

Dear Parents/Guardians of Sixth and Seventh Grade Students,

We are looking forward to working with you during this upcoming school year to help your students learn and practice healthy behaviors. Sixth grade students will have a 9-week health rotation with Mrs. LaViolet, while seventh grade students will have a 7-week health rotation with either Mrs. LaViolet or Mr. Albert.

Throughout the two-year health rotation students will be introduced to numerous health topics that are developmentally appropriate at each grade level. These include such areas as nutrition, community resources, substance use and abuse, personal health, CPR, and disease prevention. At the 7th grade level, we have added lessons on Suicide Prevention taught by our Guidance Counselor. We also want you to be aware that a Growth and Development Unit is taught as part of the health curriculum at Gorham Middle School. The goals of this unit are to:

1. Encourage communication between students and their families.
2. Provide accurate information in a simple, straightforward manner using gender-inclusive language.
3. Continue to develop an understanding and appreciation of the changes taking place in their growing bodies, and the variance in the rate of growth and maturity in individuals.
4. Provide an understanding of STD (sexually transmitted disease) transmission and prevention.
5. Provide an understanding of the different stages of fertilization, pregnancy, and birth.
6. Introduce the concept of preventive health care for the reproductive systems including abstinence and contraception.

The Growth and Development Unit at the 7th grade level may include videos from amaze.org along with a teacher-developed slideshow. An informational packet as well as BrainPop videos may be used at the 6th grade level. These materials are available for your review by emailing or calling either of us at school (222-1220) between 7:00 and 8:00 A.M. or after 2:20 P.M.

We strongly encourage students to discuss what has been covered in class with adults at home. In the sixth grade, one homework assignment is to have a discussion with an adult at home about puberty and have that adult sign off that a conversation took place. We want to work with you to educate your child in all areas of health. Please ask your students what they are doing in health and take advantage of the opportunity to be involved. We would be happy to provide further information or answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to call us or contact us by email: martha.laviolet@gorhamschools.org or denis.albert@gorhamschools.org

Sincerely,
Denny Albert
Martha LaViolet
Health Education
Gorham Middle School