

PURPOSE

To help students understand how our brains can be influenced by our peers, and how we can improve our relationship skills in order to deal with conflict.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Understand the impact of certain hormones on the brain and their relationship to conflict.
2. Understand the influence of our peers at this stage in our development.
3. Learn some ways to communicate in times of conflict.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Lesson 8 teenFEMM powerpoint
- Entry Ticket Activity: Healthy Habits Maze
- Worksheet: Script the Scenario
- Case Study: Carmen's Worst Day Ever

VOCABULARY

- **Habit:** something you do so often that it becomes natural to you.
- **Hormones:** Chemical signals that travel in the bloodstream, directing the activity of every system in the body.
- **Hormonal feedback:** When a hormone that has been produced in the body sends a message to the brain to either increase or decrease its own production.
- **Conflict:** the state of being in disagreement with someone.
- **Conflict resolution:** the process that two or more parties use to find a peaceful solution to their dispute.
- **Scripts:** Things that we have practiced saying so that they come to mind easily when needed.

PREPARATION

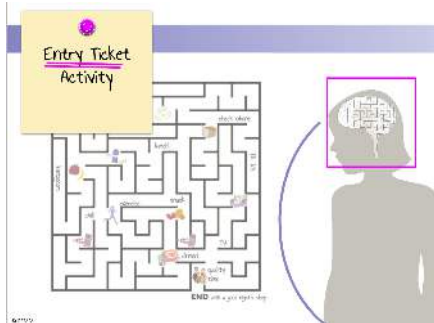
- ☐ *Print and cut out the Entry Ticket Activity: Healthy Habits Maze, one for each student.*

- ☐ Print the **Script the Scenario Worksheet** for each student.
- ☐ Print a few copies of the **Case Study: Carmen's Worst Day Ever**.

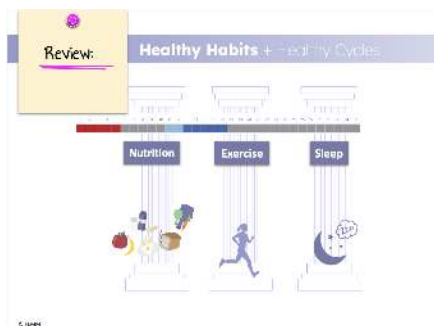
PROCEDURE

Step 1 (5 minutes): Entry Ticket Activity: **Healthy Habits Maze** + Review

Give each student a maze to complete.



Daily choices create habits. Whether it's making a sandwich to bring for lunch instead of buying french fries, going to bed on time instead of staying up late on your device, these choices become **habits**. Habits train our brain. The brain is like a maze of all of our choices and habits. Do you remember the first time you learned to walk? Probably not! But when you were a toddler, your brain was forming a new habit of walking. Now, you don't know about it, you just walk. When you make a healthy choice, your brain remembers this. Habits form the brain. It can take time to form a new habit in our brain, but it's worth it!



Last class, we learned about the pillars of health. They are what “hold up” your health. What we eat, how much we sleep, and how much we move our body impacts our overall health and helps our hormones stay in balance. When we don't do these things, we make it hard for our body and brain to function at their best.

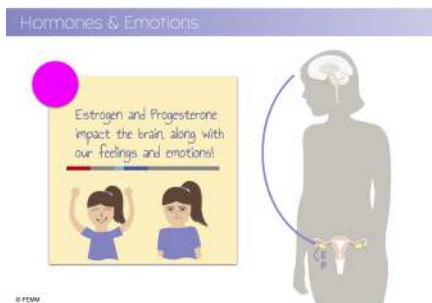
Scientists say that it takes about 21 days to create a new habit in the brain. If you filled in your **Health Checklist: Media** edition last week, you're five days closer to a new habit!



What did you learn about yourself? What are some of your social media habits? *Give students a couple of minutes to discuss.*

Step 2 (15 minutes): Hormones, Emotions and Conflict

We know that estrogen and progesterone do a lot of very important things in our body! The hormones estrogen and progesterone also impact our emotions and feelings.



One day we might feel like we're on top of the world: we could give a great presentation to the whole class and feel amazing doing it! Another day, we feel like hiding in our room, or yelling at anyone who gets in our way!

Emotions and Conflict

Sometimes, our feelings can lead to conflict with the people around us.

Conflict is a normal part of life, but it's how we handle it that's important.



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Sometimes, the way we are feeling can lead to more or less conflict with the people around us. **Conflict** basically means that you disagree with someone about something. Dealing with conflict is something that happens to all of us. It's a natural part of human relationships, but it isn't necessarily something to be viewed negatively. Conflict can lead to positive change, but we must handle it with care.

Conflict resolution is an important skill to build. Being honest and communicating directly is a great skill! Running away from conflict might seem like the easy way out, but it can often make things worse. To grow in maturity we need to practice working through disagreement in a positive way.

Ask: *Can you think of an example of a conflict that was resolved in a bad way? Can you think of an example of a conflict that was resolved in a good way?*

Here are 3 tips for resolving conflicts:

Tips for Resolving Conflict

#1

Recognize your emotions.

Try to name how you are feeling. Is it sad, angry, or disappointed? When you know the emotion, you can better communicate your needs.

#2

Listen well.

Really try to understand their perspective on the issue. Use your power of imagination to picture things from their view.

#3

Stick to the facts!

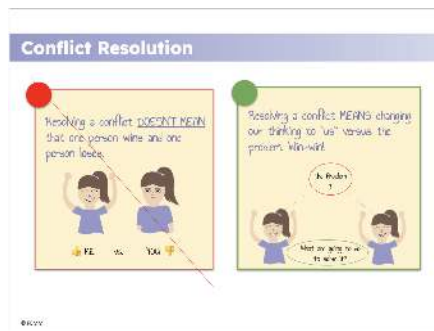
Be specific about what is bothering you and how it makes you feel.

