

Chapter**16****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 will then focus on growth and development during infancy, childhood, and adolescence. We will conclude with a study of adulthood and aging.

Some questions your teen will consider as we study these topics include: *How does a fetus develop? How are characteristics inherited? What are the physical, mental/emotional, and social changes that occur during adolescence? How can aging be a positive experience?*

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 teen:

- Spend an evening reviewing family pictures with your teen. 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 teens with your child. Afterward, discuss the issues that the characters confront. Ask your teen's opinion on how well the adolescent characters deal with their new independence, maturity, and conflicts.
- Work together to make a list showing the positive aspects of 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 teen 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