

# 5

## *Being Responsible And Safe*

It is very important to understand that students falling in the age group of 10 to 14 years are particularly prone to a large range of accidents, as they tend to get excited about everything and in the process compromise with their safety. Safety involves being careful in order to prevent an accident or risk that could cause harm or injury. Thus it is important for us to teach them to be safe and avoid injury.

As safety is freedom from danger or harm and prevention is an important element of safety; everyone needs to know how to act safely in dangerous situations. Acting responsibly in dangerous situations can sometimes save a life. For example, every school should have a plan for escaping from the school building in case of fire or natural disaster. Safety should also be considered whenever the student starts a new activity, for example, when learning to ride a bike, use a skateboard; or learning to cook, the student should be taught safe techniques. For instance, following some simple guidelines such as not leaving burning candles unattended can prevent many fires.

Through this Unit we have tried to provide an opportunity to the students of this age group to identify the "not so safe" areas/activities and help them to handle them.

These are few suggested activities. Teachers / counsellors can modify the activities according to the local needs.



## Activity – Evacuation drill

**Background :** In today's world it is important that all the students should have a fair knowledge about the calamities/disasters and the basics of how to handle such emergencies. Thus, drill can become a part of routine that can be followed in an emergency situation.

**Methodology :** Students are told to assemble, given briefing, shown plan and then the situation is simulated. Time set is maintained. Practical exercise, according to the situation is taken up.

**Observation :** Students understand the situation, analyze and react without panic and are mentally alert to face crisis. Discuss the problems faced.

**Conclusion :** Awareness regarding urgency in case of an emergency.

**Key Messages :** Practice makes a man perfect.

### Self-assessment :

- Make a list of feelings and reactions
- Time management
- Regular introspection.

### Suggested activities :

- Quiz based on the information provided
- Worksheets-sample attached
- Hold a school-wide *Fire Safety* Poster contest. Winning posters at each grade/ level might be displayed in the public library or in the windows of local grocery stores.
- Power point presentation to be prepared by the students.



### CONCEPT

Developing a sense of discipline and urgency during emergency.



### OBJECTIVE

To train the students to evacuate the building in case of fire, flood or earthquake.

To evacuate the building without panic, anxiety or stampede.

Teach the students to respond to emergency alarm.



### MATERIALS REQUIRED:

copies of the plan, audio-visual presentation, Whistle/alarm



### MODE

Whole School



### TIME

1 hour / 2 periods



**Electrical Safety World-Student Worksheet 1**

**How Can Electricity Hurt You?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Electricity always takes the easiest path to the \_\_\_\_\_  
a) sky            b) tree            c) ground
2. You have to be touching the ground directly to be shocked by electricity.  
(True or False) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. You should never touch anything electrical while you have wet hands or while standing in water because

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4. Draw a picture of a dangerous situation inside or outside a home that could result in someone being shocked by electricity

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5. Now, explain something that people can do to correct the shock hazard you just drew.

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**Electrical Safety World-Student Worksheet 2**

**In Case of Emergency**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What can happen if you throw water on an electrical fire? What should you do instead for an electrical fire?

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2. If you touch someone who has been shocked and they are still contacting the source of the electricity, what could happen to you?

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3. What is the only safe thing to do if you see a fallen power line?

- a) jump over it
- b) stay far away from it and tell an adult
- c) move it with a stick

4. What is the safest thing to do if you are in a car with a power line on or near it?

- a) climb out of the car window
- b) stay in the car
- c) get out of the car as fast as you can
- d) get onto the car roof and stay there

5. List 3 things that would be useful to have in a safety kit during a power shortage.

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6. If you see lightning or hear thunder and can't get indoors, you are safest

- a) under a tree
- b) in a hardtop car
- c) on a wooden bench
- d) in a wooden boat on a lake

## Activity – Safety Rules to be followed in various situations

**Background :** India is very prone to disasters. Over the years these disasters have caused extensive damage to life and property. Thus in order to have pro-active, comprehensive and sustained approach to disaster management and to reduce the detrimental effects of disaster it is important to begin early.

### Methodology :

- The teacher starts the session by asking the students about safety rules.
- Then she classifies the rules into different categories such as:
  1. Common Rules
  2. Specific Rules
  - (i) Road
  - (ii) Fire
  - (iii) Strangers
  - (iv) Anything related to local dangers.
- Divide the whole class into small groups and let each of the group work on each category.
- Each group presents their findings through role plays, posters etc.

**Observation :** Students will learn to understand safety; create safe environment and cope with any emergency.

**Conclusion :** Students should know about the safety rules that should be followed in various situations ranging from crossing the road to being aware of other potential dangers in the environment such as dealing with strangers.

**Key Message :** Safety saves and Precaution matters.

**Self-assessment :** We should keep these things in mind. Check and complete the information.

- Do you have a number on the front of your house?
- Can the number be seen easily from the street during the day and night? This is very important in case the driver of a fire truck or ambulance needs to find your house quickly. House numbers can be purchased at a low cost from a hardware store.

### CONCEPT

Teaching safety rules help the students to take care of themselves.



### OBJECTIVE

- To teach consequences of risk-taking behaviour.
- To facilitate safe living for themselves and others.

### MATERIALS REQUIRED:



Computer with Internet connection, writing material, chart papers etc.



### MODE

Group work



### TIME

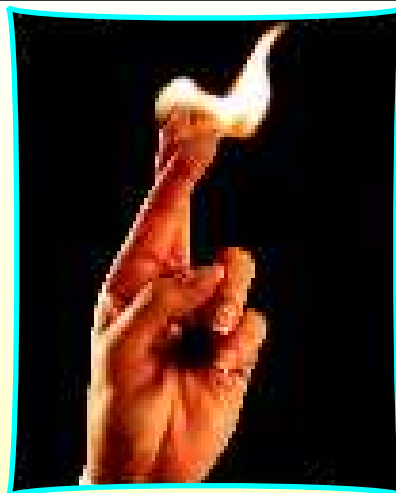
2 periods



## EXAMPLE POSTERS/FACT SHEETS THAT CAN BE PUT UP

### Facts About Fires

- Real fires are FAST. In a few minutes your whole house could be on fire.
- Real fires are HOT. Temperatures can be more than 600 degrees.
- Real fires are DARK. You won't be able to breathe and you can't see anything.
- Real fires are DANGEROUS -- no matter how small. If you see a fire, get out and get help.



### Home Fire Safety

- Draw a simple picture of your home. Plan at least two escape routes from your home and two ways to get out of every room.
- Agree on an outside meeting place.
- Decide who will take charge of each child.
- Practice the escape routes during fire drills. (Practice escapes at night, that's when most deadly fires occur.)
- Show children who live in high-rise buildings the shortest route to a safe exit. Warn them not to use the elevator.

### In a Fire...

- GET OUT FAST, seconds count. Phone for help from a neighbor's home, not from inside a burning building.
- COVER your mouth and nose.
- CRAWL LOW under the smoke to the nearest exit.
- TEST the door. If it's hot or there's smoke, use another way out.
- ONCE OUT, STAY OUT. There's nothing more important in your home than you. If someone is missing, tell a firefighter.
- GATHER at your designated meeting place.
- NEVER go back into a burning building.

### **If Clothing Catches on Fire...**

- STOP. Running fans the flames, making fire burn faster.
- SHOUT for help. Don't run for help.
- DROP to the floor and cover your face.
- ROLL back and forth to put out flames.
- COOL a burn with cool water.

### **Smoke is Deadly**

- Each year, fires and burns kill hundreds of children and permanently scar thousands, yet more fire victims die from the smoke than flames. Smoke can overwhelm a child or adult in minutes.
- Protect your family by installing smoke detectors outside all sleeping areas and on every level of your home.
- Test them monthly, following manufacturers' instructions. Change batteries at least once a year -- even if they are still working.
- Caution: Never remove batteries for use in toys, a flashlight, or radio.
- Teach your children about smoke detectors. Let them help test the detectors, so they recognize the alarm. Follow up by practicing your escape route.

