



# Writing Peer Advice

THIS IS A: ✓ Student Assignment Classroom Activity

## SYNOPSIS:

Students will use their writing skills to write responses/answers to other kids' questions regarding self-image as well as the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Students will write responses to peers regarding a variety of human growth & development
- Students will identify and locate resources that provide valid health information

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL: 5<sup>TH</sup>, 6<sup>TH</sup>

## NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS/PERFORMANCE INDICATORS MET:

- 3.5.1: Identify characteristics of valid health information, products, and services
- 3.5.2: Locate resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information
- 3.8.1: Analyze the validity of health information, products and services
- 3.8.5: Locate valid and reliable health products and services

## NATIONAL SEXUALITY EDUCATION STANDARDS - CORE CONTENT AND SKILLS, K-12:

- PD.5.AI.1: Identify medically accurate information and resources about puberty and personal hygiene
- PD.5.AI.2: Identify parents or other trusted adults of whom students can ask questions about puberty and other adolescent health issues
- PD.8.AI.1: Identify medically accurate sources of information about puberty, adolescent development and sexuality

## NATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS MET:

- NL-ENG.K-12.4 Communication Skills: Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 Applying Language Skills: Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Paper or computer
- ***In Need of Advice*** handout
- Large paper for groups to put answers
- Markers

IN-CLASS/AT-HOME TIME: 15 minutes

## BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS:

National Health Education Standard 3 states that students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health. Accessing valid information, products and services is important in the prevention, detection, and treatment of health problems. Application of the skills of analysis, comparison, and evaluation of health resources

empowers students to achieve health literacy. This skill is often the foundation of many decisions students will make. When using this skill, students will be evaluating the validity and reliability of information they have accessed on the Internet, from other printed sources, the media, and other people. Mastery of this skill will empower students to either accept or reject the information they have found in order to achieve better health.

#### TEACHING STEPS:

1. Tell students that one of the National Health Education Standards is to learn the skill of learning how to access valid information and products and services to enhance health. Identifying and locating resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information is critical in the prevention, early detection and treatment of health problems. Explain to students that when using this skill, you will be evaluating the validity and reliability of information you have accessed on the Internet, from other printed sources, the media, and other people. Mastery of this skill will empower you to either accept or reject the information you have found in order to achieve better health.
2. Teach students that when analyzing a resource for validity, you are checking to see if the source is honest and truthful. This means that the information is true based on facts. When analyzing a resource for reliability, you are checking to see if the source is trustworthy and dependable.
3. If need be, beforehand, lead a discussion about locating resources from home, school, and community that provide valid health information. Put up large pieces of paper in different areas in the room. On the piece of paper, divide into 2 columns. The first heading is RESOURCE and the second heading should say "WHY VALID & RELIABLE?"
4. Have students work in small groups, each with a large piece of paper, and write down resources in the community who can help and WHY that resource is valid and reliable (defined as knowledgeable, appropriate and safe). Ideas could include parents, doctors, school nurse, school social worker, clinic, health department, certain online organizations, etc...
5. Distribute the ***In Need of Advice*** handout to all students. Ask different students to read each one out loud. Ask students to choose 2 and write a response back to the person asking for the advice.
6. For each letter back to the person, have students include the following:
  - Explanation that the changes or feelings they have are normal
  - List a person or resource in the community they could talk to and why that person or resource is valid and reliable
  - How to reach that person or resource in the community

#### EXTENSION:

Turn it around and have your students be the ones to write the questions. They can be anonymous. After they are written, distribute them to the class and have classmates answer each other's questions.



# In Need of Advice

Why am I different?  
Most of my friends haven't gone through their growth spurts yet but I have. I'm so much taller than most of my friends and I'm only 12. I look out of place. Help!  
- Ethan, age 12

I have really dark hair on my arms. I didn't mind until people started teasing me about it. I don't know what to do.  
- Anika, age 12

I feel so ugly. My face is covered in spots all the time, it's sore and red. I think it's acne but why did it happen so suddenly?  
- Sam, age 14

I am only 12 and I wear a size 12 shoe. My dad says I have clown feet. What should I do?  
- Luis, age 12

Now that I'm in middle school, is it normal to get angry at my mom and my little sister all the time? One minute I'm fine and the next I'm angry. I don't get it.  
- Jess, age 11

Someone in my class has strong body odor. I'm not sure how to let them know or even if I should. Can you help?  
- Riley, age 13

## Directions:

Choose 2 letters to respond. In your letters back, include the following:

- Explanation that the changes or feelings they have are normal
- List a person or resource in the community they could talk to and why that person or resource is valid and reliable
- How to reach that person or resource in the community