

# **UNIT 6**

*Conclusion*

# DreamMakers – DreamBreakers

Unit 6 centers on the spiritual aspects of the individual and the importance of healthy spiritual development in living a productive life of mature freedom and responsibility. The grandmothers take the opportunity to share their spiritual experiences and how these experiences affected their character development. In Lesson 32, students are encouraged to choose at least one form of accountability to help them keep the commitments they have made during the course of this curriculum. They are asked to write a story or make a poster about one positive decision they have made while studying this material as well as a description of something they have learned in each of the six units.

Unit 6 closes with a celebration of students' commitments to choose healthy lifestyles in the pursuit of positive goals – a rite of passage. The purpose of the celebration is to commission the students to move forward into the next stage of life – choosing positive dreams, setting healthy boundaries, and maintaining a moral and productive lifestyle, while exercising mature freedom and responsibility. Many suggestions are given for arranging this celebration, which include ways to involve parents in the event.

In this unit, the GOING DEEPER sections concentrate on helping students to understand the reality of the “unseen world” so they will comprehend that what is inside of them is at least as important as what is outside. Students are shown how to apply what they have learned to break destructive cycles, such as anger and revenge, and to reverse these cycles through forgiveness and positive life decisions. The PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION pages promote closer relationships between parents and their adolescents by encouraging a sharing of beliefs, experiences, and values based on the material in this unit. These closer relationships, it is hoped, will help the students to maintain their focus on making their dreams come true.

## INTRODUCTION TO UNIT 6

This is the first lesson of the final unit. In Units 2 through 4, the students were primarily presented with facts about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex. For some students, the information about the negative consequences associated with these activities will be sufficient for them to resist societal and peer pressures to experiment.

But longitudinal studies have shown that, for many adolescents, information about the dangers is not enough by itself to prevent involvement. Unit 5 considered some of the deepest emotional and psychological reasons that adolescents are drawn to self-destructive behaviors. Unit 5 also gave students some skills, such as encouraging healthy beliefs and establishing boundaries to cope with these emotional pressures.

This final unit will introduce students to the influence, positive and negative, of a third dimension of human life. Every major culture of the world has recognized that humans are not only physical and psychological beings, but men and women also have a spiritual dimension to their lives. Cross-cultural studies also indicate that while morals are transmitted by many means such as families, media, and education, enduring moral values are nearly always rooted in a religious tradition.

This final unit will explore the mysterious but powerful influence of the spiritual dimension of life on the issues of drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex. For many of your students, it is likely that only a spiritual awakening will have a powerful enough influence on their lives to hold them back from the pressures that could draw them into self-destructive behaviors.

Your role as a teacher is not to advocate that your students join a particular religion or church (or yours, if you identify with a particular religious tradition), or any other tradition. That is a decision best left to the students themselves and their families.

However, by exposing them to the spiritual dimension of life and allowing them to decide for themselves, you are giving them another powerful tool to combat the lure of the destructive behaviors we are considering in this course.

To allow you as the teacher to remain neutral and informative, most of the spiritual content in this unit is communicated within the grandmothers' stories.

Lesson 33, the final session, is written to be a celebration of your work together as a learning community. In Lesson 32, your students will put together posters for a "Gallery of Learning" for the celebration in Lesson 33. You might want to make this a class-only celebration of community, or you may want to ask your students to invite their parents to celebrate with them and get a better idea of what they worked on throughout the year. Either way, we suggest you plan to make the session a special celebration with tea and treats.

