

ADVOCATING

FOR HEALTH

Model

An advocate is a person who speaks or writes in support of something. You are an advocate for health when you persuade others to make healthy choices. Read how Parker became an advocate for his grandfather's health.

When Parker learned about heart disease, he became concerned about his grandfather. After a heart attack, Parker's grandfather quit smoking. However, he did not change his eating habits or increase his activity level. Parker decided to write his grandfather a letter to tell him about his concerns.

Dear Grandpa,

I am writing this letter to tell you some important things I learned about heart disease. First of all, I learned that stopping smoking was one of the best things you can do for your heart. I was really proud of you when you quit smoking. It made me feel like I was more important than those cigarettes. I'm so glad you quit.

I've learned some other things about heart disease, too. Staying physically active can make your heart stronger and lower your blood pressure. It can also help you control your weight, and that's good for your heart. I was thinking that we could walk together every day and that would help both our hearts. I also learned that what we eat is important. We need to include more fruits and vegetables so we get the fiber and nutrients our bodies need. Maybe we could work together on this too.

Most of all, I want your heart to stay healthy so we can keep going fishing and watching hockey long time.

Love,
Parker



Practice

As you have learned, abstinence from sexual activity is the best protection against STDs. Practice your advocacy skills by pretending to be an advice columnist. Read this teen's letter and write a response that promotes abstinence from sexual activity before marriage.

Dear Dr. Leslie,

I am a student at Webster Middle School. Today in health class, we talked about abstinence from sexual activity. My teacher said that abstinence is the best choice for teens. But movies and TV shows never even talk about it. How should I interpret these mixed messages?

Wondering at Webster

Share your letter with others in your class. How is your response similar to or different from theirs?

Apply/Assess

See if you can get right to the point by developing a bumper sticker that contains an abstinence message. Your challenge will be to get a message across in just a few words.

Create a bumper sticker that makes a clear stand for abstinence. Draw your bumper sticker on a strip of butcher paper or poster board. You may use art, borders, or graphics to illustrate your work. Be prepared to explain why abstinence is the best choice for teens.



Advocacy

Using the skill of advocacy asks you to

- take a clear stand on an issue.
- persuade others to make healthy choices.
- be convincing.

Self-Check

- Did I take a clear stand?
- Is my bumper sticker persuasive to teens?
- Did I give reasons why abstinence is the best choice?

Abstinence  **Makes the HEART grow fonder**

The SAFEST SEX
is NO SEX!

I'm WAITING ...
because I'm WORTH IT!