Our class has been participating in the Too Good program developed by the Mendez Foundation to teach skills for healthy living and violence-free lives. As an extension of what was learned in the classroom, we encourage families to discuss and participate in activities that reinforce the lessons taught in Too Good.

Well-set goals serve as a compass keeping adolescents on course toward a well-designed future. Adolescents who set and reach personal goals have a stronger sense of self and make better decisions.

Activity: Family Goal-Setting Collage

In the Goal Setting lesson, our class learned the steps to reaching a goal and the four criteria for naming a goal. Have your teen interview you and ask the following questions regarding goal setting.

1. What is a goal you have set and accomplished in the past?
2. Did you experience any obstacles when trying to reach your goal and how did you manage those obstacles?
3. Do you have a goal you are currently working on?
4. Are there any obstacles that might prevent you from reaching that goal and how might you deal with some of those obstacles?

As a family, discuss a Family Goal - one that everyone can participate in. Examples include saving money for a family vacation, reducing water waste in the home, or collecting items throughout the house to sell at a garage sale in order to raise money for a charity.

Name Goal: __________________________________________________________________________________________

List Action Steps: 

1. __________________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________________________

After completing the activity, fill out the section below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your teen’s teacher.

Home Workout 1: Family Goal-Setting Collage

Student Name: ___________________________ Adult Signature: ___________________________
In class today, we learned a decision-making model to help us remember to stop and think when we have a decision to make. Through this activity, you and your teen will continue practicing healthy decision-making skills so your teen will be ready when faced with big decisions.

Max went to a party with his best friend Jack. Max’s mom drove them to the party, and Jack’s dad agreed to pick them up. When the party was over, Jack’s dad was waiting outside in his car. Max could smell that Jack’s dad had been drinking alcohol. Max’s parents told him to never get into a car if someone had been drinking alcohol. What should Max do?

1. Discuss Max’s possible choices. Write them in the chart below.

2. Discuss the positive and negative consequences for each choice. Write them in the chart below.

3. After your family has considered the positive and negative consequences, take a vote on the best choice. Write your decision in the space provided below the chart.

4. Now that you’ve made a decision, reflect on how a similar situation could be avoided in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Solution</th>
<th>Positive Consequences</th>
<th>Negative Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex: Max could just get in the car even though Jack’s father smells like he has been drinking.</td>
<td>• Max doesn’t have to endure an awkward confrontation. • Max doesn’t make Jack or his dad uncomfortable.</td>
<td>• Max could be seriously injured or die. • Max will be nervous or scared.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Family’s Decision

After completing the activity, fill out the portion below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your teen’s teacher.

Home Workout 2: Problem Solving

Student Name: ___________________________ Adult Signature: ___________________________
In class today, we learned how to identify and manage our emotions. We discussed the consequences of decisions based on emotions, and we learned that when we can recognize how our emotions influence our decisions, we are better prepared to make thoughtful, rational choices. Through these activities, you will help your teen continue to build emotional self-awareness and begin to recognize and appreciate the emotions of others.

**Activity: Facing our Feelings**

As a family, flip through a magazine and find pictures of people with different expressions and poses. For each picture, try on or imitate the person’s facial expression and body language. How does it make you feel? Discuss what might have caused the person to feel that way. Don’t let the text influence your story. Look only at the picture. For example, if the picture shows a person with a scowl on his face and his arms crossed, imitate his body language. Identify his emotion and think about what could have made him feel that way. Consider how you would respond if your best friend approached you in this manner.

Choose the best picture from the activity and answer the following questions:

1. What is the emotion? ________________________________________

2. How were you able to identify the emotion? ____________________________

3. What might have caused the person to feel that way? _______________________  

4. Try on the emotion. How do you feel? _________________________________

5. Would you have a positive or negative response if your best friend approached you wearing this emotion? Explain. ____________________________________________

After completing the activity, fill out the portion below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your teen’s teacher.
In class today, we learned effective communication and active listening skills. Teens who are effective communicators are better able to make decisions consistent with their goals and develop healthy relationships. This activity will help you and your teen continue to build the skills necessary for effective communication.

**Activity: Talk TV**

You and your family have been invited to appear on a talk show to discuss a problem you need help resolving. In preparation for the show, each family member will create a fictitious “problem” and write it down on a piece of paper.

The problem could be something like, “I have an upcoming science report due in a couple of weeks. The report requires a presentation in front of the whole class. I am really shy and afraid of public speaking. If I don’t do well, my grade will suffer.”

Once everyone has written down a problem, exchange papers, and take turns reading the problems aloud. As each family member discusses a problem, practice your active listening skills and show them support.

- Making eye contact
- Asking clarifying questions
- Paraphrasing the Speaker’s message
- Paying attention to body language
- Showing attentive posture

1. When talking about your problem, how did your family make you feel that they were listening?
   
   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

2. When you offered support to a family member who had a problem, how did you show you were really listening?
   
   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________

After completing the activity, fill out the portion below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your teen’s teacher.

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Home Workout 4: Talk TV

Student Name: ________________________________ Adult Signature: ____________________________
Home Workout 5
for adults and teens together

In class today, we learned that peer behavior, both positive and negative, is a strong influence on teen decision making. When teens associate with pro-social peers, they are more likely to conform to healthy norms and make responsible decisions. This activity will guide you through a conversation with your teen about positive and negative peer influence and how to make positive, healthy decisions when under pressure.

Activity: Positive Peers

Often the words “peer pressure” make us think of negative encounters. We assume that peer pressure takes the form of someone pushing or encouraging another person to drink alcohol, smoke a cigarette, or engage in some other form of risky behavior. The truth is peer pressure can be both good and bad. Teen friendships, interactions, and influences are a part of positive, healthy development.

When teens are part of a positive peer group, they get feedback on their personal characteristics; practice and gain social skills and confidence; learn the importance of cooperation; and how to work together to achieve group goals.

Effective communication is key to a healthy relationship. Have frequent conversations with your teen about the people they spend time with. Here are some guiding points you might find useful when talking with your teen about peer influence:

• Be yourself. You don’t need to pretend you don’t care when you do or act a certain way because you think that’s what the other person wants.

• Be aware of the type of friendships you want. Surround yourself with people that make good choices and will help and encourage you to do the same.

• Even though a friend or friends may be comfortable with certain actions and certain choices, it doesn’t mean you need to be.

• Trust yourself to make sure you feel respected, safe and comfortable.

After completing the activity, fill out the section below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your teen’s teacher.

Home Workout 5: Positive Peers

Student Name: ___________________________ Adult Signature: ___________________________
We started class today with a discussion of what it means to be “yourself”. When you feel comfortable being yourself, you are comfortable with who you are. When you have self-respect, you believe that you do not have to hide or change who you are around others. Self-confidence gives you the courage to take healthy risks and try to reach the goals you set in life. We practiced using positive self-talk, and changing negative thoughts to positive ones, to build our self-confidence and self-respect.

Any group of people, a team, an organization, or a family, is stronger when the members respect themselves and each other. We all bring a different set of skills, ideas, and attitudes that together strengthen the group and its abilities making it easier to work with and learn from each other. This activity will give you and your teen an opportunity to discuss each family member’s assets.

**Activity: Family Portrait**

Each member of the family brings a set of skills, ideas, and know-how to the group. Some of us are good at sports. Some are good at fixing things. Some of us are good at solving problems. We also each have something we need to improve on. When we assemble all of these attributes and the things we want to improve, we build a composite of what we can do and what makes us strong.

Hold a family meeting. At the meeting, give each member a pen and a sheet of paper. Ask each member to write down the things they are good at. Then, ask each member to write down at least one thing that they would like to improve. Combine your assets in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Assets</th>
<th>Improvement list</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Asset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After completing the activity, fill out the section below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your child’s teacher.

**Home Workout 6: Family Portrait**

Student Name: ___________________________ Adult Signature: ___________________________
We started today's lesson by defining conflict as a disagreement between at least two parties. Depending on how we approach a conflict, it can turn out well or it can turn out badly. Today we looked at conflicts not just as problems to be solved but also as opportunities to build stronger relationships.

We practiced the healthy approaches to resolving a conflict listed in the chart below. Review and discuss them as a family to prepare for the activity that follows. In this activity, you and your teen will have a discussion about how to resolve a conflict using the healthy conflict resolution approaches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Your Feelings &amp; Your Point of View</th>
<th>Tell the other person how you feel about the conflict and clearly state your point of view.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apologize &amp; Talk it Out</td>
<td>Tell the other person, “I’m sorry,” and talk out your disagreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steer Clear</td>
<td>Stay away from a dangerous conflict, for example if drugs, violence, or weapons are involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Agree to give up some of what you want in order to resolve the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Win-Win</td>
<td>Come up with an alternative that all parties agree on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff</td>
<td>If it is a small problem, let it go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to Disagree</td>
<td>Acknowledge that an agreement will not be reached and tolerate each other’s opinion and stop arguing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity: Pick Your Approach**

As a family, discuss how you would resolve the following conflict using one of the healthy conflict resolution approaches.

Your family has come up with a hilarious skit for the talent show at your upcoming family reunion. You write the skit together, but you disagree on who should play each role. Everyone wants to play the main character that gets all of the laughs. Which approach would you take to resolve the conflict? Explain your answer below.

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

After completing the activity, fill out the portion below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your child’s teacher.

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Home Workout 7: Pick Your Approach

Student Name: ______________________________ Adult Signature: ______________________________
In class today, we learned that a conflict doesn’t have to escalate. The various conflict de-escalation strategies are helpful to de-escalate a conflict before it becomes serious.

- Relax your body language to signal that you are ready to talk not fight
- Speak in a calm tone of voice; no yelling
- Call the other person by their name to make a personal connection and show respect
- Identify the problem without blaming the other person
- Use words like “let’s”, “we”, “our”, and “together” to show your willingness to cooperate

Through this activity, you and your teen will identify ways to de-escalate a conflict.

