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Mark Zelman was a Professor of Biology at Aurora University, Aurora, Illinois. He received a bachelor's degree in biology from Rockford College. He also received a PhD in microbiology and immunology from Loyola University of Chicago and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago. Dr. Zelman's research focused on prevention and control of infectious diseases, mechanisms of antibiotic resistance, and community factors affecting public health. He taught science education courses for high school teachers. He published articles on microbiology, infectious disease, autoimmune disease, and biotechnology, and he wrote two college texts on human diseases and infection control. Dr. Zelman worked with the West Africa AIDS Foundation in Ghana and other public health projects in the US and abroad. He was an officer of the Illinois State Academy of Sciences and Editor-in-Chief of the Academy's scientific journal, *Transactions*.

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Lindsay Armbruster experiences, on a daily basis, the impact that optimism, self-efficacy, and persistence can have on a class, an individual, and on students' health behaviors. As a result, her teaching focuses on strengths and possibilities and is highly influenced by the theories of skills-based health education and positive psychology. Lindsay is certified as both a K–12 Health Education teacher and K–12 Library Media Specialist in the state of New York. Lindsay has been teaching Health Education since 2004, ranging all grade levels—kindergarten through twelfth grade as well as graduate school—with most of her experience occurring at the middle school level. Lindsay received her bachelor's degree in school and community health education from the State University of New York College at Brockport and her master's degree in curriculum development and instructional technology from the University at Albany. Lindsay also earned a second master's degree in Library Media at St. John Fisher University. She has won the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NYSAHPERD) Health Teacher of the Year award and the Society of Health & Physical Educators (SHAPE) America Eastern District Health Teacher of the Year award. Lindsay is a frequent presenter at local, state, and regional conferences.

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Brief Contents

Module 1 Foundations for Health and Wellness 1

Module 2 Personal Health and Wellness 53

Module 3 Food, Nutrition, and Physical Activity 123

Module 4 Mental and Emotional Health 185

Module 5 Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs 257

Module 6 Safety 331

Module 7 Social Health 387

Module 8 Violence 439

Module 9 Human Development and Reproduction . . . 485

Module 10 Sexual Health 513

SAMPLE

Contents

Module 1 **Foundations for Health and Wellness 1**

Lesson 1.1 Learning About Health and Wellness 2
Review and Assessment 10
Lesson 1.2 Recognizing Factors That Affect Health and Wellness 11
Review and Assessment 20
Lesson 1.3 Building Skills for Health and Wellness 21
Review and Assessment 34
Lesson 1.4 Knowing How Your Body Works 35
Review and Assessment 52

Module 2 **Personal Health and Wellness 53**

Lesson 2.1 Caring for Your Skin, Hair, and Nails 54
Review and Assessment 66
Lesson 2.2 Keeping Your Mouth, Eyes, and Ears Healthy 67
Review and Assessment 77
Lesson 2.3 Getting Enough Sleep 78
Review and Assessment 91
Lesson 2.4 Infectious Diseases 92
Review and Assessment 106
Lesson 2.5 Noninfectious Diseases 107
Review and Assessment 122

Module 3 **Food, Nutrition, and Physical Activity 123**

Lesson 3.1 Getting Enough Nutrients 124
Review and Assessment 134
Lesson 3.2 Following a Balanced Eating Pattern 135
Review and Assessment 151
Lesson 3.3 Understanding Physical Activity and Fitness 152
Review and Assessment 163
Lesson 3.4 Getting Enough Physical Activity 164
Review and Assessment 175
Lesson 3.5 Staying Safe During Physical Activity 176
Review and Assessment 184

SAMPLE

Module 4 **Mental and Emotional Health 185**

Lesson 4.1 Building Mental and Emotional Health 186
Review and Assessment 196
Lesson 4.2 Making Sense of Your Emotions 197
Review and Assessment 207
Lesson 4.3 Managing Stress 208
Review and Assessment 219
Lesson 4.4 Recognizing Mental Illnesses 220
Review and Assessment 229
Lesson 4.5 Getting Help for Mental Illnesses 230
Review and Assessment 237
Lesson 4.6 Body Image, Disordered Eating, and Eating Disorders 238
Review and Assessment 247
Lesson 4.7 Preventing Suicide 248
Review and Assessment 256

Module 5 **Tobacco, Alcohol, and Other Drugs 257**

Lesson 5.1 Understanding Substance Use Disorders 258
Review and Assessment 268
Lesson 5.2 Medicine and Your Health 269
Review and Assessment 281
Lesson 5.3 Tobacco and Vaping and Your Health 282
Review and Assessment 294
Lesson 5.4 Alcohol and Your Health 295
Review and Assessment 305
Lesson 5.5 Other Drugs and Your Health 306
Review and Assessment 317
Lesson 5.6 Preventing and Treating Substance Use, Misuse, and Abuse 318
Review and Assessment 330

Module 6 **Safety 331**

Lesson 6.1 Promoting Personal Safety 332
Review and Assessment 345
Lesson 6.2 Promoting Safety in the Community and Online 346
Review and Assessment 358

SAMPLE

Lesson 6.3 Knowing Basic First Aid 359
Review and Assessment 370
Lesson 6.4 Protecting Environmental Health 371
Review and Assessment 386

Module 7 Social Health 387

Lesson 7.1 Relationships and Your Health 388
Review and Assessment 403
Lesson 7.2 Family Relationships 404
Review and Assessment 414
Lesson 7.3 Peer Relationships 415
Review and Assessment 427
Lesson 7.4 Dating Relationships and Abstinence 428
Review and Assessment 438

Module 8 Violence 439

Lesson 8.1 Bullying and Cyberbullying 440
Review and Assessment 452
Lesson 8.2 Unwanted Sexual Activity 453
Review and Assessment 463
Lesson 8.3 Abuse and Neglect 464
Review and Assessment 475
Lesson 8.4 Violence in the Community 476
Review and Assessment 484

Module 9 Human Development and Reproduction . . . 485

Lesson 9.1 Human Development 486
Review and Assessment 492
Lesson 9.2 Changes During Puberty 493
Review and Assessment 503
Lesson 9.3 Human Reproduction 504
Review and Assessment 512

SAMPLE

Module 10 **Sexual Health** 513

Lesson 10.1 What Is Sexuality? 514
Review and Assessment 525
Lesson 10.2 Sexual Feelings and Abstinence 526
Review and Assessment 534
Lesson 10.3 Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) 535
Review and Assessment 546
Lesson 10.4 HIV/AIDS 547
Review and Assessment 554
Lesson 10.5 Teen Pregnancy and Parenthood 555
Review and Assessment 563
Lesson 10.6 Pregnancy Prevention 564
Review and Assessment 575

Glossary 576

Index 598

SAMPLE

Feature Contents

CASE STUDIES

A Day in the Life of Taylor 7
The Genetic Impact for Oliver, Kylie, and Alejandro 14
Changes in Malcolm's Hygiene 56
Ava's Wake-Up Routine 83
Brian Fights off Infections 103
Sawyer Copes with Cancer 112
Theo's Taste in Food 147
Walk in My Shoes: Jaquan's Story 154
Sarah Slacks Off 180
Gia's Self-Esteem 194
Sameera Is in a Slump 202
A Busy Week for Charlie 212
Best Friends: Conor and Julia 226
Asher's Quest to Win 241
Kevin's Decision to Vape 263
Veda's Headache 270
Kara's Babysitting Conundrum 301
Mateo's Risky Behavior 309
Brianna's Social Media Challenge 350
Seiji's Paint Job 376
Luca and His Uncle Julian 408
Kalynn's Best Friend Trouble 418
Martina's First Date 432
Aarav and Rajesh: Boys Will Be Boys 471
Akiko Feels Left Behind 495
Jake Learns About Reproduction 509
Cameron and Tracee's Not-So-Magical Relationship 533
Aiden's "Perfect" Relationship 540
Aparna Chooses Abstinence 567

BUILDING YOUR SKILLS Community Connections

Your School Environment 30
Blood Donation 42
Family History 121
Being Thankful Supports Your Health 205
Advocating for an Opioid-Free Life 280
Resisting Peer Pressure 291
Addiction Prevention 320
Planning for an Emergency 343
Advocating for the Environment 381
Be Assertive 396
The Power of Consent 455
Peer Pressure Throughout the Life Span 502
Promoting Acceptance, Tolerance, and Unity 523
Testing and Treatment 544

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To the Student

We wrote this exciting textbook for middle school health and wellness classes based on our experiences as professors of psychology (Catherine Sanderson) and biology (Mark Zelman), and as the accomplished authors of high school and college-level textbooks. Our backgrounds give us a deep well of knowledge of the most current scientific theory and research to draw from.

Perhaps the most valuable experience we had in preparing us to write this book is our roles as parents to a combined total of seven children. After all, in writing this book, we both reflected frequently on our experiences as parents and our goal of ensuring that our own children maintain excellent physical, mental and emotional, and social health.

This book includes all of the standard topics found in middle school health and wellness books—including self-talk, self-compassion, and self-care; body positivity, neutrality, and compassion; health effects of vaping; medication and drug abuse (including opioids); digital citizenship and personal digital footprint; how social media affects physical, mental and emotional, and social health; and healthy relationships. We wanted our book to give middle school students the most current health information, presented in an engaging writing style so students would enjoy reading the book. We included a focus on practical health skills that young people can use to develop and promote positive health and wellness habits throughout their lives.

As the authors of high school and college-level textbooks, we felt confident in our research and writing abilities, but felt that the pedagogy was better left to health teachers. We would like to thank Lindsay Armbruster and Mary McCarley for developing the skills-based questions, activities, and resources that are a vital part of this course. We are delighted with the final product, and wish all readers of this book a lifetime of health.



Catherine A. Sanderson

Mark Zelman

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