

**Chapter****10****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In your teen's health class, we are currently studying tobacco and how it affects users and nonusers. Specifically, students will learn about the effects that tobacco use and exposure to tobacco smoke have on the body. Students will be reminded that tobacco is an extremely dangerous substance that is highly addictive because of the nicotine it contains. Because tobacco use is strongly linked to heart disease, various kinds of cancer, and other very serious diseases, our focus will be on tobacco's harmful effects and the benefits of a tobacco-free life. We will also study the respiratory system and how to protect respiratory health.

Some questions your teen will answer as we study this important topic include: *What substances in tobacco cause health problems? Why are all forms of tobacco harmful to health? How does tobacco affect various parts of the body? What are the parts of the respiratory system? How does the breathing process work? What are some illnesses that can damage the respiratory system? Why do people become addicted to tobacco? Why do teens begin using tobacco? How can I avoid tobacco use? How can I help others break the tobacco habit? How does tobacco smoke affect nonsmokers? How can I defend my rights as a nonsmoker?*

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:

- Make yourself available to answer questions and discuss concerns your teen may have about tobacco.
- Together, look through magazines for tobacco advertisements. Discuss the images that ads use to persuade people to smoke. Discuss what they do not tell the reader about the effects of smoking.
- If you were once a smoker, share the reasons you started smoking, and discuss the method(s) you used to quit. If you still smoke, talk about smoking's effects on your life today.
- Discuss what steps you use to keep your respiratory system healthy.
- Discuss your views and values on nonsmokers' rights. Discuss ways to request politely but effectively that people not smoke in your home, and ways to defend your right to a smoke-free environment in restaurants and other public places.

Please engage in any other activities that you believe will help your teen avoid tobacco use. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. As always, do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher