

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 1

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying material about overall health and well-being. The topics covered are physical, mental/emotional, and social health.

Questions your child will consider include: *What are measures of good social health? How can I make responsible decisions? Why is it important to set realistic goals?* With your help, your child can proceed with confidence and find satisfying answers.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Talk with your child about how you might work together to balance and care for your physical, mental/emotional, and social health.
- Help your child work through one decision using the six decision-making steps.
- Discuss goals that each of you wishes to achieve. Talk about steps you can take to move closer to those goals.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel would help your child deal with balancing the different aspects of his or her health. Thank you for your time and attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 2

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying mental and emotional health. The topics are designed to help the students feel good about themselves, understand their emotions, and manage stress.

Questions your child will consider include: *How does my view of myself affect my health and my behavior? How much do I really know about my emotions? What are some healthy ways to manage stress? What exactly are emotional problems?* With your help, your child can proceed with confidence and find satisfying answers.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Talk with your child about how the child feels about himself or herself. Explain how mental and emotional health can affect overall health and well-being.
- Help your child understand the emotional changes that will take place as the teen years advance.
- Find a place at home where each family member can sit quietly and relax, undisturbed, during times of stress. Encourage family members to respect each other's need to visit that place. Have them talk about why the "quiet place" is helpful.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel would help your child deal with emotions and everyday problems. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 3

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying communication and healthy relationships. The topics are designed to help students understand relationships and learn skills to create positive interactions and build self-esteem.

Students will learn specific communication methods, including refusal skills and conflict resolution skills. They will consider questions such as: *How does good communication occur? What are some roles and responsibilities in the family? What makes a good friendship? How can young people resist negative peer pressure? How can teens prevent and resolve conflicts?*

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child:

- Hold a family meeting where issues of concern are discussed with family members. Let each person take a turn talking, and then work together toward a solution.
- Talk with your child about some difficulties teens may have with peers, perhaps relating your own experiences and how you handled problems.
- Watch a TV program, read a story, or discuss current events with your child to raise issues about healthy relationships.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel will help your child deal with peer pressure and other social problems. Thank you very much for your time. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 4

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In health class, your child is currently studying about the importance of good nutrition to maintain proper health. In this lesson we are focusing on the six main classes of nutrients—carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water—and how these fit into the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) dietary guidelines.

Your child will also be learning about the nutritional recommendations in the MyPyramid food guidance system in this chapter. You may be familiar with the USDA's food pyramid, which has been the standard reference point for nutrition since 1992. As of 2005, this pyramid has been updated. You can view the new pyramid and study the related resources by visiting www.mypyramid.gov.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to talk to your child about nutrition. You may want to complete one or more of these activities with your child.

- Talk about the importance of good nutrition to proper health. Look over some of the things your family is eating during a typical day and see how they relate to the recommendations of the MyPyramid food guidance system.
- Suggest an evening of physical activity for your family. Play a sport in the backyard. Fly a kite in the park. Take a walk through your neighborhood. Go bike riding along a country trail or go hiking in the mountains.
- Encourage your child to respect his or her own body type and the body types of others. Help your child realize that bodies come in all shapes and sizes.

Please engage in any other activities that you think will help your child better understand the importance of good nutrition. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 5

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying physical activity. This topic is designed to help students learn how they can benefit from physical activity, establish a personal fitness plan, and safely engage in physical activity.

Questions your child will consider include: *In what ways can I benefit from physical activity? How can I set fitness goals? How can I safely participate in sports and other physical activities?* With your help, your child can proceed with confidence and find answers that will lead to healthy decisions.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Talk with your child about the different physical activities in which he or she can participate.
- Discuss ways that your child could improve his or her physical fitness. Help your child establish a fitness goal.
- With your child, assess his or her sports gear to see if it is safe and sufficient. If necessary, update the equipment.

Please engage in any other actions or discussions you feel will encourage your child to safely participate in physical activities and become more physically fit. Thank you for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 6

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying personal health. The topics are designed to help students understand health issues and build skills for maintaining their personal health.

Specifically, students will consider questions such as: *How does good hygiene contribute to personal health? How can I protect my vision and hearing? How can I use medicines responsibly? What do I need to know about health care? How can I help to improve health for myself, my family, and my community?*

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child:

- Work with your child to think of good habits you follow in caring for your own teeth, skin, and hair. Talk about how these habits affect your total health.
- Conduct a comparison-shopping experiment where you compare health care brands you frequently use with those of other manufacturers.
- Talk about voluntary health agencies you would like to support as a family, and take part in a volunteer activity, such as a fund-raising walk or run.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel will help your child deal with emotions related to issues of personal health. Thank you for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 7

Dear Parent of Guardian,

Your student's health class is currently studying body systems. The topics include bones and muscles, digestion and excretion, and the heart, blood, lungs, and nerves.

Questions your child will consider include: *How do the systems of the body work together? What is the job of the bones and muscles? What do bones need to stay strong? What is blood made of? What happens when I breathe? How is food digested? What is the job of the nervous system? What are examples of voluntary and involuntary movements?* With your help, your student will explore these topics with confidence and find answers that will provide information for making healthful choices. Your participation in the exploration of this material is vital.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Look through the textbook with your student and encourage him or her to explain any of the diagrams in Chapter 7. Ask questions that indicate your interest in the information.
- Access reliable information in the library or on the Internet and look at drawings and diagrams of the body systems with your student.

Please engage in other activities that you feel will help your child understand the body systems and how they work together. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 8

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your student's health class is currently studying growth and development. The topics include adolescence, human reproduction, and heredity and the life cycle.

Questions your child will consider include: *What physical, mental/emotional, and social changes take place during adolescence? How do hormones affect growth and development? What are the jobs of the male and female reproductive systems? How is an egg cell fertilized? How does a developing unborn baby receive nutrients and oxygen?* With your help, your student will explore these topics with confidence and find answers that will provide information for making healthful choices. Your participation in the exploration of these topics is vital.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Share your family health history, including any conditions or traits that may be inherited. Does your child think he or she has inherited any traits from you?
- Talk in positive ways about the physical and mental/emotional changes your child has been going through. Tell him stories about yourself as you went through adolescence.
- Help your child understand the process of fertilization and development of a fetus by looking in medical and/or health textbooks. Allow the child to ask you questions, and answer them as directly as possible.

Please engage in other activities that you feel will help your child understand growth and development. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 9

Dear Parent of Guardian,

Your student's health class is currently studying tobacco. The topics include why tobacco is a harmful drug, teens and tobacco, and staying tobacco free.

Questions your child will consider include: *How does tobacco affect the body? What factors influence teens' decisions about tobacco? What happens when a person is addicted to nicotine? How can teens say no to tobacco use? What are effective ways of stopping tobacco use?* With your help, your student will explore these topics with confidence and find answers that will provide information for making healthful choices. Your participation in the exploration of this material is vital.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Share your own experiences with refusing tobacco. Brainstorm healthy alternatives to tobacco use.
- Talk with your child about the negative peer pressure that he or she faces to use tobacco. Role play with him or her to give valuable experience in refusal skills.

Please engage in other activities that you feel will help your child understand the health issues concerning tobacco use. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 10

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your student's health class is currently studying alcohol and other drugs. The topics include the effects of alcohol on the body, the effects and dangers of drug abuse, drug and alcohol addiction and their treatment, and ways to stay substance-free.

Questions your child will consider include: *How does alcohol affect a person's health? How do drugs affect all sides of a person's health triangle? What resources are available to people who abuse substances and their families? What are some ways to avoid alcohol and drug use? What are the benefits to staying substance-free?* With your help, your student will explore these topics with confidence and find answers that will provide information for making healthful choices. Your participation in the exploration of this material is vital.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Share your own experiences with refusing alcohol or other drugs. Let him or her know that many people have experienced pressure to use these substances.
- Role play scenarios where someone tries to get your child to try drugs or alcohol. Give him or her practice in employing refusal skills.

Please engage in other activities that you feel will help your child understand the information and issues surrounding alcohol and other drugs. Thank you very much for your attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 11

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying how to prevent diseases. The topics include causes, prevention, and treatment of communicable and noncommunicable diseases.

Questions your child will consider include: *How do I "catch" and spread diseases such as colds and flu? How can I keep from getting sick so often? What is the best way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases? What can I do to keep myself healthy from heart disease, cancer, and diabetes?* With your help, your child can explore these questions with confidence and find satisfying answers.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Work with your child to think of good habits you follow in avoiding disease. Talk about how these habits affect your total health.
- Talk with your child about sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Discuss ways your child can protect himself or herself from them.
- Share your family health history. Make your child aware of any family history of noncommunicable diseases, such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, or asthma.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel will help your child develop healthy behaviors for avoiding diseases. Thank you for your time and attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

Parent Letter and Activities

For use with Chapter 12

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is studying the topics of safety and protecting the environment.

Questions your child will consider include: *How can I act safely in my home, school, and community? How can I avoid being the victim of a violent crime? What are some of the tips for swimming, hiking, and camping? What should I know about weather emergencies? What do I do for someone who needs first aid? What can I do to prevent pollution and conserve natural resources?* With your help, your child can proceed with confidence and find answers that will help her or him make healthy decisions.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your child.

- Work with your child to come up with an action plan for personal safety. Discuss the potential risks in your home. Work together to eliminate household hazards. Talk with your child about possible risks within your community.
- With your child, make a list of telephone numbers that you might need in an emergency. Discuss the purpose and use of the 911 emergency number. Include local phone numbers for the police department, fire department, and ambulance service. Also include phone numbers of family, friends, and neighbors who could help in an emergency.
- Start a reduce-reuse-recycle program at home. Have your child lead the effort, explaining to other family members how such a program would benefit the environment.

Please engage in any other activities that you feel would help your child be safe and become environmentally aware. Thank you for your time and attention. As always, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