Encourage your teen to manage anger by taking a break from frustrating situations. Taking a walk, talking to a friend, playing a game or instrument, painting, drawing or listening to music are great ways to clear our minds. Using positive self-talk by saying, “It’s no big deal” or “I can handle this,” helps diffuse angry thoughts. Using these strategies will help your teen to better manage their own emotions in a conflict and to be better able to respond to others appropriately.

Activity: A Peaceable Place

Managing family conflicts peacefully reinforces a safe family environment and builds stronger relationships at home. De-escalating a conflict takes preparation and practice. Think about a conflict that your family is facing now and apply the de-escalating strategies to resolve the conflict through Compromise or to find a Win-Win solution.

Discuss the conflict as a shared family problem. Parent(s): decide who should speak first and who should listen, keeping in mind that sharing viewpoints promotes understanding making it easier to work together to find a resolution. Have each family member commit to using one of the de-escalating strategies discussed above, the next time a family conflict arises. Use the chart below to document your progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Conflict:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Member</th>
<th>De-escalating Strategy</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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After completing the activity, fill out the portion below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your child’s teacher.

Home Workout 8: A Peaceable Place

Student Name: ____________________________ Adult Signature: ____________________________
Home Workout 9
for adults and teens together

In class today, we learned that bullying is repeated, aggressive behavior intended to intimidate or hurt another person physically or emotionally. We also learned that there are three participants in most bullying situations: the person engaging in the bullying behavior, the target of the bullying behavior, and the witness or witnesses to the bullying behavior. We discussed what to say in a bullying situation from the point of view of each of the three participants.

Targets and witnesses of bullying behavior should respond assertively by standing tall, making eye contact, and speaking up. Assertive responses communicate to the bully that their behavior is unacceptable. Targets and witness should also alert a trusted adult to the situation. The person using the bullying behavior should find healthy ways to manage their aggression like joining a sports team. Teens that use bullying behaviors should also own up to their actions, alert a trusted adult to their behavior, and ask for help to change it.

In this activity, you will help your teen respond assertively to bullying situations.

Activity: Assertive Response

As a family, read and discuss the scenarios below. Work together to draft an assertive response to the bully. Pretend you are the bully in the situation and role-play communicating the response assertively with your teen. Practice the Assertive Communication technique: stand tall, make eye contact, and speak with a confident tone of voice. Provide constructive feedback to help build and reinforce the skill.

1. An older soccer teammate of yours keeps getting in your face and putting you down because you are not as athletic as he or she is. This is the second time that you have been the target of this aggressive behavior. As the target, write what you could say to your teammate about his or her behavior.

   __________________________________________________________________________________

2. You invite a few friends over to play video games and eat pizza. One of your friends constantly picks on your little brother. Your little brother looks up to you and likes to hang out with you. As the witness, write what you could say to your friend about his or her behavior.

   __________________________________________________________________________________

Encourage your teen to share his or her problems with you. Assure them that it is safe to talk about whatever is troubling them. If your teen is the target or the witness of bullying behavior, be clear that it is a good idea to report the event to a responsible adult. Remind your teen that reporting is not the same as snitching or tattling. Regardless of the situation, hitting back or retaliating is not the right solution. Hitting back doesn’t communicate strength; it just escalates the conflict.

Social Perspectives Grade 7

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Home Workout 10
for adults and teens together

Throughout this course, we learned how to identify and manage our emotions, build relationships with friends who are positive influences, and respect ourselves and others by talking problems out and asking for what we need with confidence. We also learned how to peacefully resolve a conflict and how to deal with a conflict if it escalates.

In class today, we talked about what to do when peer conflicts aren’t resolved peacefully and escalate to violence. We learned how to recognize the warning signs for violence so that we can evaluate a situation and make the decision to leave or get help from an adult. In this activity, you and your teen will continue to practice and develop the skills you learned in this course.

Activity: The Total Package

As a family, discuss how you would apply the skills that you learned in this course to the following situation:

You meet your friends at the park. They also invited a guy from school who is a known troublemaker and always picks fights. The guy immediately starts intimidating another kid on the basketball court. Some of your friends get excited and start to gather around to see what happens.

Place a checkmark next to the risk factors in this situation.

- There’s no adult supervision.
- The other person is a known troublemaker.
- A crowd of people is encouraging a fight.

Consider the consequences. If this situation did escalate into violence, what are some possible consequences for the people involved?

Aggressor: ____________________________________________

Target: ______________________________________________

Witnesses: ____________________________________________

Now that you’ve identified the risk factors and considered the consequences of the situation escalating into violence, how would you handle the situation?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________________________

After completing the activity, fill out the section below, cut along the dotted line, and return it to your child’s teacher.

Home Workout 10: The Total Package

Student Name: ________________________________ Adult Signature: ________________________________