

# Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently learning about becoming a wise health consumer. As the number of health products and services available to teenagers and all Americans continues to grow, this topic is of ever increasing importance.

Learning to become a wise consumer involves many important issues. Questions that your teenager will be examining in detail include: *What are the benefits of improving my consumer skills? How do I know I'm getting the best buy for my money? Why do I need to have health insurance? What should I do if I have a problem with something I buy? How do I know the cosmetics, grooming products, and medicines I buy are safe?*

These and similar questions will provide the focus of our study of consumers and health. By encouraging your teenager to learn to answer these questions independently, you can help him or her develop skills to make wise choices about the vast array of health care products and services.

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:

- Go shopping with your teenager, and comparison shop for an item. Compare the price, features, quality, convenience, and warranties of competing goods. Analyze which product would be the best buy for his or her needs.
- Review with your teenager your family's health care providers. Make sure your child knows all the pertinent information, including names, addresses, and insurance information.
- View television commercials or read print advertisements for health products with your teenager, and discuss how each ad is designed to appeal to consumers. Look for evidence of quackery.
- Ask your teenager to point out the role of government public health agencies in restaurants, stores, parks, and other places your family visits.

Let me encourage you to engage in any other activities you think will make your teenager a wise consumer of health goods and services. Remember, in the marketplace it is said, "Let the buyer beware." This is a vital lesson we can work together to teach your teenager. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher