

PERSONAL POWER

Dear Parent,

Your child will be participating in the **Safer, Smarter Teens** personal safety curriculum over the next several weeks. The *Safer, Smarter Teens* curriculum was developed by me, Lauren Book, M.S.Ed., in collaboration with a developmental psychologist and career educators, to arm your child with the necessary skills to avoid sexual abuse and exploitation. It is age-appropriate and provides practical strategies to help teens protect themselves without being explicit or frightening.

Parents and other responsible adults want to protect children from those who might harm them, but no child can be supervised 24 hours a day. Middle school students by nature want to be more independent and fit in with their peer group. The *Safer, Smarter Teens* curriculum will teach your child ways that he or she can reduce the likelihood of being abused and how to get help if needed.

The curriculum is taught through six lessons that incorporate videos in which I review scenarios involving middle school students that cover our topic areas. The teacher then directs in-class discussions and activities, including small-group work and journal prompts. Information is sent home to you after each lesson to build your background knowledge of the day's topic, to provide you and your child the opportunity to extend the discussion further, and to allow for more individual attention to this important topic. This discussion also helps to keep the lines of communication open between you and your child, which is key to his or her safety. We want teens to recognize that:

- Building self-esteem increases responsible behavior, including assisting others.
- Safe relationships involve a balance of power.
- Setting personal boundaries means they have the right to say "no" to anything and anyone that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- They need to have a few adults they trust whom they can go to whenever a situation makes them feel scared or uncomfortable.
- They can learn to recognize "red flags," such as secrets or threats, that may be warning signs of unsafe situations.

The activities in the *Safer, Smarter Teens* curriculum have been designed to meet existing educational standards while imparting critical personal safety information. If you have any questions about the curriculum, please contact your child's teacher. You can learn more about the curriculum by visiting SaferSmarterTeens.org.

Thank you,



Lauren Book, M.S.Ed.
Founder/CEO, Lauren's Kids

ABOUT LAUREN'S KIDS: *Lauren's Kids was founded by child abuse survivor, prevention advocate, and elementary school educator Lauren Book. The organization educates adults and children about sexual abuse topics through an in-school curriculum and speaking engagements around the world. The goal of Lauren's Kids is to create a world where the sexual abuse and exploitation of children is not tolerated. Lauren's Kids is a designated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.*