

Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying human growth and development. We will trace the growth of the human body from fertilization through pregnancy to birth. We will also discuss the role of heredity in passing on traits from parents to children and the effects of an individual's environment on his or her development. The course then will

focus on growth and development during infancy, childhood, and adulthood. We will conclude with a study of aging, death, and grief.

Some questions your teenager will consider as we study these topics include: *What happens during pregnancy? Why was I born with certain traits, such as my hair color and the shape of my nose? Why do my moods seem to change more often than they did before? What happens to the body and mind as a person gets older? How do people cope with a loved one's death?* and many others.

As you can see, our study of human growth and development will address some fascinating questions. We will find the answers to some of these as we study the structure of the human body. Other questions will require us to look at mental or social issues for answers. Thus our study of growth and development will include all three sides of the health triangle: physical, mental/emotional, and social.

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:

- Spend an evening reviewing family pictures with your teenager. Use the pictures as a springboard to talk about family traits and about how people change as they go through the various stages of life.
- Watch a movie or television program about teenagers with your child. Afterwards, discuss the issues that confront the characters. Ask your teenager's opinion on how well the adolescent characters deal with their new independence, maturity, and conflicts.
- Work together to make a "pro and con" list about being an adolescent and another one about being an adult. Emphasize the joys that are unique to the different stages of life.

Of course, feel free to engage in other activities you think will help your teenager learn about growth and development and the stages of human life. A broader perspective on the stages of life can help make your child's adolescence more enjoyable. In this, your input and example are vital.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher