

# FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

## A LETTER FROM YOUR TEEN'S HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Now that your son or daughter is a teenager, there are some things we would like to share with you that are important to provide the best care. Your son or daughter's body is changing, and so are his or her feelings. There are many health risks during the teenage years that we try to prevent, such as accidents, violence, unprotected sex, alcohol and drug use, and stress. Some areas of teen health that we may talk about during the appointment are:

- Diet, exercise, and body image
- Fighting, danger, and violence
- Sexuality and sexual behavior
- Safety and driving
- Smoking, drugs, and alcohol
- Working/Jobs
- Depression and stress
- Peer pressure and school
- Dating and relationships
- Family life

It is good to stay close to your child. It is also important for you to allow them some time alone to talk with their medical provider about their health and changes in their bodies and lives. This will help your teenager make good decisions. We encourage teenagers to share information about their health with their parents or guardians. However, there will be some things that your teenager may prefer to talk about with a doctor, nurse, or counselor. Washington State law allows teenagers over 13 to receive some health care services on their own. Health care providers must keep those services CONFIDENTIAL. "Confidential" means we will only share this information if a teenager says it is alright. We will also share this information when we judge there to be concerns of safety which includes imminent risk of harm to self or others or concerns of abuse or neglect.

We can contact you about most of the services your child receives. However, if your teenager receives the following services, we cannot give you information about these visits without permission from your son or daughter:

- The prevention or treatment of pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and other contagious diseases
- Care and counseling for drug or alcohol problems
- Mental Health diagnoses and treatment
- Sexual Orientation and preferred pronouns

We ask that you support these rules and help your teen learn to care for their own health needs. We look forward to providing ongoing medical care for your child. We will be happy to talk to you about the questions or concerns you may have about this letter and your child's health.