### **Matches and Children Don't Mix**

- Matches and lighters are tools for adults; they are not toys.
- Children who play with matches or lighters can be badly burned and can hurt others.
- Teach children that if they find matches, they should tell an adult the location right away.

### **Suggested Activities**

Class can again be divided into groups to develop and do the following :

- Snakes and ladders game based on the area of interest
- Crossword puzzles to enhance the vocabulary
- Colouring activities
- Matching games
- Quiz

## First Aid Essentials !!!

**Background :** Teaching First-Aid will make the students independent and responsible to handle small emergencies. This exposure will help the students to overcome anxieties related to injuries.

**Methodology :** Activity starts with a pre-activity preparation, that is, School team comprising of Nurse, Doctor and Counsellor take care that venue is ready, material required is ready etc.

- Parents belonging to similar profession are also involved.
- Activity starts with a formal introduction to First-Aid followed by a multimedia presentation showing how to handle emergencies.

**Observation :** Students will be able to handle minor injuries like cuts, sprains etc without panic and anxiety and would be able to distinguish between fracture and sprain.

**Conclusion :** As complexity in life is increasing and students are leading a very active life, it is necessary that they learn to deal with small emergencies themselves.



### CONCEPT

First-Aid is simple and immediate emergency treatment that one can give to an injured or ill person.



### OBJECTIVE

To train students to attend to small injuries that may occur on playgrounds, in a school building or in neighbourhood.

### MATERIALS REQUIRED:



Demonstration materials



### MODE

Group work



### TIME

1-day workshop



**Self-assessment :** Please maintain the kit and keep updating it. A list of all the essential items is given below.

### **First Aid Kit**

Every office, factory, home and school should have an accessible first-aid box. It is readily available in shops but you can use a tin or cardboard box at home as your first aid box. Following are the common stuff you should have in your first aid box.

- First-aid book
- Small roll of absorbent gauze or gauze pads of different sizes
- Triangular and roller bandages
- Band-aids (Plasters)
- Pen torch
- Tweezers
- Moistened towels and clean dry cloth pieces.
- Thermometer
- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Adhesive tape
- Cotton (1 roll)
- Scissors
- Latex gloves (2 pairs)
- Needle
- Antiseptic
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant



- Assorted sizes of safety pins

- Cleansing agent/soap

#### *Non-prescription drugs*

- Pain relievers
- Antihistamine cream for Bee Stings.
- Laxative
- Anti-Diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)

Keep your first aid kit where it is easily accessible. Replace drugs whenever they reach the expiry date.

#### **Suggested activities :**

- Make a list of important people and phone numbers in case an emergency occurs
- Organise a First Aid camp in the school
- **Community service :** Older students can take responsibility for teaching younger students about first aid.
- **Writing :** Invite a representative of the Red Cross Society/Local hospital/CGHS to come to school to talk to your students. Students might prepare questions for the First Aid in advance - question about fire safety and also jobs related to the field.
- Students can use the information they gather to write a "news story" about the First Aid camp



# Behaviour And Life Skills





# 6

## *Behaviour And Life Skills*

As health education and Life Skills have evolved during the past decade, there is growing recognition of and evidence for the role of psycho-social and interpersonal skills in the development of young people from their earliest years through childhood, adolescence, and into young adulthood. These skills have an effect on the ability of young people to protect themselves from health threats, build competencies to adopt positive behaviours and foster healthy relationships.

There is now strong evidence from an increasing number of studies that skills-based health education, including education that fosters the development of Life Skills, changes behaviour.

Skills-based health education is an approach to creating or maintaining healthy lifestyles and conditions through the development of knowledge, attitudes, and especially skills using a variety of learning experiences with an emphasis on participatory methods.

Life Skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO ).

Essential Life Skills include such things as being able to recognize and describe one's feelings, giving and receiving feedback, recognizing assumptions, setting realistic and attainable goals and employing problem-solving strategies.

