

Chapter**1****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has started a new course in health. The “health” that we will be studying means much more than being physically fit and not being sick. Being healthy also means feeling good about oneself and getting along with other people. It involves physical, mental/emotional, and social well-being—the three sides of what we call the “health triangle.”

Over the next few weeks, students will be learning how to balance their health triangle in order to achieve wellness. We are using the term *wellness* to refer to an overall state of well-being. Students also will be learning how the changes that take place during adolescence affect their health triangle. We shall explore together ways in which students can take responsibility for their own health—by making healthy choices and by abstaining from risk behaviors.

Some questions your child will answer as we begin this course are: *How can I keep my physical, mental/emotional, and social health in balance? How do my daily decisions contribute to wellness? What physical, mental/emotional, and social changes occur during adolescence? How can I develop positive health habits? How can I recognize and avoid risk behaviors?*

Your involvement and participation in your child’s health education is important. Teens take their lead from adults. By showing them good, positive health habits, you reinforce what they learn in their health class. To help you do this, I will send you this type of letter for every major topic that we study. In the letter, appropriate activities that you and your child can do together will be suggested. To begin this process, please plan to complete one or more of the following activities with your teen:

- Ask your child to draw a triangle and explain to you what is meant by a balanced health triangle. Discuss the balance of your child’s triangle and of your own.
- Visit a park or shopping mall together and do some “people watching.” Encourage your child to observe and comment on people who show healthy characteristics, such as good posture, a happy smile, and so on. Help your teen see that wellness means more than fitness.
- Engage in a healthful activity with your child, such as playing an outdoor game or taking a walk together. Point out how this contributes to mental/emotional and social health as well as to physical health.

Please plan other activities you think will help your child develop and maintain healthful habits. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss your child’s health education.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher