

# Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying nutrition and diet. In learning about the elements of nutrition, your teenager is learning about choosing healthy foods. In learning about the different food groups, your teenager is learning how to choose a balanced diet. Our studies will also include lessons about weight control and eating disorders. Throughout, our emphasis will be on following a diet that will help your teenager look and feel well and maintain an ideal weight.

Some questions your teenager will answer as we study diet and nutrition are: *What can eating the right foods do for me? What nutrients do I need to be healthy? What are nutritious snacks? What is my ideal weight? Where can a teen with an eating disorder get help?* and many others.

A well-balanced diet is essential to good health. In our world of fast-food restaurants, vending machines, and microwave ovens, planning a healthful diet may take some effort. However, by working together, we can provide your child with the information needed to enjoy the benefits of a balanced diet.

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 food shopping together. Read the labels on the foods you buy, and identify the nutrients and calories in the various food products.
- Visit a restaurant. Review the menu choices and discuss which dishes are likely to have a high fat content and which are likely to be low in fat. Select a meal that is low in fat and includes some vegetables or fruit. Then enjoy it together!
- Plan and prepare a meal together that includes servings from the following food groups: (1) bread, cereal, rice, and pasta group; (2) vegetable group; (3) fruit group; (4) meat, poultry, fish, dry bean, eggs, and nuts group; (5) milk, yogurt, and cheese group.

Of course, feel free to engage in other activities you believe will encourage your teenager to follow a healthy diet. Along with exercising regularly, eating properly is a key to a long and healthful life. Thank you for joining me in conveying this message to your teenager.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher