

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently studying infectious diseases that are spread from one person to another through sexual contact. This category is referred to as sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs. Although people of all ages are susceptible to STDs, these diseases pose a particular threat to teens and young adults.

Because we recognize that the only known way to prevent any kind of sexually transmitted disease is to abstain from sexual contact, we will emphasize the choice of abstinence. This choice could be one of the most important health decisions your teenager makes.

Some questions your teen will explore as we study this chapter are: *Why are teens at particularly high risk for infection from STDs? What dangers do STDs pose to my health and to my future? What is the best way to avoid getting a sexually transmitted disease? What are the names of common STDs, and what are their symptoms? How are STDs treated?*

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

- Ask your son or daughter to describe three problems that can result from sexual contact. Discuss the common STDs.
- Discuss with your son or daughter the role that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage plays in the prevention of STDs. Encourage your teen to be responsible for his or her actions while following your family's values.
- Together, talk about what should be done if a teen believes that he or she may be infected with an STD.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter understand why a decision to practice abstinence is a life choice that he or she can be proud of. 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