In the following Unit an attempt is made to acquaint the students with some Life Skills which can help them to develop better.

These are few suggested activities. Teachers / Counsellors can modify the activities according to the local needs.



# Expressing One Self

## Background :

Life Skills are the skills necessary for successful living. Essential Life Skills include such things as being able to recognize and describe one's feeling, giving and receiving feedback, recognizing assumptions, setting realistic and attainable goals, and employing problem solving strategies

## Methodology :

- Teacher instructs the students to look through photographs or magazines for things they like or that describe them.
- Cut them out and arrange them on the poster board. Make any design they like. Paste pictures of things that make them feel good, express what they like and who they are. Hang them on the wall with pride.
- Do one every six months and you will be amazed at the results.

## Observations/discussion :

Students draw the family's painting, which provide an insight in their perception and self esteem.

## Conclusion:

Growing up children are not able to express their conflicts verbally. Thus, it is a good idea to ask the student to draw and paint their view of the relationship of their family.

## Key message :

Insights are stepping-stones for desirable behavior modification.



## CONCEPT

It is a way to raise awareness about the way we feel and react in a particular situation.



## OBJECTIVE

This activity provides an insight into students' perception and attitude towards others in relation with oneself.



## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

Pencils, colours, mounting board, glue, sparkles etc.



## MODE

100% participation



## TIME REQUIRED

2 periods



### **Self-Assessment :**

In this activity the teacher observes the student and asks certain questions based on the work presented. Some guidelines for the interview are:-

- The colours used by the student
- Content analysis
- Injury from the seemingly disturbed student.
- Parental interview and counseling to both, the child and the parents.

### **Suggested Activities :**

- Visit to art gallery
- Rate your emotion
- Write poetry
- Assign symbols to various emotions
- Pretend to be grown up and behave accordingly



**Worksheet**

**Exercise: Warm-up questions**

Take a few minutes to answer the following questions:

1. A time I couldn't have made it through something difficult without my mom/dad/team ...

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2. A time when I appreciated my mom/dad/team was ...

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3. Something I like about my mom/dad/team is ...

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4. One of my strengths is ...

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5. The biggest challenge for me is ...

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6. One positive change I would like to make is ... \_\_\_\_\_

I promise to work towards IT!!

I promise to take help if I feel the need.

Signature:

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# Building Empathy

**Background :** Role-play creates an environment in which young people begin to experience intimately what a situation may mean and feel, thereby helping them to empathise. Besides, it introduces young people to the use of drama in education. This also helps students to break down barriers of self consciousness.

**Methodology :** Divide the class into small groups. Assign the students their roles and give them time to practice. Allow them to display. Discuss and ask the students for comments.

## Materials Required:

Role-play does not require a mountain of props, rather the opposite. The idea is to focus on the characters whose roles have to be played out. Props only provide a distraction to the audience and the actors. Of course, minima also means that groups make do with what is available. Therefore, if there are tables, chairs and other furniture in the room where you are working, the groups could use these in some way. Room setting should be done according to the designed activity.

**Observation/discussion :** Students would be able to empathize, organize, analyze and reflect their perception and relationships with others and their environment making the students more responsible.

**Conclusion :** Through role-play, participants can experience the feeling and potential outcomes of a social situation without suffering the actual consequences of their decisions.

**Self-assessment :** Ask the students to work on the provided guidelines

- Think of a situation
- Decide the roles

## CONCEPT

Role-play techniques are ideally suited for situations where identification is sought for the characters especially for contrasting or evolutionary behaviour.



## OBJECTIVE

This activity aims at generating innovative and reflective range of responses towards a particular situation. It will enhance the personal skills while providing safe environment to give vent to one's 'emotions'. Besides, it helps the students to empathise.



