

## CHAPTER 30 HIV and AIDS

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently learning more about acquired immune deficiency syndrome, commonly known as AIDS. Because the disease is unlike any other in modern history, we will closely examine the facts about the disease so that your teen will have a thorough understanding of the virus that causes AIDS—what it is, how it is contracted and spread, and how it attacks the body's immune system.

Some questions your teen will explore as we study this chapter are: *How does HIV enter the body? What lifestyle choices put a person at risk for contracting HIV? How can infection with HIV be prevented? What is AIDS, and how does it affect the body? What current research is being carried out in order to find a cure for HIV/AIDS?*

Above all, we want your teen to possess all the facts about HIV and AIDS so that he or she can make intelligent lifestyle choices that lead to continued good health. Knowing the facts about HIV and AIDS, as opposed to the myths, is the first step to maintaining personal health as well as caring for the health of others.

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 explain how HIV, the virus that causes the disease AIDS, is transmitted. Also, ask how HIV is not transmitted.
- Discuss HIV testing with your teen. Who should be tested? Should the results of these tests be kept private? Why or why not?
- With your teen, identify and use reliable sources of up-to-date information about HIV and AIDS.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter develop a greater understanding of this life-threatening disease. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss your child's health education.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher