

Chapter 5 Parent Letter and Activities

Dear Parent or Guardian,

The current topic of your teen's health class is mental and emotional problems. As you may be aware, children and teens do experience depression and other emotional disorders. Approximately one in five children and adolescents experience the signs and symptoms of an emotional disorder during the course of a year. Your son or daughter will learn about types of mental disorders, their symptoms, and treatments.

Your teen will explore the following topics in this chapter:

- Dealing with Anxiety and Depression.
- Mental Disorders.
- Suicide Prevention.
- Getting Help.

Your participation in your teen's health education is important. To support our classroom work, please complete one or more of the following activities with your teen: Ask your son or daughter to define *mental disorder* and name the symptoms of common mental disorders. Ask him or her what the difference is between mental disorders and short-term feelings of depression, anxiety, and anger. What are some of the warning signs that people exhibit when they are having trouble coping with emotional or mental problems. Have your teen describe his or her strategies for dealing with high-stress situations. Discuss professional mental health care alternatives should these strategies prove inadequate in dealing with particular situations.

Please plan other activities you think will help your son or daughter develop an informed and positive attitude toward mental health issues. Thank you for supporting our classroom work. Feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss your teen's health education.

Sincerely,

Health Teacher

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