

Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We are now studying the topic of fitness in your child's health class. We are teaching the students about being *totally* fit—ready to handle whatever comes their way from day to day. Of course, physical fitness is an important part of being totally fit, and exercise plays a key role here. The students will learn that regular exercise gives them added energy and makes them look and feel better.

Some questions your teenager will consider as we discuss this topic are: *What does being fit really mean? How can I set reasonable physical fitness goals for myself? How often and how hard should I exercise? What do I need to know about sports equipment and facilities?* and many others.

Your teenager will answer these questions in the context of his or her own fitness goals. Our approach will emphasize that not everyone wants to be a sports star, but that all people can enjoy the many benefits of exercise. Your teenager will learn about two different types of exercise: aerobic exercise—such as swimming and brisk walking—that gives the heart and lungs a workout; and anaerobic exercise—such as weightlifting and sprinting—that involves intense bursts of energy. Each student will complete a personal inventory and plan an individual fitness program. The hope is that this program will start your teenager on the path toward lifelong fitness.

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:

- Discuss how physical fitness is important outside the context of sports. Take turns identifying activities (such as dancing and traveling) that are more enjoyable if the participants are fit.
- Model healthy behavior by showing an interest in fitness and developing your own exercise program.
- Watch a sports event on television with your child. Discuss the plays, the players, and the strategy of the game.
- Take the time to exercise, play a sport, or otherwise be active with your child. Encourage your child to participate in some activity daily.

Of course, feel free to engage in other activities you think will encourage your teenager to lead a fit lifestyle. As a health teacher, one of my main goals for this class is to instill a sense of the importance of exercise. Thank you for joining me in teaching the many benefits of fitness to your teenager.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher