



Students Together Against Negative Decisions

SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH – PART 1

Activity Purpose: Identify the major structures and functions of the reproductive systems in preparation for later discussions about STIs/STDs, HIV, and pregnancy.

Youth will:

- Identify the major structures and functions of the reproductive systems.
- Learn the phases of the menstrual cycle.

Activity Outline	Core Content Components	Instructional Method	Timing
1 Welcome & Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Students • Review last lesson • Question Box • WOW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-Lecture • Q&A • Cultural Teaching 	5 minutes
2 Whatchamacallit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Reproductive Health • Slang Terms Brainstorm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm 	10 minutes
3 Learning the Parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproductive Systems • Review Diagrams • Group Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-Lecture • Large Group Discussion 	15 minutes
4 Getting to Know Periods and Menstruation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Periods • Menstrual Cycle Handout • Group Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-Lecture • Large Group discussion Handout 	10 minutes
5 When a Person has their Moon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a Person has their Moon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Teaching 	5 minutes
6 Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A • Preview next session • WOW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A • Mini-lecture Cultural Teaching 	5 minutes

Materials:

- Question Box (QB)
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Pull up Reproductive System on screen or wall for viewing
- Fidget supplies: paper & markers, pipe cleaners, playdoh

Handouts:

- Student Handout 10: The Menstrual Cycle + When a Person has their Moon

Preparation:

- Question Box (QB)
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Prep: Reproductive System slides, game, or visual aids



1. Welcome & Introductions

5 minutes, Large
Group Activity

- Welcome Students
- Review last lesson, Session 9: Goal Setting
- Emphasize that as we shift into talking about sexual relationships and reproductive health over the next few sessions, it's important to communicate our goals, our boundaries and relationship needs to our partners to build a foundation for a healthy relationship.
- Answer any questions in the Question Box
- Have a student read today's WOW.



There is a special magic and holiness about the girl and woman. They are the bringers of life to the people, and the teachers of the little children.

- Sweet Medicine, Cheyenne

2. Whatchamacallit



5 minutes, Large
Group Activity

Introduce Sexual and Reproductive Health

- **Say:** In this session and the next, we will be learning about sexual and reproductive health. For some this will be a review, for others it will be a learning opportunity.
- If you have questions, please know its ok to ask them – if you have a question about something, there’s probably someone else in the room that has the same question. If you are too embarrassed to ask it, you can put it in the Question Box.
- We’ll have fun – as always – but it’s important to be respectful and not make crude or crass comments as we go through the session.
- Keep in mind that everyone’s body is unique. While all of our bodies have similar functions, the way they look may be different and how and when our bodies develop may look different from person to person. No matter what our body looks like or what parts we have, all of our bodies deserve respect and care!
- During this session, it’s important to make sure everyone is comfortable and can get their questions answered without embarrassment. Remind students of group agreements.
- **Teaching Idea:** Offer students fidget toys, like pipe cleaners, playdoh, or paper and markers. Give them something that will help them focus on the lesson and not the potential stress or anxiety of discussing reproductive systems.

Note: If you have a second facilitator, you may want to split the group based on gender identity. Encourage transgender and non-binary students to go with the group where they would feel the most comfortable. Every group will discuss the same content – it will not be gender or sex specific.

Whatchamacallit¹

- Introduce activity by acknowledging that even though everybody has genitals, people often make jokes about body parts, use slang terms or get giggly talking about them.
- Ask the students to call out some commonly used (“street” or “slang”) names they may have heard for genital structures, including the **penis, vagina, breasts, and testicles**. (If the students are reluctant to say commonly used names aloud, you may need to start the list yourself.)
- **Ask the students throw out slang terms**, repeat them aloud to acknowledge their existence.
- Once the students start running out of terms, ask them to call out commonly used names for other body parts, like the elbow, foot, or ear.
- Ask the students why they think there are so many commonly used names for body parts related to sex, but none for non-sexual body parts. Point out that some people feel uncomfortable talking about sex and reproduction, including body parts and these are some reasons why there are so many commonly used “slang” names.
- Let the students know that in Native STAND we will use “western medical terms” for body parts so that everyone understands what we are talking about and that we are able to communicate with our doctor using medical terms.

¹ Adapted from Big Decisions curriculum, available at: <http://www.bigdecisions.org>

3. Learning the Body Parts ^{2,3}



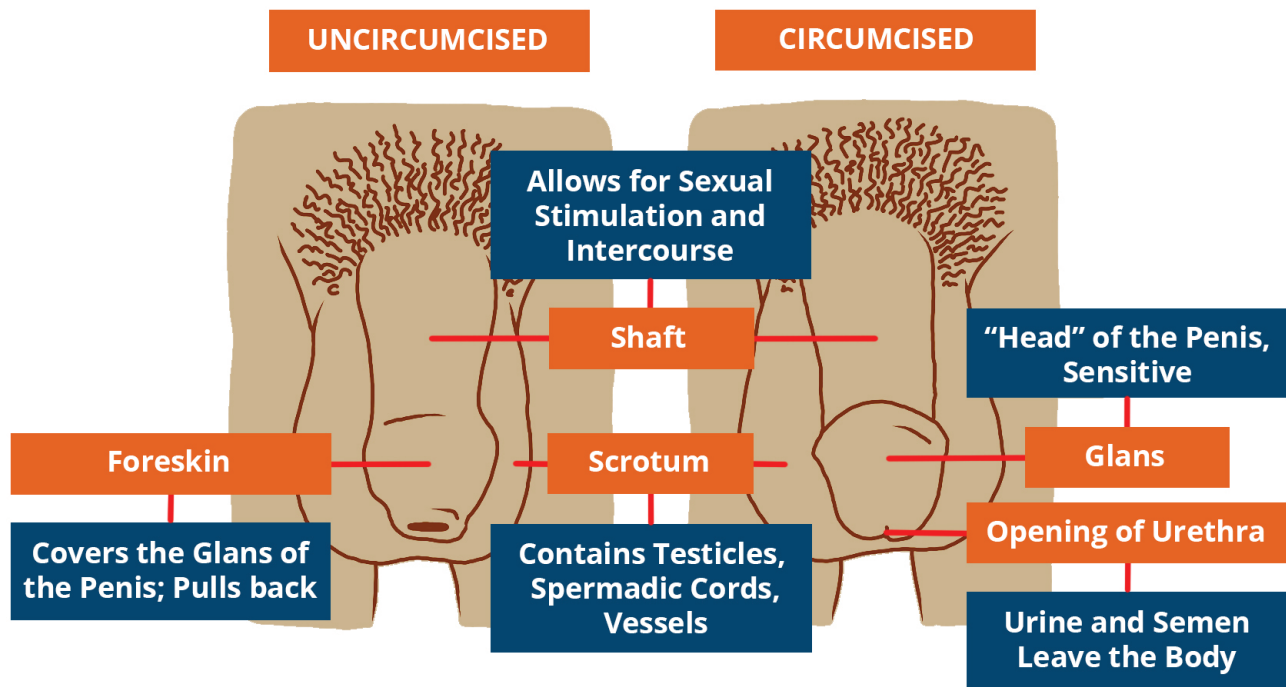
15 minutes, Large Group Discussion

- Refer students to the Diagrams of the Reproductive Systems projected on the screen/board. Ask the students to follow along as you describe the different parts of the systems and their functions.
- **Teaching Idea:** Turn this activity into a jeopardy game
- Split the group into two teams and have them choose a team color. Tell youth we'll be playing a jeopardy style game to help us learn and remember the anatomical parts and names for reproductive health. Provide each student a list of the vocabulary terms for the body parts that you'll cover. Display those same terms on the board or on a flip chart where everyone can see.
- **Teaching Idea:** For a virtual adaptation, build the activity in Kahoot, Padlet, or another jeopardy-style template.
 - **Categories:**
 - Penis and Testicles Internal Structures
 - Penis and Testicles External Structures
 - Vulvar External Structures
 - Uterine Internal Structures
 - **Terms:**
 - Shaft: allows for sexual stimulation and sex
 - Scrotum: contains testicles
 - Foreskin: covers the glans of the penis (if not circumcised)
 - Glans: "head" of the penis
 - Opening of urethra: urine and semen leave the body through this opening

² Adapted from Guide to Implementing TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention): A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV/ STD Infection. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, © 2002.

