

**Chapter****8****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying nutrition. In learning about the elements of nutrition, your teen is learning about choosing healthful foods. In learning about the Food Guide Pyramid, your teen is learning how to develop a balanced eating plan. Our studies will also include information about choosing healthful meals and snacks. Throughout, our emphasis will be on choosing nutritious foods that will have a positive effect on your teen's overall health and wellness.

Some questions your teen will answer as we study nutrition are: *Why does my body need nutritious food? What are some sources of different nutrients? Which substances in food should be limited? How can I balance the different foods I eat? Why is it important to eat regular meals? How can I choose nutritious snacks?*

Good nutrition is essential to good health. In our world of fast-food restaurants, vending machines, and microwave ovens, eating healthful meals and snacks may take some effort. However, by working together, we can provide your child with the information needed to enjoy the benefits of good nutrition.

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:

- Go food shopping together. Read the Nutrition Facts panels on the labels of 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 ones are likely to be nutritious, such as high-fiber, low-fat meals. Select a nutritious meal that includes a variety of vegetables and fruit.
- 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 teen to follow a healthful eating plan. Along with regular physical activity, good nutrition is a key to a long and healthy life. Thank you for joining me in conveying this message to your teen.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher