

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently learning about medicines. We define the term medicine as any substance that, when taken into or applied to the body, helps prevent or cure some disease, injury, or medical problem. Students will learn to distinguish between medicines and drugs, a term we use primarily when referring to dangerous and illegal substances.

After studying this chapter, students will have a better understanding of how medicines are tested before they are made available to consumers, what potential problems a person might have when using medicines, and why learning about medicines helps teens become wiser health consumers.

Some questions your teen will explore as we study this chapter are: *How are medicines classified? How does the body react to medicines? How are drugs made safe for the consumer? What is the difference between prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines?*

To support and extend our classroom work, please plan to complete one or more of the following activities with your teenager:

- Ask your teen to review with you all the medicines he or she has taken in recent months and to identify the purpose of each medicine. Then identify and discuss the medicines you have taken. Discuss the precautions you have both taken in choosing and using these medicines.
- With your son or daughter, examine the medicines in your home, both prescription and over-the-counter. Determine whether they are safely stored, and check the expiration dates. Discard any that have expired.
- Ask your teen to identify specific examples of medicine misuse. Let him or her describe the kinds of carelessness that can lead to medicine misuse. Together, discuss the dangers involved in misusing medicine.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter understand how medicines help him or her remain healthy. 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