

Dear Families/Caregivers,

Emotions give meaning to our lives. They drive our feelings, thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and sense of self.

We have been learning about how emotions affect our bodies and impact our lives. Some examples of how emotions affect the body include increased heartrate, rapid breathing, blushing, sweating, butterflies in the stomach, sweaty palms, tense muscles, and nausea. All of these are natural responses to emotions and part of being human. But the brain also has the ability to interpret a situation and determine how to respond.

Here are a couple of ways to help your teen identify, accept, and regulate his or her emotions:

- When you sense your teen reacting emotionally to a situation, ask him or her to stop and think about what is causing the emotional reaction and how his or her body is responding. Help him or her understand that while all emotions are normal, he or she can choose how to respond to the emotion.
- Talk with your teen about how different people react differently to different situations. For example, when some teens are stressed about a test, they avoid studying; whereas other teens who are stressed about the same test may study excessively. Help your teen understand strategies that work well for him or her to deal with his or her emotions.

Emotions are an important part of understanding ourselves and others. Help your teen to understand, accept, and regulate his or her emotions by providing a model of emotional maturity.