

WHEN YOU ARE 15 TO 17

POINTS TO REMEMBER

SAFETY

- **AVOID** the use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
- **IF** it is necessary to keep a gun in your home, it should be stored unloaded and locked, with the ammunition locked separately from the gun. Keep the key where teenagers cannot have access.
- **ALWAYS** wear a seat belt correctly when riding in an automobile. **IF** you are **DRIVING**, **INSIST** your passengers wear seat belts. **ALWAYS** follow the speed limit. **NEVER** ride in a car if you suspect or know the driver has been drinking alcohol or using drugs.
- **LEARN** to swim and know the safety rules of water, **NEVER** swim alone. **NEVER** swim in fast moving water.
- **PROTECT** yourself from skin cancer by putting on sunscreen when outside for long periods of time. **AVOID** going to tanning beds.
- **NEVER** carry or use a weapon of any kind. **LEARN** to manage conflict nonviolently. Walk away if necessary.
- **LEARN** ways to protect yourself from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.
- **ALWAYS** wear a helmet when riding a bicycle, motorcycle, or a three or four wheeler.
- **AVOID** high noise levels, especially in music headsets. **WEAR** hearing protection when you're exposed to loud noise.
- **ALWAYS** wear protective equipment at work, when advised to do so, and **FOLLOW** safety procedures related to your job.
- **IF YOU** are experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, **TELL** your health care worker, a responsible adult, or call the **ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800-752-6200** for help.
- **MONITOR** and be aware of where your adolescent is and who his friends are. Set limits.

NUTRITION and ACTIVITY

- **EAT** three meals a day, choose a variety of healthy foods and eat meals with your family on a regular basis. **WHEN** you eat snacks, choose and prepare nutritious foods, such as fruit, raw vegetables, yogurt, whole grain cereal, or crackers. These good eating habits will help you maintain your weight.
- **LIMIT** eating high fat, low nutrient snacks, such as candy, chips, or sugar sweetened drinks. **DRINK** water instead of soda or sports drinks.
- **TAKE** a multi-vitamin containing Folic Acid daily.
- **TRY** to be physically active for 1 hour on most, if not all, days of the week.
- **LIMIT** TV time to no more than 2 hours once a day.

HEALTHY TEETH

- **BRUSH** your teeth twice a day and floss once a day.
- **WHEN** playing sports, wear protective sports equipment such as a mouth guard or face protector.
- **SCHEDULE** a dental visit every six months, unless your dentist recommends otherwise.
- **DO NOT** smoke, chew or use smokeless tobacco.

SOCIAL and ACADEMIC COMPETENCE

YOUTH:

- **IN** most instances it is important to stay connected with your family as you get older.
- **HOW** to make friends and keep them is an important life skill. Evaluating whether a friendship is no longer good for you is also important.
- **SPEND** time with family members. Help out at home.
- **TAKE** responsibility for getting your schoolwork done and being at school on time.
- **FOLLOW** your family rules, such as for curfews and driving.
- **ASK** for help when you need it.
- **CONSIDER** getting involved in your community about an issue that interests or concern youth.

PARENTS:

- **EMPHASIZE** the importance of school.
- **PRAISE** positive efforts.
- **RECOGNIZE** success and achievements.

MENTAL HEALTH

- **TAKE** on new challenges that will increase your self-confidence. **SET** reasonable and challenging goals.
- **CONTINUE** to develop your sense of identity and **CONTINUE** to learn about yourself (i.e., what is important to you, what you believe in, etc.)
- **LEARN** to feel good about yourself through learning what your strengths are, and listening to what good friends and valued adults say about you. **TRUST** your own feelings as well as listening to the ideas of good friends and valued adults.
- **ACCEPT** who you are and enjoy both the adult and the child in you.
- **LEARN** to recognize and deal with stress. **SEEK** help if you often feel angry, depressed, or hopeless.
- **UNDERSTAND** the importance of your religious and spiritual needs and try to fulfill them.

SEXUALITY

- **ASK** your health care provider any questions you may have about body changes during puberty, including variations from person to person. **GIRLS** may have questions regarding menstruation.
- **ASK** your health care provider any questions you may have about birth control or sexually transmitted diseases.
- **NOT HAVING SEX** is the safest way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection/AIDS. **STI's** can be transmitted by oral and anal sex also.
- **LEARN** about ways to say **NO** to sex. **KNOW** the concept of "**COERCION**", which means methods used to get a person to do something they do not want to do. These methods include, **PERSUASION** ("I know you really want to..."), **PRESSURE** ("If you really loved me you would..."), **MANIPULATION** ("You're the only one who understands me; I can't live without you..."), **BLACKMAIL** ("If you don't, I will..."), **GUILT** ("I took you out; you owe me", "I gave up friends, party, someone else for you..."), and **PUT DOWNS** ("No one else will ever want you...").

- **LEARN** different ways of being **ASSERTIVE** about sexual activity. **USE** statements like “When you ____, it makes me feel” or “I want you to or I will”. **AVOID** alcohol and drugs as these agents may be used to manipulate a person into sexual activity. **AVOID** situations that may lead to coercive attempts (example: being home alone with your boyfriend). **SUGGEST** other choices (“Let’s go get pizza”), **LEARN** about other consequences (“I could get pregnant”), or if necessary, **LEAVE** and **WALK** away. **EVERYONE** has the right to **REFUSE** to participate in sexual activity or to **END** the activity at any time.
- **IF** you are participating in sexual activity, including intercourse, protect yourself and your partners from **STI’s** and pregnancy by using contraceptives and condoms correctly and consistently. **DISCUSS** methods of birth control and **LEARN** about **SAFE SEX**.
- **HEALTHY** dating relationships are built on respect, concern, and doing things both of you like to do. Leave a relationship when you see signs of violence.