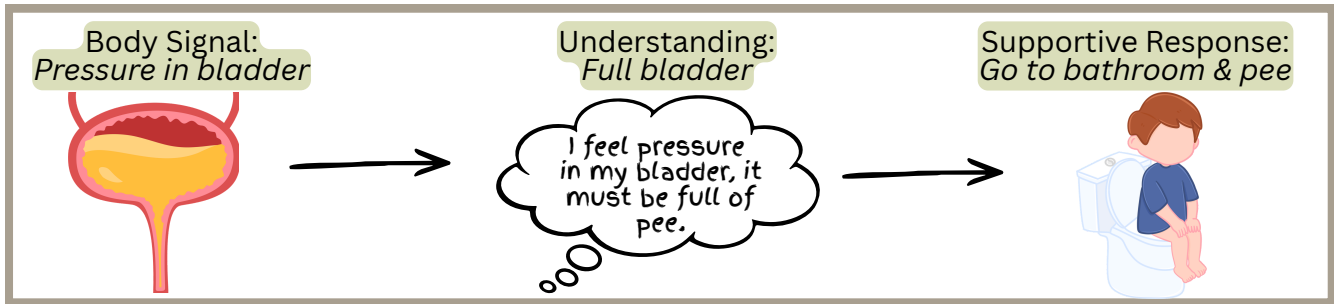


Interoception & Puberty

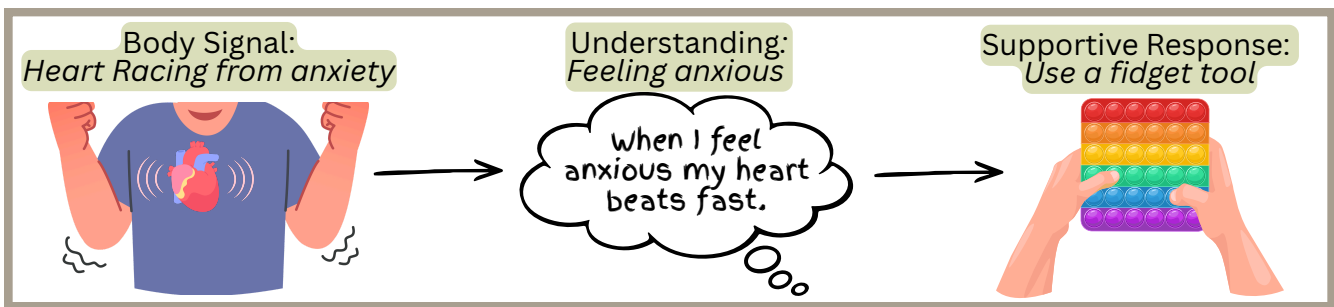
What is interoception?

Interoception is the ability to notice sensations occurring inside of the body.

- Interoceptive awareness allows us to notice our body signals, understand what they mean, and respond in a way that supports our well-being.



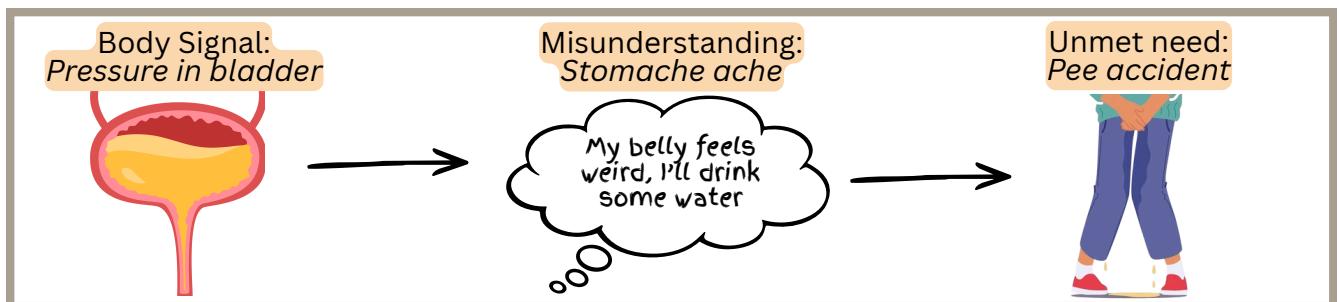
- Interoception also impacts how we experience and understand our emotions. Most emotions are connected to physical sensations.



