

# First Universalist Church of Minneapolis

5th/6th grade Our Whole Lives (OWL), 2025

## HomeLinks Packet

Date	Session Topic	Homework
Jan 26	Session 1: Sexuality and Values	<a href="#">HomeLink 1</a>
Feb 2	Session 2: Images in Popular Culture	<a href="#">HomeLink 2</a>
Feb 9	Session 3: Body Image	<a href="#">HomeLink 3</a>
Feb 23	Session 4: Changes of Puberty	<a href="#">HomeLink 4</a>
Mar 2	Session 5: Gender	<a href="#">HomeLink 5</a>
Mar 9	Session 6: Feelings and Attraction	<a href="#">HomeLink 6</a>
Mar 23	Session 7: Reproduction and Staying Healthy	<a href="#">HomeLink 7</a>
April 6	Session 8: Messaging and Peer Pressure	<a href="#">HomeLink 8</a>
April 13	Session 9: Consent, Decisions, and Healthy Relationships	<a href="#">Homelink 9</a>



OWL Parents/Caregivers are requested to please:

- prioritize your child's church attendance during the OWL unit
- support us in creating a positive, respectful classroom culture
- complete the reading homework with your child before each session
- share any questions or concerns with your child's OWL facilitators
- periodically check in with OWL facilitators at drop off or pick up to keep communication lines open

## 5th grade OWL Session Topics

**Session 1: Sexuality and Values** Helps participants clarify, support and communicate their values about sexuality.

**Session 2: Images in Popular Culture** Helps participants become informed about and aware of how the media portrays sexuality.

**Session 3: Body Image** Helps participants explore the concept of body image, understand the diverse experiences people have with their body and its abilities, and consider ways to keep their own body healthy.

**Session 4: Changes of Puberty** Helps participants understand the physical and emotional changes of puberty.

**Session 5: Gender** Helps participants examine the messages they receive about gender. They learn what it means to have a gender identity and about some of the many variations of gender identity.

**Session 6: Feelings and Attraction** Helps participants understand the concept of being romantically attracted to someone else, whether of a different gender or the same gender. Participants learn some of the terms commonly used to talk about sexual orientation, and think about what people may do in a variety of scenarios related to attraction.

**Session 7: Reproduction and Staying Healthy** Covers conception, pregnancy, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, and other possible consequences of sexual activity.

**Session 8: Messaging and Peer Pressure** Educates participants about a range of sexual activity, including masturbation and sexually explicit media (pornography). Participants then use this knowledge to think about how the messaging impacts and can create peer pressure situations.

**Session 9: Consent, Decisions, and Healthy Relationships** Helps participants learn how to communicate about consent, think and decide how they may handle or approach different situations, examine situations where consent is violated, and identify people in their lives who can offer help. Helps participants understand the components of a healthy relationship and practice communicating effectively.

# HomeLink 1

## WORKSHOP 1: SEXUALITY AND VALUES

### *Part 1*

At home, spend some time with at least one adult in your family. (You could also do this with more than one adult, or involve one or more siblings as well.) Take turns completing the following statements:

- The part of my personality I like the best is...
- Something that I do well or that makes me unique is...

Do you see each other the same way? Are there other special talents or things that make you each unique that you had not thought of?

### *Part 2*

Discuss the following questions together:

- Do you use the Internet? What for? How often? Where do you use it?
- If so, what sites do you go to for fun or socializing?
- Which devices do you use to go online (computer, tablet, phone)?
- What kinds of messages do you see about gender, stereotypes, and prejudice when you are online?

## **Word Bank Words for Workshop 1**

### **PUBERTY**

The time in a person's life when their body changes to an adult body.

### **REPRODUCTION**

The process that produces babies, young animals, or new plants. In humans, this is the process that people commonly say is "how babies are made."

### **PREGNANCY**

The time when a person is carrying an embryo or fetus inside their uterus.

## GENDER

A person's inner feeling or sense, in their mind or heart, of whether they are a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, a combination of both, neither, or something else entirely.

## VALUES

Strongly held beliefs about what is valuable, important, or acceptable.

## PREJUDICE

Making decisions about a person or group of people before we meet them or get to know them. The word comes from "pre-judge."

## STEREOTYPE

A characteristic that someone believes is true of a group of people, lumping the group together instead of seeing them as individuals.

## SOCIAL POWER

The influence that some people have over their friends or others to encourage them to do things, even things that might hurt or embarrass someone else. Social power may also encourage people to do things that are kind and helpful.

## HomeLink 2

### WORKSHOP 2: IMAGES IN POPULAR CULTURE

Choose a TV show, movie, or video clip that you like, and watch it with a parent/caregiver. Talk together about things you notice that are related to things you have discussed in the Our Whole Lives program (relationships, bodies, being healthy, communication, attraction, etc.).

Ask each other:

- What is one positive thing you noticed?
- What is one negative thing you noticed? How could you change the negative thing into a positive thing?

*Take It to the Next Level! (optional)*

If you have a camera or smartphone, create a short video about changing the negative thing you found to a positive one. Do this in the form of a role-play or skit.

Amaze.org videos to watch together *(optional)*

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [Wise on the Web](#) and [Being Safe on the Internet](#)

### Word Bank Words from Workshop 2

#### MEDIA LITERACY

A person's ability to think about what they observe in the media and decide whether it is healthy. It is also a person's ability to create media that supports their values. Media includes TV, websites, social media, magazines, and newspapers, billboards, radio, and other ways we get news and information. Literacy is the ability to understand, learn, and make meaning of that information.

### **Reading for Workshop 3**

Read Part 2: Our Bodies, Section 6, The Human Body in *It's Perfectly Normal*.

- Pages 18-21 in the 2021 edition
- Pages 12-15 in the 20th anniversary edition

## HomeLink 3

### WORKSHOP 3: BODY IMAGE

With someone in your family, create an image of a healthy body—a drawing, sculpture, photograph, collage, whatever!—using any materials you have around the house. While you create the image together, talk about ways that someone can feel good about their own body. Share some of the things you learned in Our Whole Lives, such as the way health can be defined differently for physically different types of people.

#### *Take It to the Next Level! (optional)*

Watch one or both of these videos on YouTube together, you may have already seen one of them during the workshop. Talk about how media literacy and body image go together.

- "Fabricating Beauty" by beatingED, which shows how makeup and Photoshop are used to create different looks on the same models
- "Self-Esteem Tips: Dealing with Body Image Issues" by watchwellcast, an animated discussion of the unhealthy and negative thoughts people can have about their bodies, with suggestions for boosting self-esteem

#### *Amaze Videos to watch together (optional)*

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [Why Don't I Like the Way I Look? And Bodies: Different shapes and sizes. All beautiful!](#)

### Word Bank Words for Workshop 3

#### BODY IMAGE

What a person thinks about their body, how they observe their body, and their attitudes toward and feelings about their body.

### **Reading for Workshop 4**

Read Part 3: Puberty in *It's Perfectly Normal*. This is the longest reading of the program, so you might consider doing it over several days.

- Pages 33-55 in the 2021 Edition
- Pages 24-44 in the 20th anniversary edition



## HomeLink 4

### WORKSHOP 4: CHANGES OF PUBERTY

Ask someone at home who is older than you to share what it was like to go through puberty. You can use the following questions in your conversation:

- What did they look forward to?
- What were they nervous about?
- What was the best thing about puberty?

#### Word Bank Words for Workshop 4

##### MENSTRUATION

Normal discharge of blood and tissue from the uterus that passes out through the vagina. This usually lasts for several days, about once a month, starting in puberty. This is also called "having a period."

##### EJACULATION

The spurting of semen (which carries sperm) through the opening at the tip of the penis.

##### WET DREAM

Erotic dreams that can lead to ejaculation or vaginal lubrication. Common during puberty.

##### HORMONE

A chemical substance produced by glands throughout the body, which regulates the activity of certain cells or organs in the body.

##### ERECTION

When the penis or clitoris fills with blood and becomes firm. Hormones released during puberty can increase how often this happens.

## MATURITY

Being fully developed, or almost fully developed, physically and emotionally.

## TAMPON

A tube-shaped piece of absorbent material that is inserted inside a vagina to absorb menstrual blood before it leaves the body.

## SANITARY PAD

An absorbent pad worn inside the underwear to absorb menstrual blood after it leaves the body through the vagina.

## SCROTUM

The pouch of skin that holds the testicles, or testes.

## GENITALS

Reproductive and sex organs, specifically, the external ones. These include the labia (inner and outer lips), clitoris, the penis, and the scrotum. Internally, there is the vagina, the uterus, and the testicles.

## OVARIES

Internal reproductive organs, which produce ova (eggs) and release hormones.

## PENIS

An external reproductive and sex organ. It includes the urethra and sometimes includes additional skin on the tip called foreskin.

## TESTICLES

Also called the testes; two egg-shaped glands inside the scrotum that produce sperm.

## UTERUS

Also called the womb; the reproductive organ inside which a fetus develops during pregnancy.

