

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### On the agenda

With second semester comes a new season of school activities. When you learn about your teen's upcoming sporting events, science fair, and other activities, mark them on your calendar and tell him you've saved the date. You'll be better able to avoid scheduling conflicts, and your child will know he's a priority.

### Presentation pizzazz

The right visual aids will help shift your high schooler's presentations into high gear. Suggest that she draft her talking points, then choose visuals that explain or support key parts of her message. A bar graph can highlight important statistics. Or she might display a quote that backs up an opinion.

### Not worth a puff

Your teen probably knows smoking can harm his health. But he may not realize that it can also harm his budget. Encourage him to check the prices of cigarettes and e-cig devices and liquids. Have him calculate what it would cost to smoke regularly for a month, a year, or five years. What else could he do with that much money?

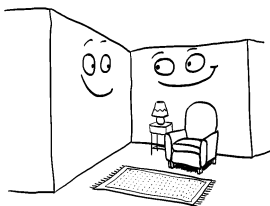
### Worth quoting

"And now we welcome the new year, full of things that have never been."  
Rainer Maria Rilke

### Just for fun

**Q:** What did one wall say to the other?

**A:** "Meet you at the corner."



## Organized for the new year

Being organized will make your teenager's life run more smoothly and help her stay on top of schoolwork and extracurriculars. Encourage her to start 2016 on the right foot with these four steps.

### 1. Say good-bye to first semester

Recommend that your high schooler get rid of items she doesn't need from the first half of the year. She could sort through her backpack, locker, and binders to throw away crumpled papers and used-up supplies. She might also gather first-semester paperwork and projects to store in folders at home.

### 2. Be a planner pro

Your teen's agenda book should be her go-to tool for tracking schoolwork. By updating it at the end of each class, she'll always know what's due when. Recommend that she pencil in long-term assignments as soon as she gets them. Checking her planner before leaving school each day will help her decide which materials to take with her.



### 3. Set up a central station

If she has one place to keep things, your child won't have to frantically search for a jacket or gym bag in the morning. Each evening, she could put her backpack, sports gear, and anything else she will need by the front door or in another convenient spot.

### 4. Use reminders

Your teen may like a bulletin board or dry-erase board for posting to-do items. She can also put sticky notes on her alarm clock, tote bag, or seat at the breakfast table ("Sell raffle tickets"). Or she might even text notes to herself at night so she sees them the next morning. 👍

## Time-smart strategies

Your high schooler can make every minute of homework and study time count. Share these ideas:

- Have him put away temptations that cause him to lose focus. If seeing his phone makes him want to play a game instead of work, he could put it in another room.

- Your student might drag his feet if he isn't clear about an assignment or a project. Recommend that he check with other students, use an online tool like a class website, or ask the teacher for advice.

- Giving himself mini-deadlines for each piece of work might help keep your teen on task. He could decide to finish fact-checking his paper before dinner or review notes in the next 15 minutes—and set an alarm for that time. 👍



# Call on courage

Your teenager may think that being brave means never being afraid. But having courage means facing fears and overcoming them. Here are ways to work on developing this trait.

**Move out of comfort zone.** Say your child wants to audition for the school play but is scared to try. Explain that while it's natural to feel fear, that shouldn't keep him from doing what he wants. Discuss times you've pushed yourself outside your comfort zone, such as talking to your boss about a raise. Help him believe he can do it, too, by pointing out ways he's been brave, like asking someone to a school dance.



them to stop vs. if he went along with them. Point out that it takes courage to do what's right. But he'll respect himself more—and others will, too. 👍

## Stick to convictions.

When your teen has to choose between right and wrong, suggest that he think about the possible outcomes and follow his gut. For instance, if classmates pressure him to take part in a hurtful prank, he might picture what would happen if he persuaded



## Parent to Parent Team up with teachers

My ninth-grade daughter, Misty, usually gets good grades. So I was caught off guard when her first-semester geometry grade was lower than I'd expected. I contacted her teacher to see how to help and how I could stay better informed so I wouldn't be surprised by her grades.

Mrs. Davenport suggested that Misty complete optional practice problems, even though they don't count toward her grade. She also said Misty could visit the math resource room to get extra help during study hall.

Then, her teacher told me to check the online gradebook to see Misty's assignments and test scores. I had known about that but hadn't created an account because I hadn't been worried about her grades. I just set one up, and I plan to look at it each week to help her stay on track. 👍

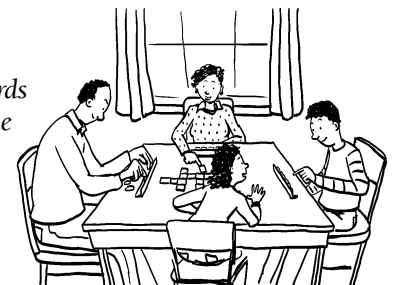


## