

Title of session:

Adolescence: what happens to our emotions and bodies

This episode introduces children, parents and citizens to the concepts of adolescence and puberty. It gives examples of emotional and physical changes and gives the audience the opportunity to reflect on the challenges of the emotional and physical transition from childhood to adulthood.

Length of recording: t.b.c.

Scene 1: Parents discuss changes in their daughter's body and behaviour.

Actors: Mami (mother), Kemoh (father), Ami (daughter)

Scene 2: Girl talking to a doctor about puberty

Actors: Mami (mother), Kemoh (father), Ami (daughter) Dr. Sarian (female doctor)

Scene 3: Doctor talking to parents about puberty.

Actors: Mami (mother), Kemoh (father), Ami (daughter) Dr. Sarian (female doctor)

Scene 1

Mami: *Kemɔ, mi at wɔri fɔ wi pikin Ami.*

Kemoh, I am worried about our daughter Ami.

Kemoh: *Wetin du? Eni problem?* Why? What is the problem?

Mami: *Na big i de big so, in bɔdi de fulɔp en den bɔbɔ dɔn bigin luk am.*

She is growing up, her body has changed and the boys start looking at her.

Kemoh: *Wetin yu de se? Na pikin we stil de go skul.*

What are you saying? She is still a child in school.

Mami: *A no, a no, bɔt ia-bifo- las wi neba pikin we in ej na bin leke Ami na so i go get bɛɛ...*

I know, I know, but the daughter of our neighbour was the same age as Ami when she got pregnant two years ago...

Kemoh: *A memba.. i bin get fɔ lef skul fɔ seka dat.*

That's right... she had to drop out of school because of that.

Mami: *A no; na dat mek a de wɔri. Den wen i bin lili i binde tɔk ɔlkyn tin wit mi, naw bɔku tɛm i nɔ de tɔk mi.*

I know; this is why I am worried. Also, when our daughter was younger, she used to talk to me about everything, now she is silent most of the time.

Kemoh: *Mmm... A tink se wi fɔ tɔk to am ...*

Mmm... I think we should talk to her...

Mami: *Yes, bɔt tin bin difren wen a bin bi in ej. Nɔnbɔdi nɔ eva tɔk to mi bɔt den tin de. A nɔ no wetin fɔ tɛl am...*

Yes, but things were so different when I was her age. No one ever talked to me about these things. I don't know what to tell her...

Kemoh: *A no wan tin we wi kin du, le wi ker am to Dɔkta Serian na in klinik.*

I have an idea, let's bring her to the clinic to see Dr. Sarian.

Mami: *Udat na dis dɔkta?* Who is this doctor?

Kemoh: *Dɔkta Serian in papa na mi padi. I nɔ tu te we i kam as dɔkta na wi vilej klinik ya. A shɔ se i go tɔk to Ami.*

Dr. Sarian, her father is of a friend of mine. She came back to our village recently to work at the clinic. I am sure she can talk to Ami.

Mami: *Oke, le wi kɔl am... (shouting) Ami, Ami!*

Ok, let's call her... Ami, Ami!

Sfx: footsteps

Ami: *Mami luk mi a de ya.* Yes, mami. I am here.

Kemoh: *Ami, yu no se wi dɔn get wan nyu dɔkta na wi klinik? En na uman.*

Ami, did you know that there is a new doctor at the clinic? It's a woman.

Ami: *En, a nɔ no.* I didn't know

Mami: *Yes, sɔntem yu go want fɔ mit wit am, wi kin go si am tumara...*

Yes, maybe you want to meet her, we can go to see her tomorrow...

Ami: *Wetin du Mama? A nɔ sik.* Why? I am not sick.

Mami: *A no, bɔt yu nɔ get fɔ sik fɔ si dɔkta. Yu kin go si am en i kin chek yu fɔ si se yu jrayt. Den if yu get eni kweshɔn yu kin aks am.*

I know, but you don't need to be sick to see a doctor. You can see her and she can check that your health is fine. Also, if you have any questions, you can ask her.

Ami: *Uskayn kweshɔn?* What questions?

Mami: *Kweshɔn bɔt yu bɔdi, yu no se yu de gro ɛn tin de chenj fɔ yu, sɔntɛm yu go tɔk to am bɔt dat.*

Questions about your body, you are growing up, things are changing for you, maybe you want to talk to her about that.

Ami: *Mmm... yes o dat na gud aydia, a go go si am.*

mmm... yes, this is a good idea, I will go to see her.

Mami: *Gud wi kin go si am tumara.* Good, we can go together tomorrow.

Scene 2

Sfx: Door opens and closes

Kemoh: *Dɔkta Serian, nawi kan si yu.* Dr. Sarian, we have come to see you

Doctor: *Oke una sidɔm.* Please, take a seat.

Sfx: Chairs movement

Doctor: *Yes, a de listin, wetin rɔŋ?* Yes, I am listening to you, what is the matter?

Kemoh: *Mi na wan yu Papa in ol padi, i tɛl mi se yu dɔn kam bak na di vilej fɔ kan wok na di klinik. Wi gladi we yu kam ya.*

I am an old friend of your father, he told me that you came back to the village to work in the clinic. We are happy to have you here.

Doctor: *Tɛnki Sa.* Thank you, sir.

Kemoh: *Wi ɛn wi pikin kam fɛn yu.* We came for you to visit our daughter.

Mami: *I nɔ sik o, bɔt as i de gro ɔp, in bɔdi de chenj. Wi jɔs wan fɔ bi shɔ se i ɔlrayt.*

She is not sick but she is growing up, her body is changing... we want to be sure she is in good health.

Doctor: *A ɔndastand, dat fayn... Wetin yu nɛm?*

I understand, that's fine... what is your name?

Ami: *A nɛm Ami Ma.* My name is Ami.

Doctor: *Gud. Ami, a go lɛk fɔ tɔk to yu fɔs. A tink se yu Mama ɛn Papa fɔ go na do fɔs we wi de tɔk.*

Good. Ami, I would like to speak with you first. I think the parents should go outside while we talk

Kemoh: *Dat fayn, wi go wet na do.* Fine, we will be outside.

Doctor: *Oke. Gud.* Ok. Good

Sfx: Chairs. Door opening and closing.

Doctor: *Bifɔ a egzamin yu a go lek fɔ aks yu tu tri kweshɔn. ɔmɔs ia yu ol?*

Before I examine you I would like to ask you a few questions. How old are you?

Ami: *Sikstin Ma.* Sixteen, Ma'am

Doctor: *Yu de go skul?* Do you go to school?

Ami: *Yes Ma.* Yes, ma'am

Doctor: *Gud. Ami yu dɔn bigin si yu piriod?* Good. Ami, have you had your first period?

Ami: *Yes ma frɔm we a ol fotin.* Yes, ma'am, when I was fourteen.

Doctor: *Oke. A go tɛl yu sɔntin. We pikin de groɔp plenti tin de chenj na den bɔdi ɛn pan di we we den de fil. Dis de apin wen di pikin ol bitwin 13 ɛn 19 fɔ bɔku pikin dem, bɔt ɔlman nɔto di sem. Da piriod de den kɔl am Pyubati. Pikin dem na dis ej den kɔl dem adɔlesent. Yu dɔn yeri da wɔd de bifo?*

Ok. I will tell you something. When children grow up, a lot of changes happen to their bodies and to the way they feel. This happens between the age of 13 and 19 for most people, but not everyone is the same. It's called puberty. Children in that age are also called adolescents. Have you ever heard this word before?

Ami: *Yes Ma. Di ticha... Misis Fatmata se wi na adɔlesent ɛn dat wi bɔdi de chenj bikɔc wi de tɔn big uman ɛn bigman.*

Yes, ma'am. Our teacher... Mr. Fatmata said that we are adolescents and that our bodies are changing because we are becoming adults.

Doctor: *Dat kɔrekt. Wetin ɛls i se?* That is correct. What else did she say?

