *How Would I feel if I (or my girlfriend) Were Pregnant Now?* worksheet by responding to the parental questions presented.
2. Use these responses as a basis for class discussion. Expand the discussion to include the roles and responsibilities of parents. What are the needs of children? Can teenage parents provide for all these needs on a daily basis?
3. Activity: Pregnancy/Parent Speaker
 - A. Invite someone who is in her third trimester of pregnancy to visit the class. Have her share her physical experiences and how these have changed throughout her pregnancy. Address the physical and emotional challenges she has personally

experienced while being pregnant. Have her include the reactions of others to her physical body changes.

- B. Invite parents who already have children to share their pregnancy experiences with the class. Couples make it interesting when both mom and dad share their perspectives.
- C. The guests could share the following topics with the class:
 - What were their first reactions upon learning of the pregnancy?
 - Was this a planned pregnancy?
 - Who did they tell first? What were the reactions of these persons?
 - What physical and emotional changes did they experience? Any challenges or difficulties?
 - As the pregnancy progressed, what changes did they notice?
 - Are there any fears about the birth or delivery?
 - How do they feel they will do as parents of a newborn?
 - Do they feel they are physically, mentally and financially ready to be parents?
 - How do they view their role(s) as a parent?
 - What advice would they give to someone considering becoming a parent? Would this advice differ if it were someone in their twenties or thirties versus someone in their teens?
- D. Invite the speakers to class with their newborn to talk about the birth process and new parent experiences if the schedule and delivery dates coordinate.

How would I feel if I (or my girlfriend) were pregnant now?

1. How do you think you would feel if you found out today that you would become a parent in 6-7 months? Write down three adjectives (descriptive words) that describe your feelings. Why did you choose each adjective?

Adjective #1 _____

Why? _____

Adjective #2 _____

Why? _____

Adjective #3 _____

Why? _____

2. Describe, in your own words, why you (circle one) ARE or ARE NOT ready to have a child.

3. What do you think a child needs from a parent? _____

4. What makes a person a good parent? _____

Lesson Four – Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts

REVIEW: Symptoms and Discomforts – Physical vs. Emotional

10 minutes

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to review the main pregnancy symptoms and discomforts and give participants an opportunity to reflect on how one symptom might impact or cause another symptom either physically or emotionally.

Materials:

- *Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts* worksheet

Facilitation Steps:

1. Have participants use the Pregnancy Symptoms and Discomforts worksheet to determine which of the symptoms/discomforts are physical and which ones are emotional. Write P for physical and E for emotional.

2. Discuss how one might affect or be a cause for another in terms of the overall health of the pregnant mother.
3. Supplemental Activity (Optional): Reaction Stories

Have participants write a fictitious story of their personal reaction upon getting a positive pregnancy test. This should be written from the male point of view as well.

- What would be your honest reaction? (Note that some participants may indicate happiness with the positive results.)
- Who would you tell first?
- Where or when would you tell them?
- What would you say before and after telling someone you tested positive for pregnancy?
- How do you think they would feel?
- What would be your next plan of action?

Have participants share their responses.