

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Turn it down

Using earbuds at a high volume for too long could put your child at risk of permanent hearing loss. To avoid harm, have her keep the volume at no more than 60 percent of the maximum and listen for no more than 60 minutes a day. Tell her this: If other people can hear the sound, the volume is too high.

Maintain your integrity

The pressure to get good grades may tempt students to cheat. But by doing so, they cheat themselves out of learning—and destroy others' trust in them. Let your teen know it's more important to be honest than to have perfect grades. Besides, when he is caught, he is likely to get a zero on his assignment or test.

See the sights

Your bucket list of things to see and do may be filled with faraway adventures. But your family could have a bucket list of nearby activities, too. Together, brainstorm doable ideas like visiting a local railroad museum or hiking a state park you've never been to. Post the list, and cross items off as you do them.

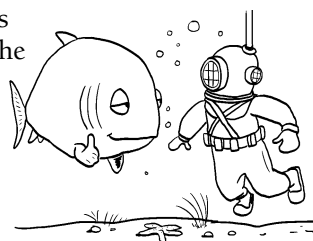
Worth quoting

"Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out." *John Wooden*

Just for fun

Q: Where is the ocean the deepest?

A: On the bottom.



Closer reading

Your teen has known how to read for years, but does he know how to do *close reading*? Encourage him to absorb all the meaning he can with these strategies. They'll improve his reading comprehension and prepare him to deal with harder texts in college or at work.

Reread on purpose

Often, reading something once isn't enough to get all the information. Your high schooler should routinely go back over difficult material. He will pick up details he missed or notice words he needs to look up. A second (or third) reading may also shed light on parts he found confusing or show him where to ask the teacher for an explanation.

Find evidence

While your teen reads, he should be on the lookout for facts that support the main ideas. Suggest that he practice with opinion pieces, such as a newspaper editorial arguing for stricter environmental laws. He might make a web with the topic in the center and boxes branching



out. He can fill each box with a piece of evidence he finds in the editorial.

Dig into new topics

An interesting approach is to have your teenager read about a subject that is new to him—he'll have to read carefully to understand the facts. Show him a magazine article about something that might interest him, such as microfinance ventures in Africa or commercial space travel. After he reads it, ask him to tell you about the writer's point of view and give his own reaction. 👍

Prepping for finals

As the school year enters the home stretch, share these tips to get your high schooler ready for final exams.

Begin early. Reviewing small amounts of material at a time will help her to remember it better. Also, going at a more relaxed pace will reduce stress.

Organize a study group. Have your teen plan a regular time and place to work with classmates. This can keep her on track even if she doesn't feel like studying. Plus, being around others may provide fresh energy.

Use a study guide. She should pay special attention to material on teacher-provided study guides. If teachers don't hand out guides, your teenager could make her own from notes, textbooks, and past tests and quizzes. 👍



Help your community

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” *Mahatma Gandhi*

Doing community service can teach your teenager compassion and may also fulfill requirements for high school graduation. Here are ideas.

Schools

Have her check with the PTA, PTO, or school office at local elementary schools—perhaps the one she attended—to see how she could help. They might welcome extra hands to set up activities or run games at the school carnival, for example. Or teen volunteers could babysit during parent meetings, be “reading buddies” for first graders, or tutor children after school.



Outdoors

Suggest that your teen contact community centers or recreation departments. They may need volunteers for summer camps or ongoing sports clinics. Or your teenager can join with friends or family to “adopt” a

city park or roadway and clean up trash or plant flowers. Also, groups that run cycling and running events often need volunteers to check people in, hand out water, or point participants in the right direction on the course. 👍

Curb college loans

If your high schooler is headed to college, he may—like most students—need to take out loans. Help him keep down the amount he will have to repay with these suggestions.

■ **Start saving.** He could sock away money from part-time and summer jobs to supply cash for living expenses during college. He can also continue to work part-time during his college years.



■ **Compare costs.** Together, look at tuition, fees, and expenses for in-state vs. out-of-state schools. Help him evaluate financial aid packages to find the one with the smallest loans.

■ **Live at home.** Your teen might go to a school in commuting distance or attend community college for two years before transferring to a four-year college. That way, he wouldn't have to borrow to cover room and board.

■ **Consider the source.** Have him take out federal student loans before higher-interest private ones. Check the terms of each loan before signing. 👍



Parent to Parent

Learning to code

When my son Thomas said he wanted to learn how to code, I thought that was a great idea, given the growing number of jobs in the technology world.

Thomas looked into it and found a lot of free resources to help him get started. First, he signed up for an online coding class.

Then, once he got rolling, he discovered a computer programming club where he could get support and meet others interested in coding. Thomas's first coding project was a simple app that plays sound effects for his smartphone. Next, he created a webpage for a friend's band. Now he and some buddies are working on a long-term project creating a video game they hope to sell.

Not everything Thomas has worked on has been successful. But he's learning as he goes—and I'm thrilled that he's gaining a marketable skill for his future. 👍



Q&A

Protect against heroin use

Q I've been hearing that heroin use has become a big problem among teenagers. What is going on, and how can I protect my daughter?

A Heroin use among young people has climbed in recent years, affecting teens from every background.

Some youths become addicted to prescription painkillers after injuries or surgeries and then turn to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get. To prevent this, carefully dispense pain pills to your child if they are prescribed for her, and dispose of any extras when she heals.

Also, check your daughter's texts and social media posts for street names like “junk,” “brown,” “boy,” “tar,” and “smack.” Watch for signs like constipation, itchy skin, nausea, runny nose, sleepiness, changing eating or health habits, or withdrawing from family. If your child sells belongings or you're suddenly missing money or valuables, those can be warning signs, too.

If you ever suspect a drug problem, contact your pediatrician or a mental health counselor immediately. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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