³ Adapted from Big Decisions curriculum, available at: <http://www.bigdecisions.org>

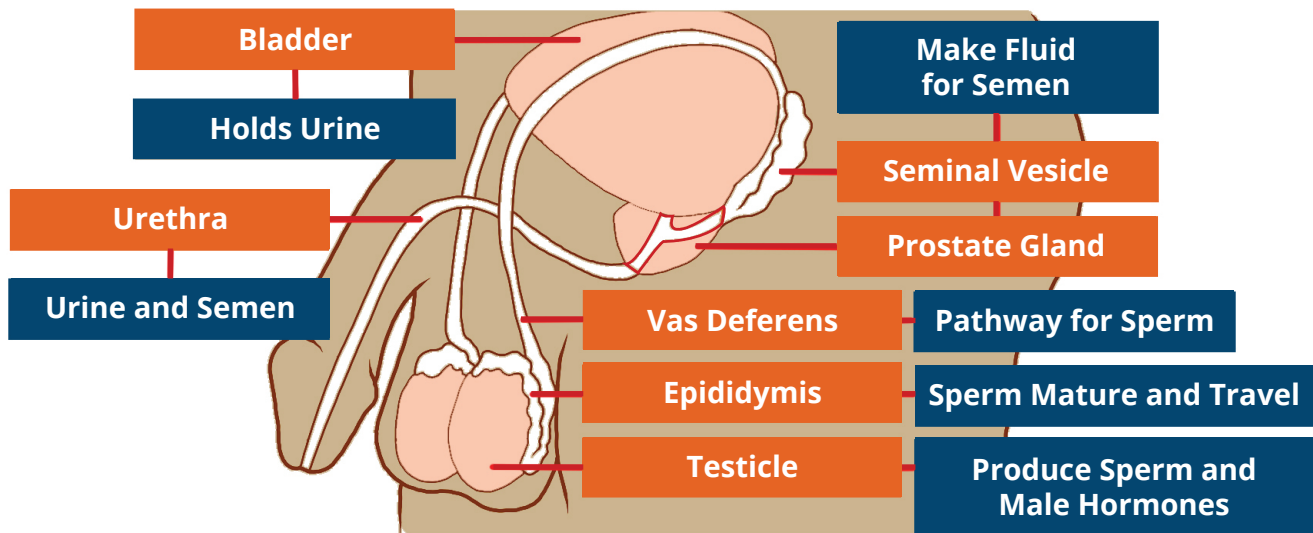
On the diagram of the external genitals:



- **Describe these components:**

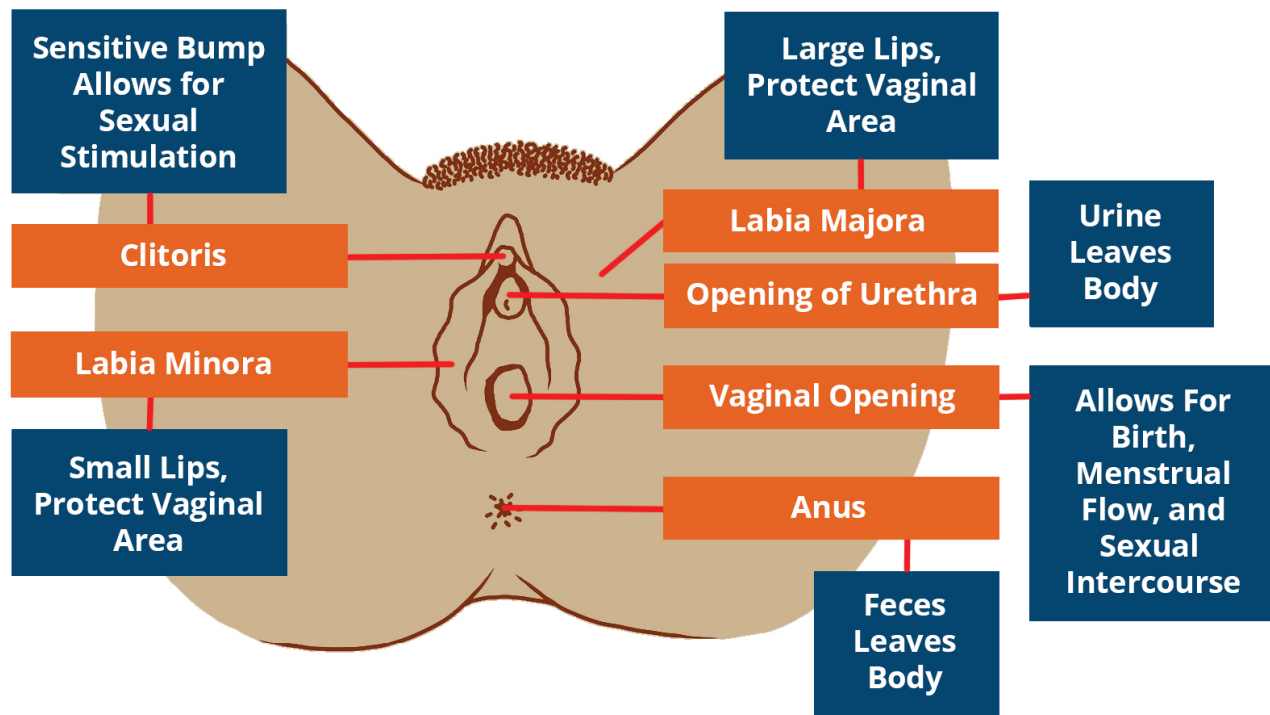
- Shaft: allows for sexual stimulation and sex
 - Scrotum: contains testicles
 - Foreskin: covers the glans of the penis (if not circumcised)
 - Glans: “head” of the penis
 - Opening of urethra: urine and semen leave the body through this opening
 - Pubic hair
- Point out that some penises are circumcised and some are uncircumcised. Circumcision is removal of the foreskin, and it is usually performed shortly after birth. Let the students know that people can be healthy and normal, whether or not they are circumcised.
 - Mention also that most people with penises also have one testicle that hangs lower than the other. The size of testicles can also differ at times due to the temperature, your age, or surgery.

On the diagram of the internal reproductive system:



- **Describe these components:**
 - Bladder: holds urine
 - Urethra: urine and semen leave body through this pathway
 - Seminal Vesicles: makes fluid for semen
 - Prostate Gland: makes fluid for semen
 - Vas Deferens: pathway for sperm
 - Epididymis: sperm mature and travel through this organ
 - Testicles: produce sperm and hormones
- Project the diagram on the white board and use a dry erase marker to trace the path that sperm take from the testes, through the epididymis and vas deferens, over and behind the bladder, through the prostate gland, into the urethra, through the penis and out the tip of the penis with ejaculation.

