



## TEACHING TIPS: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

This program is planned to promote health—to help people stay healthy. Included in the program is a series of health education handouts (**Take Care of Yourself**) and one-page leaflets (**Teaching Tips**) to use when working on a one-to-one basis with a family. As the title suggests, the program is all about keeping healthy, rather than dealing with health problems after they happen. Teaching members of families how to stay healthy is especially important because it:

- Emphasizes keeping well instead of being sick
- Helps avoid some illnesses
- Helps save money that would otherwise be spent for doctor bills and medicines
- Improves the health of family members

Each of the brief handouts deals with an important subject. Each should be useful to you as you explore health promotion (prevention of health problems).

Your role is much more than just passing out printed materials to families. Perhaps you have already found that this printed material works better when you have a plan. How you use the material is very important. The goal is to get people to read, understand and use the information.

Some of the handouts may raise more questions than they answer. Some may not contain all the information that people want to know. You will need to go over each handout with the homemakers. This will help them understand it better, and it will be of value to you in getting to know the needs and interests of different families.

The **Teaching Tips** sheets suggest how to use the health education handouts and answer some of the questions that people may ask.

When you notice good changes in the health behavior of family members, give them (and yourself) a pat on the back. Such changes mean you are doing a good job.

### Preventing Health Problems

Would you rather be healthy than sick? This question is so simple that you may wonder why it has been asked. It is really more of a reminder than a question. ALL of us care about our health, but too many people do not take very good care of their health . . . until they begin to lose it.

For instance, most people do not think about the importance of electricity in their lives until the power fails. We take it for granted, until we have to do without it. Losing your health is something like this, only more important. Power lines can be fixed and electricity returned to the home. Health is not always repaired so easily.

Some people begin to care about their health only when they are sick. Then they realize how important good health really is. For some, nothing will restore the good health they once enjoyed. Do not let this happen to you, your loved ones and members of the families you work with.

The **Take Care of Yourself** program will help people see health as an important part of their lives. It covers some basic health practices that help keep all of us well. Use the handout **To Your Health** first. This handout introduces the topic of health promotion (keeping well) and leads into the other parts of the program. As long as the introductory handout is used first, it does not make any difference which handout is used next. In fact, you may decide not to use all

of the materials with some families. Let a family's health needs and interests help you decide which of the handouts you will use.

## Breaking the Ice

Some topics—and health may be one of them—are a bit awkward to start talking about. To just give the homemaker a handout and say, "Let's talk about health today," is not the best way to handle this. There is a good chance that she may not want to discuss health at that time. First, create some interest in the subject. A special activity can be used that will interest most program homemakers and encourage them to talk about health.

A supply of emergency telephone number stickers is available to you. One of these is shown below:

	Police _____	Fire Dept. _____
	Doctor _____	Poison Control Center _____
	Hospital _____	Ambulance/Rescue Squad _____
	Pharmacist _____	
	Dentist _____	

To "break the ice," give one of the stickers to the homemaker. Explain the importance of having these emergency numbers handy in case they are needed. Sit down with her and write in as many of the emergency numbers as she knows. Encourage and help her to write the numbers in the proper spaces.

It is a good idea for you to carry a telephone directory in case the family cannot locate theirs. You can look up numbers for the homemaker and check to make sure they are correct. This is very important.

You will be given a list of poison control centers in Texas. List the telephone number of the poison control center nearest the family's home.

Do not be surprised if this activity takes one entire home visit. That is all right because the time you spend will be very helpful to the family and to you. You will discover whether or not the family has a doctor and a dentist. You will also learn how much the homemaker knows about emergency health services (poison control centers, ambulances, etc.) in her community. This activity also will be useful to other family members. If an emergency happens and a call for help must be made, they will have a handy list of local emergency numbers.

Once the emergency numbers have been written in, remove the protective paper on the back and place the sticker on the telephone. Use a broad surface where the numbers can be seen easily, even while the phone is being used. To keep the sticker clean and prevent smudging of the numbers, you may want to cover it with clear, cellophane tape.

It is important to have emergency telephone numbers handy even if there is no phone in the house. Some people use a neighbor's phone to make emergency calls. When a family has no phone, the emergency sticker should be placed where it can be seen easily and is not likely to be lost, such as on a refrigerator or cabinet door.

After the emergency telephone number has been placed, give the homemaker a copy of the introductory handout, **L-1639, To Your Health**. Explain that you plan to discuss the information in the handout on your next visit and ask her to read it before your next meeting.

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