

# **HABIT 7** **Sharpen the Saw<sup>®</sup>**

*Sharpen the Saw* means to have balance in your life. There is a story of a man who was sawing down a tree and not making a lot of progress. When a passerby asked him why he didn't stop sawing to sharpen his saw, he remarked that he was too busy sawing. Habit 7 reminds us that we are more productive when we are in balance—body, brain, heart and soul. Just like the four tires on a car, if one area is being ignored or overused, the rest will feel the results. For young children, the car analogy is one they understand; a car could not go on fewer than all four tires. Explain the four parts of each person (body, brain, heart, and soul) and how important it is to take care of each part to make them all work better.

## **Younger-Child Activities**

1. Develop a Sharpen the Saw activity center in your home. Include arts-and-crafts supplies, learning games, puzzles, classical music, books, etc.
2. Discuss various ways to Sharpen the Saw in all areas. Ideas might include: body (playing outside, riding your bike), brain (balancing reading with TV watching or making smarter choices about what you watch), heart (making a list of what makes you happy and doing something on the list every day, spending time with special friends and family), and soul (attending religious services, starting a journal).
3. Read inspiring books. (See the book list in the “Additional Resources” section.)
4. Read Chapter 7 of *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids* book with your child and then complete the Parent's Corner.

## **Teen Activities**

1. Encourage your child to keep a regular journal or blog.
2. Subscribe to magazines that have educational value or read good books.
3. Encourage your teen to get in the habit of reading a newspaper every day. Online works too!
4. Make sure you are modeling the behaviors in steps 1–3 yourself.

## **Works for All Ages**

1. Join a gymnasium or start a regular exercise program with your child.
2. Pick an organization to volunteer with for you and your child(ren).
3. Visit a new museum or try a new type of cuisine—expand your horizons and try new things.