## MODE

Group-Work

## TIME REQUIRED

1 hr/2pds



- Write down the feelings
- Discuss and share
- Expert advice

**Suggested Activities :**

- **Breathing together:** The full group should form a circle with everybody being able to see everyone else. Without speaking, they work to synchronize the rhythm of their breathing.
- **Name chants:** The full group is randomly divided into groups of four and each of these is then given five minutes to make short song, chant, rap, using their names. They then perform for the to other groups.
- Charades
- Mime machines
- Tableaux - moving tableaux

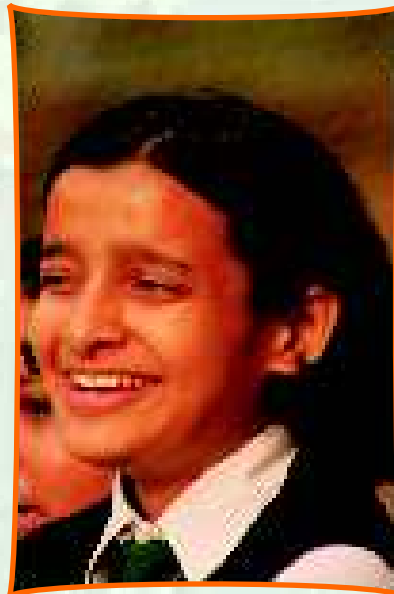
**Key message :** Feelings are integral part of one's life. One experiences wide range of feelings and their proper communication is a skill which every student must learn.



# Extempore Expression !

## Background :

Instantaneous expression about an individual or the situation provides an insight in the person's thinking styles/difficulties/hang ups etc.



## CONCEPT

On the spot activity such as extempore provide an insight into students thinking style



## OBJECTIVE

To provide the opportunity to share their opinions. This may help the school to mould their policies according to present need.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED:



## TIME REQUIRED

1 hr/2pds



# Development

## Background :

Discussion would help student's curiosity to ebb. It also leads to an increase in awareness level of students.

## Methodology :

Minimum 3 three experts from the fields can be invited. Principal, parent representative, school doctor and counsellor also join the panel. Students are encouraged to ask any question that may be pertaining to the subject. At the end experts are given opportunity to express their viewpoints and inform about the neglected aspects.

**Observation/discussion :** Increases awareness

- Type of questions asked provides insight to policy makers regarding cause and effect relationship.

## Conclusion :

Role models play an important role in moulding young minds and their viewpoints help the students to internalize the good values. These kinds of activities motivate the students to emulate their role models behavior.

## Key Message :

Open discussion widens the horizons.

## Self-assessment :

Follow the format.

- Talk to the expert if confused.
- Approach a responsible adult, if in trouble.
- Share their views with friends, teachers and parents.

**Note to the teacher :**

## Panel Discussion

A panel consists of a small group of six persons, who carry on a guided and informal discussion before an audience as if the panel

## CONCEPT

Understanding the problem from an expert's viewpoint is more convincing than others.



## OBJECTIVE

To ensure that students have gained all the necessary information, which help them to take up active and safe life.



## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

Room setting is important



## MODE

Panel discussion



## TIME REQUIRED

1 hr



were meeting alone. The proceedings of the panel should be the same as those described for informal discussion: volunteering of facts, asking questions, stating opinions-all expressed with geniality with respect for the contributions of other members, without speech making, and without making insidious personal references. This primary function should occupy approximately two-thirds of the allotted time-say forty minutes of an hour's meeting. The secondary function of the panel is to answer questions from the audience. This discussion method is suitable for use when a relatively large audience is anticipated. The disadvantage of the method is that it confines most of the discussion to the panel itself. The audience listens and is given a chance to ask questions, but for the most part is passive and receptive.

Panel discussions, if well conducted are usually more interesting to the audience than is the single-speaker forum. They provide sufficiently varied opinions presentation of facts is from multiple perspectives.



# Self Esteem

**Methodology :** This activity can be done in the classroom in the language students are comfortable with. Maximum minutes to be given to each student. The teacher keeps on recording the talk on various dimensions. Deliberate effort is made to give emotionally laden topics.

**Observation/Discussion :** The pitch of the voice, the confidence in which the students speak provides an insight into students' self-concept.

**Conclusion :** Students in their pre-adolescent years are easily excited and while participating in such activities tend to voice their viewpoints on the issues of their concern.

**Key Message :** Expression improves mental health.

**Self Assessment :** Make a list of emotions students experience in different situations, such as:-

- When you are angry \_\_\_\_\_
- When facing exams \_\_\_\_\_
- Seeking permission from parents when you think they might refuse \_\_\_\_\_
- Your friend stops talking to you  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Your best friend says something about you to others  
\_\_\_\_\_
- A boy in your class asks you to do something which you don't like \_\_\_\_\_
- Referral services according to the need may be provided
- Counselling to be provided at whatever level needed be it -  
School / Class / Individual / Peer group level

## MATERIALS REQUIRED:

List of the relevant topics to be prepared by the teacher in advance (peer pressure generation gap. Communication gap popular culture etc)

## MODE

Group presentation



## TIME REQUIRED

1 hr / 2pds



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q1 Will my birth sign affect my growth?**

No. Proper exercise and diet have direct impact on our growth.

**Q2 I am a twelve-year-old girl and I am very fat. I hate myself. What shall I do?**

Consult a medical practitioner or a dietician. Under an expert's advice examine your diet and exercise schedule and modify it. Follow the instructions given by the expert religiously. Gaining or losing of body weight is in our hand.

**Q3 What are the physical changes that take place during adolescent years?**

Boys-development of beard, moustache and low-pitch voice and increase in height. Girls-high-pitch female voice, female pattern of body hair distribution, onset of menstruation cycle, growth of mammary glands.

**Q4 I am a thirteen-year-old boy. My voice has become so hoarse that I do not want to talk to any one.**

This change is part of normal growth and development. Hoarseness is because of the low-pitch voice, which boys normally develop during adolescent years.

**Q5 I used to wear shorts, suddenly after class-VI, my father started discouraging me from wearing shorts or skirts.**

In conservative Indian society such parental instructions are not uncommon. Largely parents' opinions are influenced by the society in which they live.

**Q6 I feel my parents do not trust me any more.**

In our society, parents very frequently advise their children on various issues out of care and concern, it could be misconstrued and thought to be lack of trust. It is better to have an open communication with your parents.

**Q7 My height has suddenly increased and now I am the tallest in my class. My friends keep on teasing me. This depresses me.**

This change is part of normal growth and development. Boys normally experience sudden increase in height during adolescent years.

**Q8 My friends told me that a person can gain a kilogram or more from eating a serving of cake, ice cream or junk food.**

You should not be concerned and unnecessarily worried about this issue. It is important to understand that no food is good or bad for you. Quite the contrary, some people believe that when they take any food, it will immediately be visible on their body as excess weight. This is not how food works. In fact, when a person eats food, it is broken down by the body into energy and fuel for growth and alertness. Particularly, when you eat nutritionally dense or nourishing foods in appropriate amounts, it all gets used up and disappears before it could ever be stored as fat. Also it is important to exercise everyday.

**Q9 I know that very skinny models and actresses have unhealthy eating and exercise lifestyles. I must not model myself after them. Is that right?**

TRUE. It is unnatural and unhealthy to try to get your body to be thinner than it needs or wants to be, no matter how normal the models or actors make thinness seem. When you eat right and stay active, your body will determine that best weight for you and will maintain that weight to keep you feeling good and fit.

**Q10 Is it true that no one can know how fit or unfit I am simply by looking at me.**

TRUE. Nobody can tell how fit you are simply by looking. Largely built or overweight people are often strong, healthy and in very good shape; their heredity may determine their large size. Do you know that many overweight people exercise regularly and vigorously and are fine athletes.

**Q11 Is it true that body shapes and sizes vary from one person to the next. No two bodies can or should look the same.**

TRUE. Just as every finger print is different from every other, no two people are created to look just the same. We all come in different sizes and shapes, with different strengths and weaknesses, with different talents and interests. Our unique qualities set us apart and make us special. Who we are as people has less to do with how we look and more to do with how we think, feel and behave.

**Q12 Kids become overweight because they eat too much. Do they need to eat less.**

No one becomes overweight because he or she eats too much nutritious food. People become overweight when they eat too much of less nutritious foods and/or when they do not remain active, or engage in sports or other forms of regular exercise. Moving your body vigorously through space in some form of exercise is one sure way to keep your metabolism healthy and capable of burning fat, giving you energy and keeping you trim. When people are overweight, they do not need to diet or eat less. They may need only to learn to eat differently, to establish a healthier eating and exercise lifestyle.

**Q13 Is it true that I will be thinner if I skip breakfast. The fewer meals, I have, the thinner I will become.**

NO. You can't expect to be alert and to learn efficiently at school unless you feed your brain well after its extended overnight fast. People who skip breakfast damage the function of their metabolism, interfering with their body's capacity to burn fat effectively. In addition, excessively hungry people tend to overeat their next meal or snack; non-breakfast eaters are more apt to develop weight problems in their childhood and into their adult years.

**Q14 Is it true that sweets are not good for me.**

FALSE. There is nothing wrong with eating sweets. A dessert now and then, even once a day, is fine. A few extra sweets on birthdays and festivals is great fun and in the spirit of celebration. It would in fact be problematic if you could not feel free to eat these foods. Sweets become problems only when people eat them in excess or instead of foods that nourish and build strong bodies.

**Q15 Eating fat in your food makes you fat. Is this true.**

No. Eating fat in your diet does not make you fat. Though an over-abundance of saturated fats can be unhealthy, other kinds of fats are necessary to keep your body healthy and functional. The healthy eater is the person who eats all types of foods, as long as they are eaten in moderation (not too much and not too little).

**Q16 I worry that the more I eat, the more weight I will gain.**

FALSE. When your body is well fed and healthy, it will eventually arrive at what is called its "set point" weight. The body's set weight is the weight your body wants and needs in order to be healthy. Once this weight is achieved, it will stay, give or take a kilo here or there. If one day you eat more than usual, the scale may show a slight increase in weight but within a day or so of eating naturally again, your body will settle comfortably back to its set point weight. You can count on it.

**Q17 Everybody talks about puberty, what does it actually mean?**

Adolescence is usually defined as the period in a boy's or girl's life, which occurs between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence begins with puberty, which technically is the time when your secondary sexual characteristics appear. This is triggered by the pituitary gland, which secretes a surge of hormones into the blood stream and begins the rapid maturation of the gonads: the girl's ovaries and the boy's testicles. It varies from person to person. It may also be by the genetic make up of the person.

**Q18 What really happens during this period (puberty)?**

On an average, a child enters a period of accelerated growth just prior to pubescence. The greatest increase in height occurs around 11½ years of age for girls, and around 14 years for boys. Girls usually start their first menstrual period between 11 and 14 years of age. Other signs such as filling out of body, enlargement of the breasts, growth of hair in girls, change of voice, increase in size of genitalia and growth of hair in boys, also occur around 11 to 15 years of age and complete themselves by 14 years for girls and 15 years for boys on an average. Medically, a boy or girl is now capable to procreate i.e. have a baby.

**Q19 What is the age when the first period starts?**

The average age of menarche (first period) is considered to be between the ages of 11 and 14. Menarche usually occurs a year or two following other puberty related changes like breast development and hair growth. A young woman's age of menarche is also often related to the age that her mother had her first period. Research suggests that the average age of menarche has fallen over the last century.

**Q20 What is menstruation?**

Menstruation is a woman's monthly bleeding. It is also called menses, menstrual period, or period. When a woman has her period, she is menstruating. The menstrual blood is partly blood and partly tissue from the inside of the uterus (womb). It flows from the uterus through the small opening in the cervix, and passes out of the body through the vagina.

**Q21 I am 14 years old, and am worried about developing spots and pimples on my face.**

Pimples are the commonest of all chronic disorders in your age group. This is the result of hormonal changes that activate your sebaceous gland. Usually this is a temporary condition that will eradicate, as you will grow up. Balanced diet and personal hygiene helps to correct this condition.