

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your teen's health class is currently learning about ways to prevent violence and abuse. We will begin by discussing how to recognize the causes of violence and how to prevent violence in school. Then we will talk about abuse—the physical, emotional, or mental mistreatment of another person—and its effects. Finally, we will identify places where abused and troubled people can seek help.

Some questions your teen will answer as we study these topics include: *What are the causes of violence? What can I do to protect myself so that I do not become a victim of violence? How can I help to prevent violence in school? What is abuse, and why does it happen? How does abuse affect a person? What can be done to prevent abuse? What help is available for abused and troubled people? Why do some people fail to report abuse?*

You can see that these questions touch on serious social and personal issues. By answering them your teen will learn valuable safety skills that can keep him or her from becoming a victim.

To support and extend our classroom work, please set aside some time during the next few weeks to complete one or more of the following activities with your teen:

- Together, view a television program that includes scenes of violence. Keep a list of the violent acts that occur during the program. Discuss how viewing such acts makes each of you feel and the effect you think such programs have on society.
- Review television ratings and what each one means. Then check the ratings for the television programs for just one evening. How many have ratings that indicate scenes of violence? How many do not? What conclusions can you draw?
- Look through a newspaper together for reports of violence or abuse. Discuss the real and possible causes of each example of violence or abuse you find. Discuss ways in which the violence or abuse could have been prevented.
- Make yourself available to answer questions and discuss any concerns your teen has about violence and abuse.

Please feel free to engage in any other activities you think will help your teen stay safe and avoid violence and abuse. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. As always, do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher