

**Chapter****7****Parent Letter and Activities**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child's health class is currently studying conflict resolution. As part of our study, we will be discussing how to avoid and prevent violence. Key to our work will be an understanding of the causes and consequences of abuse—the physical, emotional, or mental mistreatment of one person by another. Our goal is to more fully understand the nature of conflict in our lives and to learn constructive, positive, and nonviolent ways of resolving it.

Some questions your child will answer as we study these topics are: *How do conflicts occur and sometimes get out of hand? What are positive ways to manage anger? What are some skills for resolving conflicts? How does peer mediation work in schools? What factors contribute to teen violence? How can I protect myself from violence? What is the cycle of abuse? How can I avoid abuse?*

As you can see, these questions go to the very heart of serious social and personal issues. By answering them, your child will learn how to effectively handle the inevitable conflicts of life. Your child will also learn valuable safety precautions that can keep him or her from becoming a victim.

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:

- With your teen, think of examples of how you or other adult family members have used cooperation and compromise to resolve conflicts. Talk about how these skills are more than abstractions, but real skills for the real world.
- Make a Safety Checklist together for posting in your home. It can serve as a reminder of various safety rules—to lock doors and windows when you are home alone, avoid poorly lit streets, and so on—for everyone in the house.
- Avoid watching television shows that glorify or legitimize violence as a way to settle disputes. Do use television shows as a springboard to discuss with your teen the ways that characters handle conflicts in positive ways.
- As a family, organize or join a Neighborhood Watch or other crime prevention organization. Encourage your teen to actively participate.

Please feel free to engage in any other activities that will help your teen stay safe and avoid violence and abuse. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. As always, you may contact me for further information.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher