

**Chapter****6****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying the topic of relationships during the teen years. Together, we will discover how friendships begin to change during adolescence and the advantages of going out in a group. We will discuss the effects of peer pressure—both positive and negative—and learn refusal skills for resisting negative peer pressure. We will also explore ways to set limits in dating situations, as well as the benefits of practicing abstinence.

While considering these aspects of relationships, your teen will answer important questions, such as: *What are the qualities of a good friend? How can I make new friends? What is the difference between positive and negative peer pressure? How can I use refusal skills? Why is it important to set limits in dating situations? What are some ways to practice abstinence?*

These questions can be highly personal and sensitive. With your help, however, your teen will learn how to choose positive friendships, resist negative peer pressure, and practice abstinence. These skills will prove beneficial not only during the teen years but also as your child enters adulthood.

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:

- Discuss the qualities of a good friendship with your teen. Share your own experiences with friendships and how they have changed over the years. Explain why some friendships have endured while others have not.
- Work with your teen to create a list of fun activities in your community that teens could do in a group. You might check the local newspaper, Yellow Pages, or community Web site for ideas.
- Refusal skills are communication strategies that help people say no effectively. Help your teen develop these important skills by role-playing. Acting out the role of another teen, try to convince your teen to do something, and give your child the opportunity to practice resisting peer pressure.
- Make yourself available to discuss and answer questions your teen may have about dating, including setting limits and practicing abstinence.

Please engage in other activities you feel will be beneficial. Your support and encouragement are vital in helping your teen develop healthy peer relationships. Thank you for your continued involvement. Please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher