

## Teaching Skills-based Standards in the BVSD Health Curriculum

We know that instructional approaches to health that only focus on information acquisition are not likely to influence health-risk behaviors. Best practices in health education and public health have shifted to teaching youth critical thinking and life-long skills. Therefore, while it is vital for educators to remain abreast of current information that supports children's and adolescent's health, it is even more important that we enable and empower students to gather their own valid information and apply it in a way that is relevant to their lives.

The BVSD K-12 Health Education curriculum is based on the National Health Education Standards. These standards focus on teaching personal and social skills by having students actively participate in learning and teaching about health rather than having teachers merely provide information that is memorized and easily forgotten. Through learning health information and skills, youth develop "health literacy" - *the capacity of individuals to obtain, interpret, and understand basic health information and services and the competence to use such information and services in ways that enhance health.*

By teaching information through skills that promote physical, mental, emotional and social health, we can engage our youth to take an active role in improving their health today and for the rest of their lives.

The following pages provide teachers with background information and ideas that may be helpful in using a skill-building approach when teaching every unit of the Health curriculum.