

# Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying alcohol. Specifically, we are examining how alcohol affects the human body and how alcoholism develops. We will conclude by emphasizing the benefits of being alcohol free.

Some questions your teenager will answer as we study this topic are: *Why do people who have been drinking often act silly and have trouble walking and talking? How can you tell whether a person is an alcoholic? If someone I know has a problem with alcohol, how can I help? How can I refuse to drink and still have friends? How can I have fun and not drink?* and many others.

As your teenager answers these questions, he or she will develop a thorough understanding of the risks of alcohol use and the benefits of being alcohol free. The risks of alcohol use, from automobile accidents to alcoholism, are many. Yet many teens are pressured—by their peers and by advertising—to experiment with alcohol. Our course will help students to resist peer pressure and to focus on activities that are free from alcohol use.

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 alcohol use.
- Ask your teenager to tell you about the effects of alcohol—even one or two drinks—on motor coordination. How does alcohol affect someone's ability to ride a bike, for example, or to participate in sports?
- Visit the library together, and locate an article about alcohol use. Read the article independently, then discuss it together.
- Look at advertisements for alcohol products in magazines together. Ask your teenager to identify the different ways the alcohol industry encourages people to buy and use its products.
- Role-play incidents that will help your child develop refusal skills when someone tries to persuade him or her to drink.

Of course, feel free to engage in any other activities you think will encourage your teenager to choose to be alcohol free. Your input and example in making this choice are vital. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. As always, you may contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher