

Standard # 7 - Advocating for Self, Family, Friends and Community

Health advocacy is *taking action to influence others to address a health-related concern or to support a health-related belief*. Teachers can actively engage their students through role-modeling this behavior and providing opportunities for students to encourage others to practice healthful behaviors. Some ideas include:

- Discussing with students the positive and negative health choices being made by their friends. Talk about how to support the positive choices and how to intervene when their friend's behavior puts them at risk.
- Discuss how obeying laws that protect community health plays an important role in overall health.
- At various intervals in the course of the semester/trimester/quarter, take a break to encourage students to share health information and skills learned thus far. Ask their opinions about ways to use that information to create healthier communities.
- Look for opportunities for your students to engage in community events or actions that improve their own health, that of their families, friends or of the entire community including:
 - Engage in letter-writing campaigns
 - Use information from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to create a positive "social norming" campaign that emphasizes that more youth practice health-promoting behaviors than those who practice unhealthy behaviors.
 - Create poster campaigns
 - Create petitions for an action or health issue they support
 - Plan and carry out a health fair
 - Older students can prepare "testimony" on an important health issue which they can present to the class. Some may want to testify before City Council, the School Board or other community groups.