

Dear Family,

We have come to the fourth theme of *Fully Alive*, our Family Life program. Because the partnership of home, church, and school is so important, this letter is written to let you know what we talk about in class and to offer some ideas for your involvement.

### **About Theme Four**

Theme Four of *Fully Alive* is called “Growing in Commitment.” Each one of us is challenged to grow in commitment to God and to each other. This is part of what it means to be fully human. Growth toward maturity is never a straight path. As children learn to make more decisions about their lives, they need to know that freedom is best understood as a freedom *for*, rather than a freedom *from*. Commitment is really the free gift of ourselves to being the best people we can be at each stage of our life. For more information go to [www.acbo.on.ca](http://www.acbo.on.ca).

### **In Theme Four we will**

- discuss some of the feelings the students have about growing up and examine the relationship between freedom and responsibility.
- analyze and practise the process of making decisions.
- explore the connection between commitments and responsibilities and reflect on what it means to be authentic people and to create balance in their lives.

### **Working together at home and at school**

- Growing up and becoming an adult is hard work, and young people need family support. You can show this support by encouraging your child to make more decisions and by being patient when things don’t work out as expected. Learning from small mistakes is part of growing up. Young people also need the safety of limitations in areas in which they do not have the experience or maturity to make independent decisions.
- The virtue highlighted in Theme Four is perseverance. In class we will discuss perseverance as the virtue that allows us to overcome obstacles and patiently meet the challenges in our lives. Children need encouragement to persevere, not only because it is an important habit for the rest of their lives, but also to experience the pleasure of overcoming difficulties and to develop the confidence that comes from success.
- At school the students will be learning that there are no short cuts to maturity and that trying to grow up too quickly deprives young people of the experiences and time they need to become fully mature. Our society puts a lot of pressure on children as young as 8 or 9 to assume the styles and behaviours of much older teens. It can be difficult for parents to resist this trend, but there are good reasons for doing so. It can result in preteens and young teenagers being exposed to situations that they do not have the maturity to handle.
- As children grow up they tend to be more private and share less of their day-to-day lives with their parents. There are times when they have problems that worry them, but are often hesitant to talk to an adult about their worries. This is particularly true if they have been involved in something they know their parents would disapprove of. It’s important for young people to know that their parents or guardians are always ready to listen, and that even when they get upset or angry, their love for their children is not in question.
- The students will discuss a variety of responsibilities related to their commitment to being a family member. One of these responsibilities is an effort to understand the viewpoint of other

family members. This is especially important for parents and young people, who often find themselves frustrated by arguments that seem to go nowhere. You might ask your child about this responsibility and how it applies to your family.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_