

# Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying the topic of social health. By **social health**, we mean *the ability to get along with the people around you*. People with good social health can accept differences in other people, get along with family members, have at least one or two close friends, and work well in groups.

In exploring the various aspects of social health, your teenager will consider some important questions, such as: *How can I learn to get along better with others? How do I say no to my friends without offending them? What makes families different from other groups of people? What are some good ways of dealing with peer pressure? What do I need to think about before I go out on a date? Why are teens encouraged to choose abstinence?* and many others.

These are challenging questions. With your help, however, your teenager can explore them with confidence and find answers that are rich and rewarding. Your participation in this exploration of social health is vital. It provides you with a wonderful opportunity to interact with your child. Moreover, when you, your teenager, and I work cooperatively, we set a good example of social health.

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:

- Work with your teenager to think of examples of compromise and cooperation in your own life and the lives of other adult family members. Talk about how these two skills are more than abstractions, but real skills for the real world.
- Refusal skills are communication strategies that help people say no effectively. Help your teen develop these important skills by role playing. Acting out the role of another teenager, try to convince your teenager to do something, and give your child the opportunity to practice resisting peer pressure.
- Help your teenager get to know your extended family by working together to make a family tree.
- Play a "bell/buzzer" game to help your teenager learn about dating and marriage. You make true and false statements about these topics, to which your teenager can respond with a bell or buzzer noise.
- Ask your teenager what qualities represent good parenting skills and what qualities represent poor parenting skills. Share your ideas, and search for common ground. Use this as an opportunity to explain why things your teen may view as being negative are, in fact, positive parenting.

Please engage in other activities you feel will help your teenager develop good social health. Your support is critical to your teenager's understanding and applying these vital life skills. Thank you very much for your continued involvement. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher