



## DEAR EDUCATOR,

Skin health is a critical component of the health curriculum, particularly during the tween years when students must “face” acne and the self-esteem issues it can often create. That’s why the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) has developed **Good Skin Knowledge** — **Know the Skin You’re In**, a free downloadable educator’s guide with content developed by the AAD and educational coordination from curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired (YMI).

This standards-based program provides an introduction to skin health basics that you can supplement with a vast array of educational resources available in the **Good Skin Knowledge** section of the AAD website at [www.aad.org/lessons](http://www.aad.org/lessons), including health activities on topics such as skin, hair, nails, and sun safety.

In addition, **Good Skin Knowledge — Know the Skin You’re In** also helps students recognize how advertising media typically present perfection as the norm for personal appearance, setting an unrealistic standard that can undermine self-esteem. As you know, poor self-esteem in early adolescence can have a negative impact on academic performance and may contribute to unhealthy social interactions at school, with effects that can carry over into adulthood. By teaching your students the facts about skin health and personal appearance, you can help them resist the misleading impressions created by media and gain self-esteem by being knowledgeable about skin care.

We hope that you will share this valuable program with other teachers in your school. Although these materials are copyrighted, feel free to make as many photocopies as needed for educational purposes.

Please let us know your opinion of this program at [ymiclassroom.com/feedback-aad](http://ymiclassroom.com/feedback-aad). We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dominic Kinsley  
Editor in Chief  
Young Minds Inspired



For questions, contact us toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at [feedback@ymiclassroom.com](mailto:feedback@ymiclassroom.com).

## TARGET AUDIENCE

This program includes separate learning activities for grades 3-5 (ages 8-10) and grades 6-8 (ages 11-13).

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Educate students on basic facts about skin health and the care of skin, hair, and nails.
- Empower students to recognize that media often unrealistically portray perfection as the norm for personal appearance.
- Engage parents in learning and conversation with students about skin health and self-esteem.

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- This downloadable teacher’s guide
- 2 downloadable activity sheets, one for each grade level
- Online feedback form available at [ymiclassroom.com/feedback-aad](http://ymiclassroom.com/feedback-aad)

## STANDARDS CORRELATION

This program meets National Health Education Standards for grades 3-8. For detailed standards alignment, visit [ymiclassroom.com/aad](http://ymiclassroom.com/aad).

## HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

Choose the activity sheet appropriate for your students. The version for grades 3-5 begins with a quiz that covers a wide variety of skin health issues. In the version for grades 6-8, the quiz focuses on acne. Begin the activity by asking students to take the quiz and see how much they know about the skin they’re in. Use the information below to review correct answers with students. Please encourage students to have their parents take the quiz, too.

## ACTIVITY 1: THE SKIN I’M IN (FOR GRADES 3-5)

### Part 1: How Much Do You Know About Skin Health?

1. **False.** There are three layers of skin: 1. epidermis — first layer, the part of the skin that you can see. It is part of the immune system that protects the body, and it makes new skin cells and gives skin its color; 2. dermis — second layer, thicker than the epidermis. It makes you sweat, grow hair, make oil, and when blood comes into the dermis, it feeds your skin. It also contains nerve endings that signal our sense of touch; 3. subcutaneous fat — bottom layer, attaches the dermis to muscles and bones, houses blood vessels and nerve cells, controls body temperature, and stores body fat that protects muscles and bones.
2. **True.** Eczema and psoriasis are non-contagious conditions that irritate skin and cause it to become itchy. Doctors don’t know why people get these conditions, but they do know that there are certain triggers, or things that cause them to happen — for example, animal dander, scratchy clothes, sweating a lot, soaps, cleaning products, fruit juices, dust, and a cough, cold, or the flu.

3. **True.** Acne is the most common skin condition in the United States. Anyone at any age can get acne, but it is most common for people between the ages of 12 and 17.
4. **False.** The body is always making new skin cells and shedding old ones. In fact, the body sheds 30,000 to 40,000 old skin cells every day!
5. **True.** Acne is a result of many physical changes that happen inside the body during puberty. One of those changes involves the way glands in the body begin to produce more oil. Excess oil and dead skin cells clog up skin pores. This causes bacteria to grow, which is what causes pimples.
6. **False.** Warts are caused by a germ called a virus. Viruses spread easily between people and objects. While it is important to bathe and keep your skin clean, this doesn't always prevent warts.
7. **False.** The sun's rays can still filter through and damage your skin on cloudy days.
8. **True.** A dermatologist is a doctor who specializes in skin care. Since hair is not only on our heads, but grows out of the skin and covers our whole bodies, a dermatologist can also help with scalp and hair issues.

## Part 2: Are They For Real?

Review the questions with students before they conduct their commercial viewing experiment. Afterwards, use their findings to talk about the misleading impression that the media give about beauty. Then help students work as partners to write positive characteristics about one another. Have students reflect on how beauty includes what is found on the inside, not just how people look on the outside.

## ACTIVITY 2: THE SKIN I'M IN (FOR GRADES 6-8)

### Part 1: How Much Do You Know About Skin Health and Acne?

1. **True.** Our bodies are constantly making new skin cells and getting rid of old ones. That's why the skin is the body's largest and fastest growing organ. In fact, there are about 19 million skin cells in every square inch of the body's surface!
2. **True.** Our bodies get rid of 30,000 to 40,000 skin cells every day. During puberty, dead skin cells and oil from glands in your body clog skin pores, which leads to pimples.
3. **False.** During puberty, the body produces more oil in the skin. This is why skin pores are more easily clogged as this oil combines with dead skin cells to produce a breeding place for bacteria, which cause blackheads, whiteheads, and bumps, or pustules, that you call pimples, zits, or acne.

4. **False.** Acne is caused by changes occurring inside your body during puberty. Gently washing the face twice a day with a mild cleanser can help control acne, but it does not prevent you from getting it.
5. **False.** Keeping your hair clean is one of the many ways to help control acne. The oil already in your hair and in oily or greasy hair products is easily transferred from your hair to your face, making acne worse if you don't regularly wash your hair.
6. **False.** Touching pimples only transfers more bacteria and oil from your hands to your face. Picking, squeezing, or "popping" pimples makes acne worse and can result in scars.
7. **False.** Even though most kids get acne, it can cause low self-esteem, stress, and even depression. Some kids might even get bullied because they have acne.
8. **True.** A dermatologist is a doctor who specializes in skin care. Dermatologists treat almost everything that can happen to skin, including acne, rashes, dry skin, and skin cancer.

### Part 2: Accurate or Inaccurate?

Prepare students for completing the comment sections by discussing the following questions in class before students complete the commercial viewing assignment at home.

- Does the product make promises it can keep?
- Do the actors in the commercial look "real" or do they look too perfect?
- Does the skin condition look real or fake?
- Is it safe to trust media-driven images?
- Could the commercial images have been altered or exaggerated?
- Does this commercial appeal to emotions or provide facts?

Have students share their commercial viewing experiences with one another, including their Tweets and blogs. Discuss whether the commercials were misleading. Did they play on emotions or present facts? Help students understand that the media often emphasize physical perfection and beauty over what is normal and typical. Discuss how this can affect healthy self-image. Extend the activity by challenging students to reflect on other images from magazines, television, film, and other media. Then have students analyze their findings to determine what this might say about our culture.

## RESOURCES

AAD.org

AAD.org/lessons

ymiclassroom.com

