

The Effects of Early Menarche on Mother-Daughter Communication

Sample Student

BEHS 343 7984 Parenting Today

Commented [w1]: Format = 4 points. The paper has a cover sheet that includes course number and name. The paper is double spaced and is written as a journal entry.

Commented [w2]: This paper earned the maximum point total of 50 points.

The Effects of Early Menarche on Mother-Daughter Communication

Description of what happened

Dear Diary,

Today has been very eventful. It is a day I will never forget. On this hot summer day, my oldest daughter who is 9 years and 11 months old started her period. As I was in the kitchen preparing lunch, she came out of the powder room and said, "Guess what Mommy? I started my period just now!" She was so proud and I was proud of her for handling the situation with so much positivity. I am so thankful that we were at home for this momentous event because I know that being at school when this happens could be very embarrassing.

We were not unprepared for this day. I have been talking with her for approximately a year about what to expect regarding her period. In the event that she had been at school during this time, I packed her a little "emergency kit" to place in her backpack. In the kit I placed a sanitary napkin, new panties, and a starlight mint. Despite being only in the fourth grade when she started carrying the kit, she seemed to be very proud. I think we are off to a good start!

I do know that that she is young for this transition but I was too. I know that the median age of menarche for girls in the United States is 12.4, but the mean age for African American girls is younger (Holden, 2009). I remember feeling totally unprepared for what was happening to me. I also remember feeling very ashamed and embarrassed about menstruation. Based on how I felt when I started menstruating three days after my 10th birthday, I did not want my daughter to begin her journey into womanhood feeling the same way that I did.

Identification of parenting issues

Nonetheless, I am still concerned about many of the issues that parents may face in helping their very young adolescent daughter transition into a new stage of development. These issues include: 1) an increase in parent-child conflict; 2) adolescent sexual experimentation; 3)

Commented [w3]: This section gives a detailed, excellent, and clear description of the parenting scenario, which is mother-daughter communication about early menarche. 10 points

Commented [w4]: This section gives a comprehensive and clear analysis of what issues need to be researched or explored regarding early menarche. 20 points

adolescent depression; 4) and poor adolescent body-image. I am taking a course in parenting and I believe that it is going to give me excellent insight into ways that I can help my daughter overcome any obstacles related to early menstruation. I am eager to research and learn more about how I can successfully avoid and/or manage some of the issues that may arise as a result of her early menarche.

Plan of action

In addition to the plan of action that I initiated prior to the start of her period, I am going to continue to encourage her to speak openly with me about how she feels about her body. I am also going to continue to talk with her about what the biological changes in her body mean. For instance, we will talk in more detail about ovulation, pre-menstrual symptoms (i.e. cramps, backache, nausea, moodiness, ect.). I want her to know and understand that menstruation is just a normal part of life that women experience. Although I want to speak openly with her, it is not always easy for us to talk. Sometimes she just does not seem interested in talking about her feelings. Sometimes I am also at a loss of words when she comes to me to discuss some of the social issues that she is facing as a result of her early development. For instance, she told me that she feels boys are staring at her chest when they talk to her. That makes her feel very awkward. It is easy for me to tell her not to worry about those silly boys but my words seem to offer her little comfort.

My course readings (Holden, 2009) provide some excellent suggestions on how I might be able to encourage more open communication with my daughter. Some of the tips include: 1) choosing a good moment to talk (i.e. car ride); 2) being a good listener and accepting her feelings; 3) being positive and giving praise; 4) remaining calm and honest during discussions; and 5) not forcing her talk when she is not ready. After reading these tips, I realize that I have

Commented [w5]: A comprehensive and detailed plan of action is provided for dealing with the situation. 10 points

more work to do to help us to have better mother-daughter communication. The communication tip that stands out the most to me is to accept that sometimes she will not want to talk about her feelings. I think I have been guilty of trying to make her talk about how she feels when I want her to talk. This is not a good strategy and if I continue to do this, I will only make her more unwilling to communicate with me about her body, friends, sexuality, etc.

Another action that I can engage in to help my daughter deal with all of the changes she is experiencing is to continue to monitor her behavior and interactions with her peers. She understands that I and her father can access her phone and social media pages at any time. Although we let her know that we respect her privacy, she also understands that if it is not something she would want her parents to see or read, then she should not post the information. This action is also supported by what I have read in my class. Holden (2009) states that good communication is important but not enough. Parents must monitor their teens, especially in the early years.

Diary I am going to end my letter today by letting you know that I feel encouraged about how I have handled my daughter's menstruation experience so far. Although things are off to a good start, there is always room for improvement. In my next entry, I hope to let you know what progress we are making towards improving our communication.

Commented [w6]: Writing quality: The paper is clear, concise and descriptive. There are no grammar or mechanical errors. The paper is also divided into clear sections that are in direct alignment with the sections outlined in the rubric. 6 points

Reference

Holden, G. (2009). *Parenting : A dynamic perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.