## URETHRA

The internal tube that leads from the bladder to the outside of the body to release urine.

## VAGINA

The passage that connects the vulva to the uterus. Some babies are born by passing from the uterus into the vagina and then out of the body.

## VULVA

A sex organ on the outside of the body. It includes the clitoris, the labia (inner and outer lips), the opening of the urethra, and the opening of the vagina.

### **Reading for Workshop 5**

Read Part 1: What Is Sex?, Section 5, in *It's Perfectly Normal*.

- Pages 11-17 (Who We Are) in the 2021 edition
- Pages 8-11 (Who You Are) in the 20th anniversary edition

## HomeLink 5

### WORKSHOP 5: GENDER

Have a discussion with a grown-up you trust, perhaps someone in your family. Take turns sharing the ways that you like to express your gender. Do either of you know someone who gets teased or bullied because of how they dress or act or who they say they are? Do either of you know someone who is excluded from activities or events because of how they dress or act? If so, what are some ways you can show respect to that person?

Have you experienced teasing, bullying or exclusion of this kind? If so, who has shown you respect? What support has been helpful – or would be, if you could find it?

If your family is uncomfortable talking about gender, consider whom you can talk to comfortably about your questions, like your doctor, a school nurse or librarian, or a favorite teacher.

*Take It to the Next Level! (optional)*

Have each person in your family create a collage of how they like to express themselves. Talk about which things you each believe are associated with gender and which are not. Did you learn anything new?

*Amaze Videos to watch together (optional)*

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [Sex Assigned at Birth and Gender Identity: What is the difference?](#) and [Expressing Myself. My way.](#)

*Brains On! Podcast (optional)*

You can listen to this podcast on [Fancy Men](#): the historical changes to gender expression, and discuss how things are different even from when you were a kid to now!

## **Word Bank Words for Workshop 5**

### **SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH**

A label assigned at birth—male, female, or intersex- usually on the basis of the appearance of the baby's genitals or medical tests of their chromosomes, hormones, and internal reproductive organs.

### **GENDER IDENTITY**

A person's inner understanding of their own gender.

### **CISGENDER**

A term that describes a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth are the same.

### **TRANSGENDER**

A general term, sometimes shortened to trans, that describes a person whose gender identity and sex assigned at birth are not the same.

### **GENDER-FLUID**

A term that describes a person who feels like their gender changes over time.

### **GENDER-NONCONFORMING**

A term that describes a person who feels like they don't fit into the binary categories boy/man or girl/woman. Some people may also call themselves non-binary.

### **GENDER EXPRESSION**

The ways that a person shows the world about their gender, such as by the clothes they wear, their appearance, or how they talk.

### **TRANSPHOBIA**

Fear of people who identify as transgender.

*Definitions below were added by First Universalist OWL teachers*

#### GENDER EXPANSIVE

An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms.

#### GENDER NON-BINARY

Gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine. The identity may be both, neither, or some combination.

#### GENDERQUEER

An umbrella term to describe someone who doesn't identify with conventional gender identities, roles, expression and/or expectations. For some, genderqueer is a non-binary identification, and for others it is not.

#### THIRD GENDER

A concept in which individuals are categorized, either by themselves or by society, as neither man nor woman. It is also a social category present in societies that recognize three or more genders.

#### **Reading for Workshop 6**

Read Part 1: What Is Sex?, Section 3, Strong Feelings, in *It's Perfectly Normal*.

- Pages 6-7 in the 2021 edition
- Pages 4-5 in the 20th anniversary edition

## HomeLink 6

### WORKSHOP 6: FEELINGS AND ATTRACTIONS

Write a sentence or a short poem about intimacy, attraction, or feelings you may have for someone. Or write about how someone else might feel about having a crush. You could also write about what it feels like to not have romantic feelings and yet feel pressure to pair up.

#### *Take It to the Next Level! (optional)*

With a trusted adult, listen to a popular song that is about intimacy or attraction. Talk about how the song relates to the "three Rs" – the Our Whole Lives values of relationships, respect, and responsibility.

#### *Amaze Videos to watch together (optional)*

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [Sexual Orientation: A Spectrum of Attraction](#)

### Word Bank Words for Workshop 6

#### ATTRACTION

A feeling of strong liking, interest, or desire.

#### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The romantic or sexual attraction toward people of a particular gender or to people of more than one gender.

#### GAY

A term for someone who is attracted to people of the same gender; sometimes used to mean a man who is attracted to men.

## HOMOSEXUAL

A term for someone who is attracted to people of the same gender. This term is no longer widely used.

## LESBIAN

A term for a woman who is attracted to women.

## BISEXUAL

A term for someone who is attracted to people of more than one gender.

## HETEROSEXUAL

A term for someone who is attracted to people of another sex or gender. Also called straight.

## ASEXUAL

A term for someone who is not sexually attracted to other people.

## QUEER

A term for someone who feels that they do not fit cultural norms for sexual orientation or gender identity. This word has sometimes been used in a derogatory manner, causing some people to be uncomfortable with its use. However, the word has been reclaimed and many use it with pride.

## HOMOPHOBIA

Fear and hatred of people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual.

## HETEROSEXISM

The assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual.

## PANSEXUAL

A person who is attracted to people regardless of their gender. People may also refer to themselves as polysexual or omnisexual.



## INTIMACY

A feeling of emotional closeness with someone else.

### **Reading for Workshop 7**

Read the following pages in *It's Perfectly Normal*.

#### **2021 Edition:**

- Part 1: What Is Sex?, Section 2, Making Babies (pages 5-6)
- Part 4: Families and Babies, Section 17, Instructions—Information (pages 56-58); Section 19, Before Birth (pages 63-65); Section 20, What a Trip! (pages 67-71); and Section 21, Other Arrivals (pages 72–74)
- Part 5: Decisions, Section 23, Planning Ahead (pages 75–81)
- Part 6: Staying Healthy, Section 27, Scientists Working Day and Night (pages 101-105)

#### **20th Anniversary Edition:**

- Part 1: What Is Sex?, Section 2, Making Babies (pages 3-4)
- Part 4: Families and Babies, Section 18, Instructions from Mom and Dad (pages 48-49); Section 20, Before Birth (pages 54–57); Section 21, What a Trip! (pages 58–61); and Section 22, Other Arrivals (pages 62–64)
- Part 5: Decisions, Section 23, Planning Ahead (pages 65–70)
- Part 6: Staying Healthy, Section 28, Scientists Working Day and Night (pages 86-90)

## HomeLink 7

### WORKSHOP 7: REPRODUCTION AND STAYING HEALTHY

With a parent/caregiver or trusted grown-up, go to the BabyCenter website (babycenter.com) and type "inside pregnancy" in the search bar. Watch one or more of the videos about fertilization and pregnancy. Discuss with the grown-up what you have watched. Do you have any questions?

Don't have Internet access? Ask someone in your family or a family friend to tell you about what it is like to be pregnant and to give birth.

Amaze Videos to watch together (*optional*)

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [How do Queer Couples Have Babies?](#)

### Word Bank Words for Workshop 7

#### FERTILIZATION

When a sperm unites with an egg.

#### CONCEPTION

The process of becoming pregnant, which includes fertilization and the implantation of the fertilized egg into the wall of the uterus.

#### ZYGOTE

A cell that is formed when an egg and sperm combine: a fertilized egg.

#### EMBRYO

The collection of cells that have developed from a fertilized egg, from implantation in the uterus through the eighth week of development.

## FETUS

The name of an embryo from the eighth week of development until birth.

## VAGINAL BIRTH

When the uterine muscles contract and push a baby out of the uterus, through the vagina, and out of the body.

## CESAREAN BIRTH

Also called Cesarean section or C-section; when a doctor delivers a baby by making a cut through the abdomen and uterus and lifting the baby out.

## SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

When the genitals of one person envelop or enter the genitals, mouth, or anus of another person for sexual pleasure. Examples include a penis entering a vagina (vaginal intercourse), mouth-to-genital stimulation (oral sex), and a penis entering an anus and rectum (anal sex).

## IUI

Stands for Intrauterine insemination, where semen is inserted into the vagina, usually in a medical office, and fertilization occurs in the uterus.

## IVF

Stands for In Vitro Fertilization, where the semen and egg are combined outside of a body in a medical lab, then inserted into a vagina, either of the person who will be the parent, or a surrogate.

## SURROGACY

An agreement where a person with a uterus agrees to carry a fetus to term, but will not be a parent to the child.

## ABSTINENCE

Choosing not to have sexual intercourse or skin-to-skin genital contact.

## CONTRACEPTION

Also called birth control; methods of preventing pregnancy.

## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTION

No longer called sexually transmitted disease; an infection that is transmitted from one person to another during sexual contact or an exchange of body fluids.

## HIV

An abbreviation for human immunodeficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS.

## AIDS

An abbreviation for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, which is the last stage of HIV infection. People with AIDS are not able to fight off infections.