Ami: *I se nɔto wi bɔdi nɔmɔ de c henj bɔt di we we wi de fil sɛf de chenj.*

She said that not only our bodies can change, but we can experience new feelings.

Doctor: *Dat na bikɔs yu bɔdi de bigin pul nyu omon dem. Den omon ya na kemikal dem we di bren de yuz fɔ tɛl yu bɔdi fɔ stat fɔ mek di chenjis dem na di bɔdi we go mek*

yu bi big-man ᵛ big-uman. Den omon ya de mek yu bɔdi en aw yu de fil ɔl chenj. Sɔntende yu kin kɔnfyus bikɔs di chenj den nyu. Natin nɔ rɔng wit dat. Yu dɔn notis eni chenj nay u bɔdi?

Yes, that is because your body is producing new hormones during adolescence. These hormones are the chemical messengers that your brain uses to tell your body to start making the changes that are needed for you to become an adult. These hormones affect your body and your emotions. Sometimes this can make you feel confused because it's new. There is nothing wrong with that. Have you noticed any change in your body?

Ami: *Yes a de swet bɔku en a nɔ lek mi bɔdi in smel.*

Yes, I sweat a lot and do not like my body odour.

Doctor: *Yu nɔ fɔ fil bad bɔt dat. Na di omon dem mek yu de swet. If yu de swet bɔku na fɔ mek shɔ se yu was yu ɔndaan en yu wanol bɔdi.*

Do not feel bad about that. It is the hormones that are responsible for your sweat. If you sweat a lot, make sure you wash well your armpits and your entire body.

Ami: *Den a de get pimpul en mi fes de pul bɔku ɔyl.*

I also have pimples and my face is very oily.

Doctor: *Dis sef na nɔmal tin. Nɔ tɔch yu pimpul wit dɔti an en was yu fes na mɔnin en bifo yu go slip na net.*

That is normal as well. Don't touch your pimples with dirty hands and wash your face in the morning and before going to bed at night.

Ami: *... bɔt sɔm gyal-pikin den nɔ get pimpul...*

... but some girls don't have pimples...

Doctor: *Yes, wi ɔl difren, dat sef nɔmal. ɔlman nɔto di sem.*

Yes, all of us are different, it's normal. Not everyone is the same.

Ami: *Wetin mek wi bɔdi de chenj?*

Why does our body change?

Doctor: *Di bɔdi de chenj as yu de redi fɔ bi big-man en big-uman en fɔ redi fɔ get pikin. Bɔt memba se jes bikɔs di bɔdi de redi fɔ mek pikin nɔ min se yu redi fɔ men pikin. Fɔ men pikin na big respɔnsibiliti.*

The physical changes happen to prepare our adult body to have children, but remember, just because a person's body has changed and allows them to make babies, that does not mean they are ready to raise a child! Raising a child is a big responsibility!

Ami: *Dat na tru. Mami en Dadi den get bɔku rɛspɔnsibiliti. Den get fɔ provayd fɔ den pikin en fɔ mɛn dem.*

That's true. Parents have many responsibilities. They have to provide for their children and raise them.

Doctor: *Yes. Sɔnten yu bɔdi kin chenj fas wan, bɔt yu nid tɛm fɔ bi big-man ɔ big-uman. Yu go notis sɛf se di we we yu de fil bɔt tin den difrɛn.*

Yes. Your body sometimes changes fast but you need time to become an adult. You will notice changes in your emotions... your feelings.

Ami: *Wetin dat min?* What does that mean?

Doctor: *Fɔ egzampul adɔlesent den kin bigin notis se den lek ɔda pɔsin dem we we den no bin de fil bifo. Di titi kin bigin fil difrɛn tin fɔ di bɔbɔ ivin do den dɔn bi padi loŋ tɛm; we den bin de praymari skul i bin jes si am leke in padi, bɔt wen di adɔlesent omon den bigin wok, i go bigin si se di bɔbɔ fayn.*

For example, adolescents start to feel sexual attraction. A girl might start feeling differently about a boy she has always been friends with; during primary school she only saw the boy as a friend, but when the adolescent hormones come, she might start to find him attractive instead.

Ami: *Dis de apin to ɔlman?* Does this happen to everyone?

Doctor: *ɔlman difrɛn, bɔt i de apin to bɔku pipul dem. Na so Gɔd mek wi, so yu get fɔ lan aw fɔ manej den nyu we ya we yu de bigin fil.*

Everyone is different, but this happens to most people. It's natural. So you have to learn how to manage these new emotions.

Ami: *Aw mi fɔ du dat?* How do I do that?

Doctor: *Wel di most impɔtant tin na rɛspekt. Yu get fɔ rɛspekt di we we ɔda pipul den de fil en tink, en mek shɔ se den rɛspekt yu yon. If yu fil se yu lek sɔmbɔdi bɔt da pɔsin de nɔ fil di sem we, yu fɔ rɛspekt dat.*

Well, the most important thing is respect. You need to respect the feeling and the opinion of the other people and make sure that they respect yours. If you

feel attraction for another person, but the other person doesn't feel the same, you should respect that.

Ami: *Wetin go apin if wan bɔbɔ lek mi bɔt mi nɔ lek am?*

What happens if a boy is attracted to me but I am not attracted to him?

Doctor: *Wel, in fɔ rɛspekt dat. Yu get di rayt fɔ se nɔ. If in nɔ rɛspekt dat, yu fɔ tɔk to am. If i mek yu nɔ de fil gud ɛn sef we i de nia yu, yu fɔ tɛl wan big pɔsin we yu biliv, sɔntɛm yu mama ɛn papa ɔ wan ticha.*

Well, he should respect that. You have the right to say no. If he doesn't respect that, you should talk to him. If he makes you feel uncomfortable or you feel in danger when he is around, you should tell an adult you trust, maybe your parents or a teacher.

Ami: *... den wetin fɔ apin if a lek di bɔbɔ ɛn in sef lek mi?*

... and what happens if I am attracted to a boy and he is attracted to me?

Doctor: *If dat apin, una tu fɔ tek tɛm kɔndisa if una want fɔ get sɛks, we min se yu nɔ fɔ gri jɛs bikɔs yu padi dɛnsɛf de du am. ɔItɛm yu fɔ de tink bɔt di difrɛn tin den we kin apin we sɛks kam insay padi biznɛs. Tin den lek bɛɛ we yu rɛdi fɔ am et ɔ den sik dem we sɛks kin bring. Yu ɔndastand wetin a de se?*

In that case, both of you should consider carefully if you want to engage in any sexual activity, which means that you should not accept only because your friends are doing it. You should always think about the risks of sexual activity. Like an unwanted pregnancy or getting a sexually transmitted infection. Do you understand what I am saying?

Ami: *Yɛs Ma. A lek wetin yu se bɔt rɛspekt. Fɔ mi di tin we impɔtant naw na fɔ dɔn mi skul ɛn a want mi padi dem fɔ rɛspekt dat.*

Yes, ma'am. I like what you said about respect. For me the most important thing is to finish my studies and I want my friends to respect that.

Doctor: *Yɛs rɛspekt impɔtant. Den yu get fɔ gi yusef tɛm fɔ gro. Sɔntɛm yu de notis den nyu filin ɛn chenjis ya as yu de gro ɔp naw bɔt dat nɔ min se yu dɔn rɛdi fɔ bɔyfrɛn biznɛs. Wen tu pɔsin se den lek dɛnsɛf dat min se den fɔ ebul tɔk ɛn ɔndastand dɛnsɛf gud wan ɛn fɔ ebul tek kia ɔf dɛnsɛf.*

Yes, respect is important. You also need to give yourself the time to grow. You might experience new emotions and changes as you are growing up now, but it does not mean you are ready for a boyfriend. Being in a relationship with someone is also about being able to communicate well with the other person and taking good care of each other.

Ami: *A ɔndastand dat. Sɔntende in kin at fɔ le ɔda pipul den no aw yu de fil.*

I understand that. Sometimes it's difficult to let the others know how I feel.

Doctor: *Dat na nɔmal tin. So gi yusef tem. Yu kin bigin tɔk to yu padi en big pɔsin dem we yu biliv, den misef de ya if yu wan tɔk to mi.*

That's normal. So give yourself time. Start by talking to your friends and adults you trust, and of course I am here if you need me.

Ami: *Dɔkta Serian tenki ma.* Thank you, Dr. Sarian.

Doctor: *Oke, le a egzamin yu naw.* Fine. Let me examine you know...

Scene 3

Doctor: *Oke Ami, naw a dɔn egzamin yu. Yu oke. Yu wan kɔl yu mama dem kam naw?*

Ok Ami, now I have examined you. You are in good health. Do you want to call your parents now?

Ami: *Yes ma. Tenki Ma.* Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

Sfx: Chair. Door opens and closes.

Doctor: *Una sidɔm.* Please, take a sit.

Mami: *Tenki.* Thank you.

Sfx: Chairs

Kemoh: *ɔltin ɔrayt?* Is everything fine?

Doctor: *Yes, yu gyal-pikin ɔrayt.* Yes, your daughter is in good health.

Mami: *Tel Gɔd tenki.* Thank God.

Kemoh: *Dɔkta Serian Tenki.* Thank you Dr. Sarian

Doctor: *Una pikin na adolescent naw; i de gro ɔp en in bɔdi en di we we i de fil ɔl de chenj. Wan advays we a kin gi perent dem na dat una fɔ de tɔk to una pikin dem ɔltem, en sɔpɔt dem as den de gro ɔp.*

She is an adolescent now; she is growing up and her body and emotions are changing. My advice to all parents is to talk to your children regularly to support them while they grow up.

Mami: *Aw fɔ sɔpɔt dem?* How can we support them?

Doctor: *Nɔ fɔ de ala pan dem. Listin to dem. If den biliv en trɔt yu den go trɔst wateva yu se wen den get fɔ mek eni disishɔn we den wan tek na den layf.*

Don't shout at them. Listen to them. If they have confidence in you, they will trust your opinion on the decisions they want to take in their life.

Kemoh: *Dis na gud advays Dɔkta Serian. A jes wish mi mama en papa den bin get sɔmbɔdi lek yu fɔ tɔk to we mi bin smɔl. Den bin de ala pan mi en bit mi ɔl di tɛm, so a bin de fred dem. Wen a bin de get prɔblem sef a nɔ bin de tɔk to dem bɔt dat.*

This is a good advice Dr. Sarian. I wish my parents talked to someone like you when I was a child. They were shouting at me and beating me all the time, so I was afraid of them. I could not talk to them about my problems.

Doctor: *Tin dɔn chenj naw. Yu si, sɔntende di yɔŋ titi en bɔbɔ den kin wan tek den yon disishɔn bikɔs den de fil se den dɔn big, bɔt wan tin we wi as perent dem get fɔ du, na fɔ gayd dem. Bɔt aw yu go du dat if den de fred yu den den nɔ de tɔk to yu?*

Things have changed. You see, sometimes girls and boys want to take their own decisions because they feel they are already adults but our role as parents is to guide them. How can you do that if they are scared of you and they don't talk to you?

Mami: *Dat kɔrekt. A nɔ binde tel mi mama dem mi bele wɔd bikɔs den nɔ bin de listin to mi sef. Bɔt den tɛm de dɔn pas. A want le mi pikin trɔst mi. Dɔkta Serian tenki.*

That's right. I never confided in my parents because they never listened to me. But those were other times. I want my children to trust me. Thank you, Dr. Sarian.

Doctor: *I oke. Wen yu get tɛm, kam bak kan si mi. Naw a get ɔda peshɛnt den fɔ si.*

You are welcome. When you have time, please come back to see me. Now I have to see other patients.

Kemoh: Dɔkta Gɔd blɛs yu. God bless you Doctor.

Radio Discussions, discussants focus on:

- Who is an adolescent?
- How the body and emotions change during puberty?
- Role of parents

Open Phone Lines – LWL team to document feedback