

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying tobacco. Specifically, we are examining the effects of tobacco on the human body and looking at reasons why people start using tobacco and become addicted to it. Throughout our study of this serious topic, we will emphasize the benefits of being tobacco free.

Some questions your teenager will answer as we study this topic are: *What substances are in tobacco? How does tobacco affect body systems? Why do people use tobacco? What are the personal costs of tobacco use? What are the costs to society of tobacco use? What are the reasons to not use tobacco? How can I stay tobacco free? How can I help others remain tobacco free?* and many others.

As you know, tobacco is an extremely dangerous substance. Tobacco use can lead to heart disease, cancer, and a host of other serious diseases. Our focus in studying tobacco will be on its harmful effects. Students will be encouraged to build refusal skills that will enable them to stay tobacco free.

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 teenager:

- Make yourself available to discuss and answer questions about tobacco use.
- Visit a store together, and price tobacco products. Working with your teenager, project the economic costs of tobacco use over a lifetime. Encourage your teenager to name other ways he or she would rather use the money.
- Visit the library together and locate an article about tobacco use. Read the article independently, then discuss it together.
- Look at cigarette ads in magazines together. Ask your teenager to identify the ways tobacco manufacturers try to lure people into using their products.
- Together, make a survey of smoke-free areas in your community. Find out what the federal and local regulations are and what provisions are made for smoke-free areas in local restaurants, government offices, offices or plants of private companies, and sports facilities.

Please feel free to engage in any other activities you believe will encourage your teenager to choose to be tobacco free. As a health teacher, I am keenly aware that this is one of the most important health decisions your child can ever make. Your support in making this choice is vital.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher