

# High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Lab assistant

Your high schooler could get hands-on science training and gain informal work experience by being a classroom lab aide. She might set up labs and demonstrations or do other work for a teacher who needs help. Suggest that she check with the science department about possibilities. Depending on her school, it may even be for credit.

### Healthier snacks

Does your child grab junk food when running between commitments? Stock up on nutritious “fast food” that he can take along instead. He may like string cheese, nuts, whole-grain crackers, fruit, or cut-up raw vegetables. Also, encourage him to keep a refillable water bottle in his backpack for a healthy on-the-go drink.

### Help for cutting

Cutting is a form of self-injury that often starts in the teen years, and unfortunately the number of cases is growing. Teens may cut or scratch themselves to cope with problems by being able to feel something. Watch for unexplained wounds, scars, or bloodstains. If you suspect your teen is cutting herself, seek help immediately from a doctor or therapist.

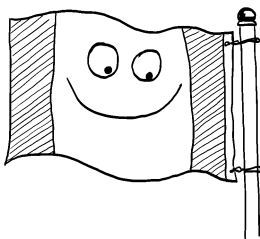
### Worth quoting

“Put your heart, mind, and soul into even your smallest acts. This is the secret of success.” *Swami Sivananda*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What flies all day but never goes anywhere?

**A:** A flag.



## Healthy relationships

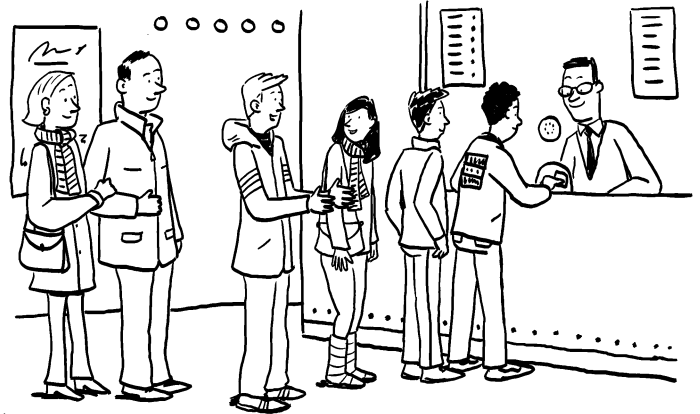
During high school, your teenager will probably develop close friendships or romantic relationships. Use these tips to help make sure the bonds formed are healthy ones.

### Qualities

Discuss how your teen should be treated and how he should treat others. For instance, balance is important. Both parties should have a say in decisions like where to go or what to do. Honesty is another key. Your child will want to feel comfortable sharing his feelings and opinions—and having them respected—even if he and his friend disagree.

### Standards

Have your teenager think about favorite relationships, perhaps with a friend, relative, or coach. Why does he enjoy spending time with those people? Maybe they're good listeners, or he feels good about himself when he's around them.



Encourage him to evaluate how he behaves toward friends—does he prompt those same kinds of feelings in others? He can also keep those standards in mind to gauge the health of his other relationships.

### Fallout

Brainstorm how to handle things if they start to sour. Say his girlfriend wanted him to spend all his time with her. He could explain that he needs to keep up with friends and family, too. If she couldn't accept that, he may need to step away. Or perhaps a friend constantly puts him down. He might tell his friend to stop—and take a break from the friendship if needed. 👍

## As we discussed...

Participating in class discussions keeps your high schooler engaged in the topic at hand. Plus, it lets her show teachers that she's plugged in and may even boost her grade. Here are ways to jump in:

- To start a conversation or keep one going, try open-ended questions that begin with “Why did...” or “How did...”. Or ask the teacher to give an example or clarify a concept.
- Listen for openings in a discussion. Then, follow up on someone else's comment by making a related point (“I agree with that because...”). Or briefly summarize what's been said (“It sounds like you both feel that...”), and add your thoughts. 👍



# Writing that shines

Using precise words and including vivid details will make good pieces of writing even better. Share these ideas to help your teen strengthen her essays, reports, and creative writing.

**Dig into meaning.** Suggest that she write with a dictionary and thesaurus by her side (or on her screen). By looking up definitions and searching for just the right synonym, she'll pick the words that match what she's trying to convey. For example, if she says a character is "basking," the reader could imagine the character looking happy, pleased, and content. But if she writes "lounging," that paints a totally different picture.



edge. If she's writing about a basketball game, she could go to one and jot down what she sees, hears, smells, tastes, and touches. But what if she's writing about the Statue of Liberty and it's two states away? She might find photos or videos of it online or talk to an uncle who has been there. 👍

## Do background work.

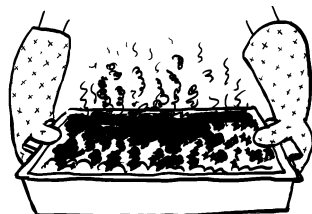
To accurately describe an experience, a scene, or a person, it helps to be familiar with concrete details. Your high schooler can make the details in her writing more realistic by building background knowl-



## Parent to Parent

### "I goofed!"

As a parent, I used to feel that I had to be right all the time or my kids wouldn't think highly of me. If I made a mistake, I would actually try to make it seem like it wasn't really a mistake.



One day, I stopped at a neighbor's house while he was cooking dinner. Unfortunately, the lasagna burned to a crisp. My friend was quick to admit that it was his fault. "I'm sorry," he told his teenagers, "I should have set the timer!" His children laughed right along with him, and then they all started figuring out what to make for dinner instead.

I've learned that I don't have to be right all the time. My kids appreciate when I admit my mistakes—and I'm teaching them to do the same. 👍

## OUR PURPOSE

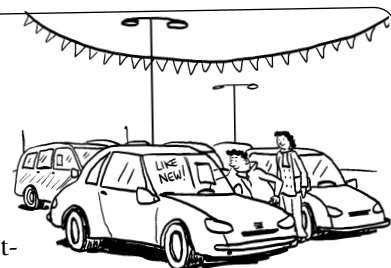
To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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## Be a smart spender

Making smart spending choices will help your child learn to live within his means. Suggest these strategies:

- Encourage your teen to shop around for the best deals. Whether he's buying a used car or getting glasses, he'll learn there can be a big difference in prices.
- Ask him to think about whether he could achieve the same result for less money. He might split the cost of a video game with a neighbor and share it, for example.
- Advise him to wait a few days before making a purchase. That can keep him from buying on impulse. Also, he should check the return policy and keep the tags and receipt in case he changes his mind or there's a problem. 👍



## Q & A Extracurricular activities: How important for college?

**Q** My daughter has decent grades, but she doesn't do any extracurricular activities. How much does that matter for getting into college?

**A** It's not the only criterion, but colleges do favor students who show commitment to an interest, demonstrate leadership, or contribute to their communities. Including one or more of those qualities on her application will give her a better chance at admission.

Encourage her to check her school's activity list or consider

joining a club that friends are active in. If she's not passionate about anything that's offered, she might start her own school club (say, an Asian club if she's inspired by Asian culture). That will give her an activity and also help her show leadership and commitment.

Remember, her activities don't have to be school-related. She might play in a community sports league or volunteer somewhere that lines up with her talents or interests, such as at a glass-blowing studio or a church youth group. 👍

