

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently learning about the value of maintaining a healthy weight. Unfortunately, many teens equate being thin with being fit. Consequently, they may make extremely unhealthy choices about eating, which can result in serious health risks.

Most teens make many of their food choices independently, away from the family setting, yet their bodies still need a healthy diet to grow and develop properly. We will stress the responsibility that each teen has in making healthy food choices.

Some questions your teen will explore as we study this chapter are: *How many calories do I need each day, and how can I decide which foods best supply these calories? What health problems are connected with too much or too little body weight? Is there a wrong way to diet? What are eating disorders? What are the special dietary needs of athletes, vegetarians, aging people, and pregnant women? How can I know that the food I eat is safe?*

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 help you calculate your Body Mass Index and to explain the significance of this figure. Discuss healthy food choices the entire family can make to control the weight and enhance the health of all family members.
- Talk with your teen about how he or she sees himself or herself in relationship to body weight. If the image seems distorted, help identify ways to make it more accurate. If your son or daughter does have a valid weight problem, help him or her seek the proper guidance and advice.
- Ask your teen to describe ways food can be kept safe. Together, examine your family's food storage practices for any potentially hazardous conditions.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter develop and maintain healthful diet habits. 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