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1. **Recognize your emotions.** Try to name how you are feeling when you are sad, angry, disappointed, or upset. This is a better option than just saying it doesn't matter. When you're aware of your emotions, you can communicate your needs without threatening or punishing others.

2. **Listen well.** Really try to understand their perspective on the issue. You can ask questions. Really try to use your power of imagination to try and understand things from their view.
3. **Stick to the facts!** Don't bring up old problems that are not relevant to what is going on right now. Remain calm and be respectful when you are addressing the person with whom you are having conflict. Be specific about what is bothering you and how it made you feel. Both parties need to communicate for there to be positive results.

Resolving a conflict doesn't mean that one person wins and one loses. Instead of thinking of it as "me versus you", try to think of it as "us versus the problem."



Step 5 (10 min): Script the Scenario



You might find it easier to deal with tricky situations if you have practiced some ways to resolve conflict before the conflict actually begins. **Scripts** are phrases that you have practiced in advance, that can help you remain calm or get out of a difficult situation. Here are three kinds of approaches you can use to respond to difficult scenarios:

Direct approach: this is where you address a person in the situation directly. It can be short and sweet, but clear and firm.

Empathetic approach: you might try to communicate in a way that helps someone *feel* what the other person is feeling. Or, it may be a way to help someone think about how they will feel later, if they do something they'll regret.

Distraction approach: sometimes it's helpful just to change the subject to get out of a difficult situation or to protect a friend's feelings.

Read the following example aloud:

You're on the bus with two friends. Ana takes Sophia's sunglasses off her head. Sophia tries to take them back, but Ana won't give them back to Sophia. Sophia says she's going to post something that "everyone will be very interested in seeing" about Ana.

Direct Approach: "Ana, just give them back."

Empathetic Approach: "Sophia, don't do something you'll regret later..."

Distraction Approach: "Oh, I forgot that I wanted to show you both this hilarious video that my sister sent me!"

Hand out the **Script the Scenario** worksheet to each student. Read the questions aloud with the class. You may use the **Teacher's Answer Key** for guidance, to help students brainstorm and script solutions to the questions.

Having tools to manage conflict means that you will be someone who helps friends and others in a positive way. Conflicts will happen, but learning to deal with them in a calm and mature way is an important skill to practice.

Step 6 (10 minutes): Case Study: Carmen's Worst Day Ever

Print a few copies of the **Case Study**.



Ask students to volunteer to read the story aloud. Work through the Discussion Questions as a class. It's important to describe the conflicts, name the facts (these need to be agreed upon by all students and the teacher), then move to issues and solutions.

Discussion Questions (teacher reads and discusses with the class):

1. Describe the **conflict(s)** in this case study. (*Carmen vs. mom; Carmen vs. sister; Carmen vs. guys in her class, especially Ben; Carmen vs. Mr. Collis.*)
2. How are the characters handling the conflict? Stick to the **facts!** (*Carmen's mom raised her voice; Carmen stomped and shouted in her house; Carmen yelled at Ben; Mr. Collis spoke very loudly, etc.*)
3. What are some of the **issues** that led to the conflict? (*Carmen waking up late, Carmen staying up too late the night before, Carmen not having organized laundry/laundry issues in the house, Carmen rushing and forgetting to wash her face and pack her homework, guys in class teasing Carmen, etc.*)
4. What are some **solutions** that could be used to help Carmen, her mom, and Ben in this case? How could Carmen have been a better sister to Lucy? Why is it important for Carmen to recognize her behavior last night affected her ability to deal with conflict today? How could Carmen have stood up for herself more effectively in front of Ben and the other guys and girls that were laughing at her?

CONCLUSION

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- Our emotions are affected by our hormones.
- Conflict is a normal part of life.
- We can learn skills to make us better at conflict resolution.
- Part of growing to maturity involves making good choices about what we do when conflict arises.

Our emotions are affected by our hormones. This is normal. Sometimes, we will find ourselves in conflict with others. Part of growing up and becoming a mature person is taking responsibility for ourselves. We can use certain skills to become excellent at conflict resolution. This helps us, our family, our friends, and our community. Conflict resolution may also mean practicing the habit of going to bed on time or preparing our clothes the night before. Maturity is about making choices that lead to good health, habits and relationships in life.

teenFEMM CONCLUSION (5 minutes)

Part 1: Everyone goes through puberty!

The boys in your grade have completed their grade 6 teenMEN course as you have been working through this course. Although their changes are different from yours, many of the same hormones are also playing a major role in the boys' body and brain development during puberty. It is important to remember that all kids go through puberty, and hopefully you all will have a little bit more understanding for each other as you navigate these changes. The boys won't have a monthly hormonal cycle, like you, but rather a much more gradual daily hormonal "cycle." Through puberty, the pathways in their brains will continue to develop, they will grow taller and stronger, their voices will deepen, they will grow more body hair, and their reproductive organs will mature. You are both going through these incredible changes, and with a little bit of extra focus on making good choices to support your bodies and minds through this process, you will all grow into amazing men and women!

This brings us to the end of our teenFEMM grade course. I hope that you have learned some new things about your cycle and your health, and are feeling excited to be going through this amazing stage of growth in your lives. It is a great idea to keep charting- on

paper or in the FEMM app if your parents are ok with it- so that you have a unique health record for yourself. I hope you continue to consider the impacts of sleep, nutrition, and exercise on your developing mind and body, and remember that your ovulation cycle is an amazing window into your own health and power as a young woman.

REFERENCES

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