### **Reading for Workshop 8**

Read the following pages in It's Perfectly Normal:

- Part 1: What Is Sex?, Section 4, Making Love
  - 2021 edition: pages 8-10
  - 20th anniversary edition: pages 6-7
- Part 3: Puberty, Section 16, Perfectly Normal
  - 2021 edition: pages 51-52
  - 20th anniversary edition: pages 43-44
- Part 4: Families and Babies, Section 19, A Kind of Sharing
  - 2021 edition: pages 59-62
  - 20th anniversary edition: pages 50-53
- Part 6: Staying Healthy, Section 25, Helpful—Fun--Creepy—Dangerous
  - 2021 edition: pages 87-92
  - 20th anniversary edition: pages 74-79

## HomeLink 8

### WORKSHOP 8: DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Gather at least three people – family members or friends – and pretend that you are going to order pizza. You must all agree on three toppings you will have on the pizza. But before actually making the decision, make a plan for how you will decide. You might decide to vote on toppings, or you might decide that everyone has to agree on all the toppings. Or you might decide that each person can pick one topping no matter what the others want, or that each person can veto one,

Once you've chosen a plan, use it to decide what you will order, and then discuss these questions:

- What strategies did you use to make the decision on toppings?
- Were the same things important to everyone?
- Was everyone happy with the final decision? Why or why not?
- What was challenging about doing this?
- How do you think this activity could relate to making decisions with someone about what you do and don't want to do with your body? Might there be the same types of challenges—that not everyone wants the same thing? How do you think you would handle these challenges in that situation? How would it be the same as or different from deciding on a pizza?

Amaze Videos to watch together (*optional*)

You can watch these short videos, and ask what your youth noticed, or what they learned, or share something you learned: [Sexting: What should you do?](#) or [Porn is Not Sex Ed](#)

### Word Bank Words for Workshop 8

#### MASTURBATION

Touching or rubbing one's own genitals for pleasure.

## PORNOGRAPHY

Photographs or videos of people engaging in sexual activity, fantasy created as entertainment for adults, not as educational material. It is adult entertainment and often does not reflect healthy relationships and sexual interactions.

### **Reading for Workshop 9**

Read in in *It's Perfectly Normal*:

- Part 6: Staying Healthy, Section 25, Talk about It
  - 20th anniversary edition: pages 80–82
  - 2021 edition: pages 93-96
- Responsible Choices
  - 20th anniversary edition: section 29, pages 90–92
  - 2121 edition: section 28, pages 106-108

## HomeLink 9

### WORKSHOPS 9 & 10: CONSENT, PEER PRESSURE AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

With another person in your family, take turns practicing asking permission to do something and responding in ways that communicate "yes," "no," and "maybe." You might ask to get your nose pierced, go on a wild vacation, watch an R-rated movie, get a new pet, or shave off all or part of your hair. Make some of your requests to do things together, such as going on a walk, sharing hugs, or getting in a tickle fight. Compete to see how many different ways the person being asked can give consent or refuse. Talk about what makes it easy or difficult to talk about consent.

#### *Take It to the Next Level! (optional)*

Watch a movie that has a romantic storyline, and discuss how the characters seek and give consent, or how they don't. Suggested films are *The Princess and the Frog*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Preacher's Wife* (PG), *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Hundred Foot Journey* (PG), *Letters to Juliet* (PG), *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Never Been Kissed* (PG-13), *Floored by Love* (NR, 2005), and *Juno* (PG-13).

Peer pressure happens in many ways, and there are many things that people can do in order to stay true to their own values and decisions. With a parent/caregiver or trusted adult, watch a YouTube video on peer pressure called "PSA Peer Pressure," by Karla Santiago and Adriana Diaz. Discuss how you can do the things suggested in the video and how these tips can help someone handle peer pressure in their life.

#### **Word Bank Words for Workshop 9**

##### CONSENT

Agreement to do something, either given or received. It is given with words. Consent must be freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic, and specific.

## REFUSAL


Unwillingness or choosing not to do something. It is sometimes indicated with words and sometimes with actions.

## PEER PRESSURE

Social pressure from one's peer group to take a certain action.

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## Wrap It Up

 **You did it!** Congratulations on completing the OWL program. These activities will help you remember and make the most of your OWL experience and learning.

### *Recipes for Success*

Write a family recipe for success together. Post your family's recipe for success somewhere where everyone can see it often, perhaps on the refrigerator. Refer back to it periodically to see if your family is following it or if it needs amending.

### *Affirmations*

Some people find it helpful to keep affirmations they have received, to boost their confidence or self-esteem during hard times. What will you do with the affirmations you received as part of the last Our Whole Lives workshop?