What are interoception challenges?

Challenges with interoceptive awareness can make noticing and understanding body signals very difficult. Many neurodivergent people have interoception challenges.

- Missing or misunderstanding body signals can lead to unmet needs & dysregulation.

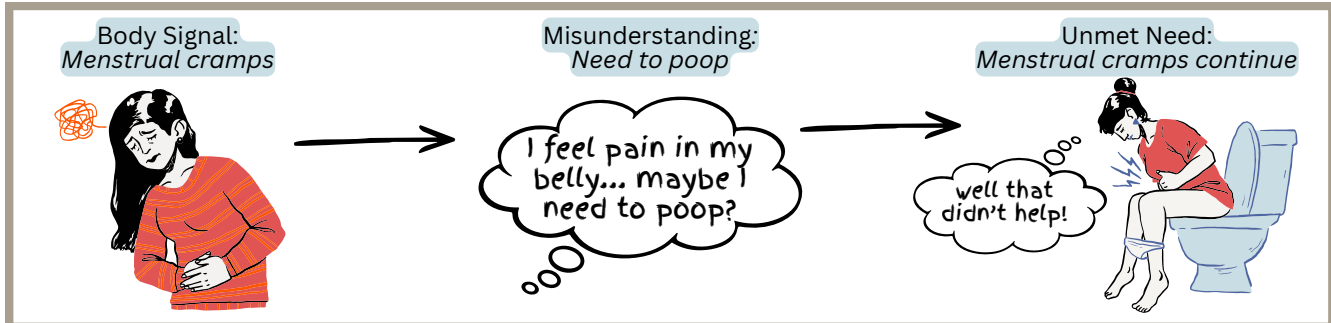


Interoception & Puberty

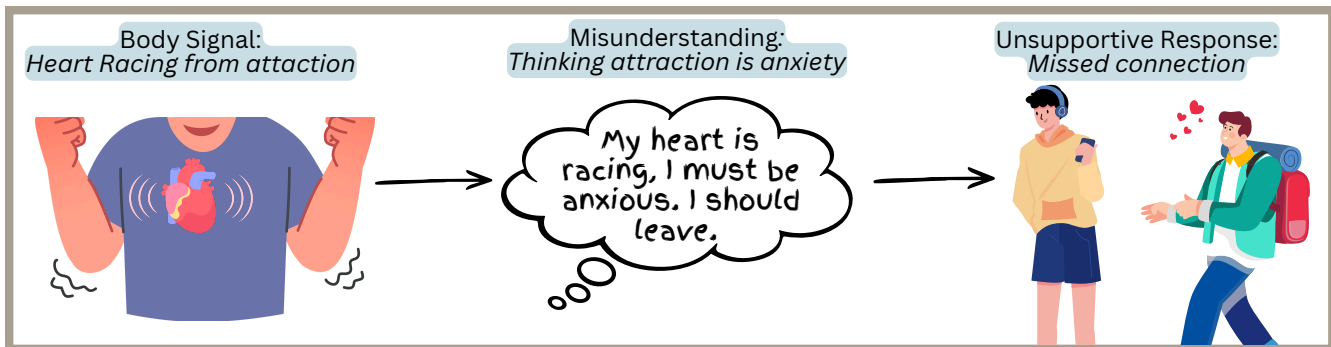
What does interoception have to do with puberty?

Puberty causes an increase in hormones which trigger big changes to the body, brain, and emotions. We often experience body signals that are new or more intense.

- Difficulties with interoception can make it hard to understand unfamiliar cues and manage our bodies changing needs.



- Puberty can increase how often we feel strong emotions. We might quickly switch from one emotion to another.



What can I do to help?

Working on interoceptive awareness helps to ensure support needs are being met and makes emotional and sensory regulation more manageable.

- Occupational therapists help people develop strong interoceptive awareness.

Here are some tips to support your interoception:

- Practice paying attention to what is happening inside your body:
 - Body scans: practice identifying sensations in your body from head to toe
 - Notice before and afters: pay attention to the way your body feels before and after doing an activity (ex. play a game, exercising).
- Try out these tools to manage bodily needs:
 - Keep regulation supports (ex. sensory tools) readily available
 - Utilize schedules to manage bodily needs (ex. reminders to use the bathroom or drink water).