

CONVERSATION MATERIAL FOR INFORMATION ON THE HYMEN

1. Explain that you will now talk about the hymen, and that you will start by watching a film about it. Explain that the film will include drawings of naked bodies.

2. Watch the film together.

3. Explain that you will now discuss the topic together, and that the participants may ask questions. Feel free to let the participants themselves decide what the conversation focuses on. Below are examples of questions for discussion that you may use.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Ask the participants to summarize what they thought the film dealt with - was there anything unexpected, new or interesting?
- Summarize together:
 - What is the hymen? Where is it?
 - What is the story behind bleeding during the first sexual intercourse?
- What happens to the vagina when you are aroused and want to have sex?
- Can one tell if a person has had sex?
- What kinds of myths are there about losing one's virginity and what the vagina looks like? What can these myths result in? How can they be counter-acted?
- How can you support someone who feels pressured to bleed during their first sexual intercourse, or someone who is concerned that it will hurt?
- Are there more myths about women's sexuality and bodies? Why do these myths exist?

IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS:

- There is nothing that changes in the vagina after a person has had sex for the first time - it is never possible to tell by looking at a person's body if they have had sex or not. There is no "virginity membrane".
- Most women do not bleed the first time they have sex.
- The myth of a virginity membrane may affect many women's social situation and emotional well-being. It is important to spread information about the truth behind it.
- Nobody has the right to make decisions about anyone else's first sexual experience and/or sexuality. So-called "virginity checks" may be illegal and are a type of sexual abuse.