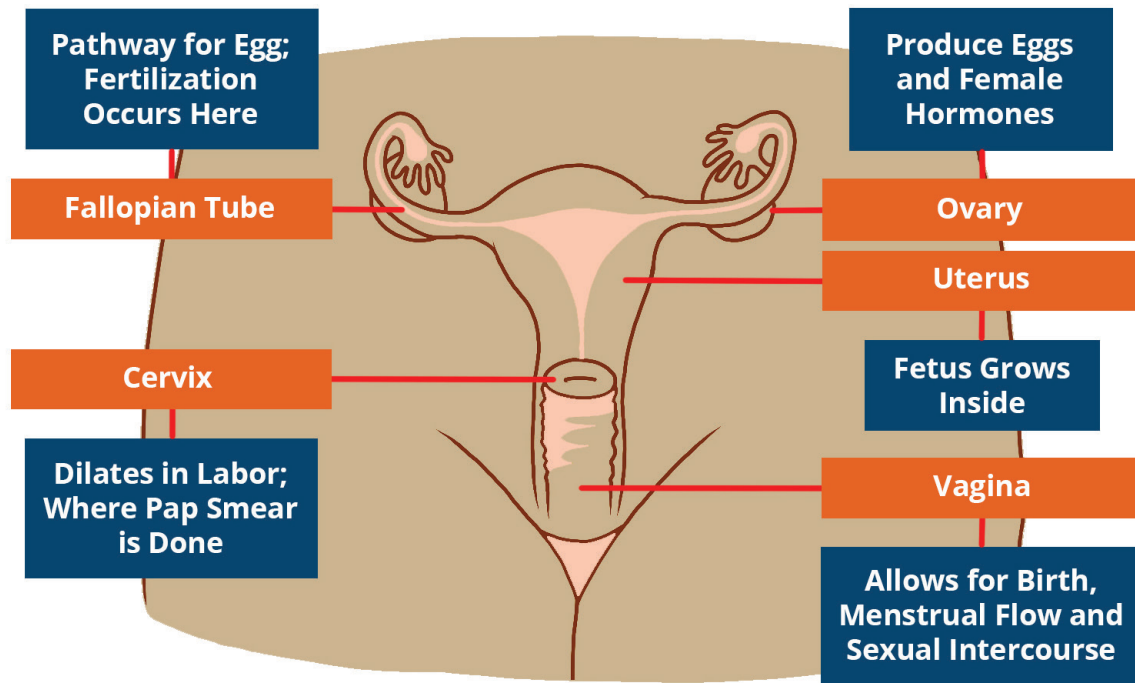
On the diagram of the vulvar external genitals:



- **Describe these components:**

- Clitoris: sensitive bump that allows for sexual stimulation
 - Labia Minora: small “lips,” protect vaginal area
 - Labia Majora: large “lips,” protect vaginal area
 - Opening of urethra: urine leaves body through this opening
 - Opening of vagina: allows for birth, menstrual flow, and sex
 - Anus: feces leaves body through this opening
- Point out the opening of the vagina, and let the class know that some people have a hymen, i.e., tissue around the opening (leftover from embryonic development).
 - For many people with vaginas, this tissue is stretched, thinned over time, or broken when they first use tampons, or ride bikes or horses. When this tissue is first broken or stretched, they can have some bleeding or pain.
 - Some people have very little to no hymen tissue and have no bleeding or pain when they first engage in penetrative sexual activity (i.e. fingering, penetration, etc.). Everyone’s bodies are unique.

On the diagram of the uterine internal reproductive system:



- **Describe these components:**

- Fallopian Tube: pathway for egg, where fertilization occurs
 - Vagina: allows for birth, menstrual flow, sex
 - Uterus: fetus grows inside
 - Ovary: produce eggs and hormones
 - Cervix: opening to uterus, dilates in labor, where a Pap Smear is done
- Trace the path that the egg takes from the ovary, through the Fallopian tube, into the uterus. Then, if it has not been fertilized (in the tube), the egg goes with the menstrual blood flow through the cervix, and through the vagina to the outside of the body.
 - If the egg is fertilized, this happens shortly after ovulation (when the egg is released from the ovary). Fertilization of the egg by the sperm occurs in the Fallopian tube. The fertilized egg takes about a week to travel to the uterus, and then it implants in the uterine lining to begin a pregnancy. If fertilization and implantation are successful, the female will usually not have menstrual bleeding. A “missed” or “late” period is one of the symptoms of early pregnancy.
 - Having some discharge from the vagina is totally normal! If things change – like the color, texture or smell – reach out to a care provider.

Lead a Discussion:

- **Ask:** Why is it important to feel comfortable touching your own genitals? (Possible answer might include):
 - Genitals are sources of pleasure and masturbation is a risk-free way of expressing and experiencing one's sexuality.
 - People with testicles need to touch their testicles to feel for lumps that might be a sign of testicular cancer.
 - People with vulvas should check for lumps or bumps.
 - People with breasts should do self-checks to see if any lumps have formed.
 - We all need to know what is normal for our body, so we can see or feel changes, if they occur.
 - People who menstruate who use tampons must touch their genitals to insert them.
 - Some methods of contraception require touching the genitals.
 - It's always important for teens to know how their bodies function and how they can stay healthy.
- **Ask:** Why is it important for teens to understand exactly how and when conception occurs? (Possible answer might include):
 - Knowing exactly how and when conception occurs is necessary – so teens know how to prevent pregnancy, by abstaining from vaginal intercourse or by using effective contraception.
- Next, we're going to talk about... periods!

4. Getting to Know Periods and Menstruation



15 minutes, Large Group Discussion

- Explain that menstrual cycles are a very basic human physical process, and that without it none of us would be here. A person's monthly cycle is what allows someone to become pregnant (or not).
- **Ask:** Why is it important for everyone to understand how the menstrual cycle work?
 - So people can know when their most fertile times of the month are to avoid or attempt a pregnancy
 - So they can know whether their cycles are regular or not
 - So people can understand your overall health and wellness – attitudes/mood swings, physical pain, emotional balance/imbalance, stress.
 - For those who “don’t menstruate,” it’s an opportunity to:
 - Learn and communicate about sensitive topics with future partners.
 - Develop empathy, reduce stigma (period shaming), develop sexual health communication skills.
 - Everyone will encounter periods directly or indirectly eventually, so good to learn.
- **Ask:** Why is it important to keep track of when periods start?
 - So one can know when their cycle begins and estimate their most fertile days to be extra careful to avoid pregnancy during that time.
- Refer students to The Menstrual Cycle Handout.
- Have them follow along as you describe the menstrual cycle:
 - Most people have a menstrual cycle that lasts an average of 28 days.
 - The first day of a cycle is the day the period [menses] begins.
 - The blood that comes out is actually the lining of the uterus.
 - A person’s uterus builds up the lining anticipating a fertilized egg. Since no fertilized egg happened, the body sheds the lining.

- Half-way through the cycle, hormonal changes cause the ovary to release an egg. [Called: ovulation]
 - An unfertilized egg only lives up to 24 hours after it is released from the ovary. (However, sperm cells can live as long as five days in the female reproductive tract. So, if sperm are present as the egg travels from the ovary through the fallopian tube, fertilization can occur.)
 - In the meantime, hormonal changes cause the uterine lining to begin to build up again.
 - If the egg is fertilized, hormone levels continue to rise, and the uterine lining becomes even thicker.
 - The fertilized egg may become implanted in the uterus. If so, the uterine lining does not shed, and the person's menstrual period does not begin - this is when someone is considered pregnant.
 - If fertilization does not occur, hormone levels fall, the uterine lining sheds, and menstrual bleeding begins again.
- **Ask:** What happens the first day of menstrual cycle?
 - Around how many days after the start of a period does the fertility period begin?
(Remind students that every individual is different, and these are just approximations.)
 - What physiological changes accompany menstruation? (i.e. cramps, headache, bloating)
 - **Ask:** Around how many days does the fertile period last?
 - **Ask:** Once a person's fertile period has passed, is it safe to have sex without protection? Why or why not?

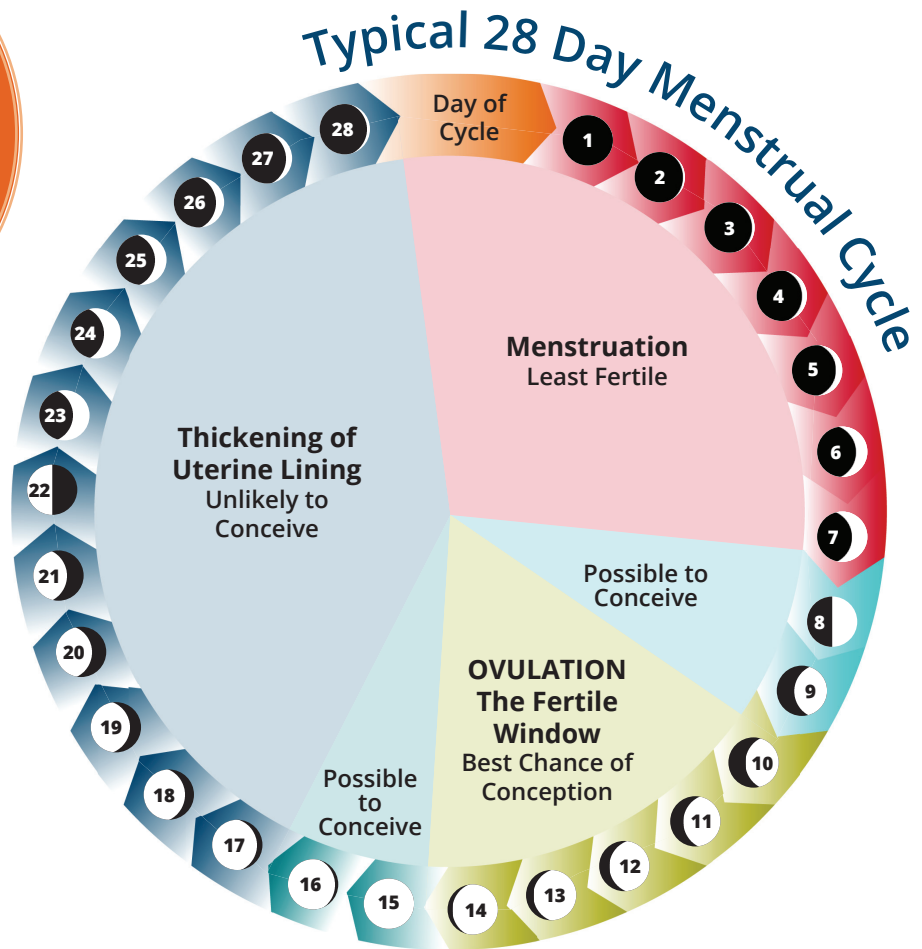
5. When a Person Has Their Moon

5 minutes, Large Group Discussion

- Introduce the topic by stating that in many cultures, there are strong beliefs, customs, and practices about those who menstruate. In some cultures, menstruating individuals are seen as having a lot of power; in others, they may be seen as unclean. Because of these beliefs, in some cultures, people may live in separate quarters while they menstruate, they may not be able to interact with other people, or they may not be able to prepare food.
- Refer students to the ***When a Person Has Their Moon*** Handout.
- Read the passage to the students or have them read it silently to themselves.
- **Ask:** What are your community's beliefs about those who menstruate? Are there particular practices that your Tribe had?
- **Ask:** Does your Tribe or family have a "Coming of Age" ceremony, or any teachings they practice, to celebrate when youth in your community reach puberty or adulthood?

Student Handout 10:

Menstruation and Cultural Teaching



When A Woman Has Her Moon

People will say that a woman who is having her moon should stay away from the ceremonies because she could ruin them, but they don't understand or know why this is. It is because a woman is the only one who can bring a child into this world. It is the most sacred and powerful of all mysteries. Certainly, the man must be there to plant the seed, but his part is simple and relatively unimportant.

When a woman is having her time, her blood is flowing, and this blood is full of mysterious powers that are related to childbearing. At this time, she is particularly powerful. To bring a child into this world is the most powerful thing in creation. A man's power is nothing compared to this, and he can do nothing compared to it. We respect that power.

If a woman should come into contact with the things that a man prays with (pipe, rattles, medicine objects) during this time it will drain all the male powers away from them. You see, a woman's power and a man's power are opposites – not in a bad way, but in a good way.

Because of the power a woman has during this time it is best that, out of respect for her men and for their medicine things, she would stay away from them. In the past they would build a little lodge for her, and their other female relatives would serve her needs. She would get a rest from all of her chores. It was not a negative thing like people think now.

So, you see, we did this out of respect for this great mystery, out of respect for the special powers of women.



6. Closing

5 minutes,
Large Group

- Remind students they can add questions to the Question Box.
- Repeat the WOW:



There is a special magic and holiness about the girl and woman. They are the bringers of life to the people, and the teachers of the little children.

- Sweet Medicine, Cheyenne

- Preview Next Session: Reproductive Health – Part 2
- Remind students that you are available to talk anytime.

**Native
STAND**

Students Together Against Negative Decisions