

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently studying the beginning of the life cycle. Your son or daughter will examine the stages of fetal development from conception through birth. Students will learn about heredity and how traits are passed from parent to child. Your teen will also examine aspects of prenatal care in an effort to understand its importance during pregnancy. Another focus of this chapter will be an introduction to the developmental stages of childhood. Students will learn that growth and development follow general patterns.

Some questions your teen will explore in this chapter include: *What are the stages of fetal development? What role do heredity and genetics play in fetal development? Why is prenatal care important? What can be done to optimize health for both mother and baby? What effects do alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs have on the fetus? What are chromosomes and genes, and how do they influence the passing of traits? What are some common genetic disorders? How can genetic counseling benefit families? How has genetic research impacted health? What are the developmental stages of childhood? What are developmental tasks? Why are health screenings for children important? Which school or community health services offer screenings and immunizations?*

Please reinforce our classroom work by discussing with your son or daughter one or more of the following topics:

- Ask your teen to explain the stages of fetal development.
- Discuss the dangers of using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs during pregnancy.
- Point out family traits, such as height, hair color, and eye color, to your son or daughter and ask him or her to explain how such characteristics are passed on.
- Have your teenager explain the developmental stages and tasks of childhood by using neighborhood children as examples. Share stories from your son's or daughter's childhood that illustrate these stages.
- Discuss with your son or daughter the importance of health screenings for children.

Please plan other activities you think will help your teen understand the concepts presented in this chapter. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss your teen's health education.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher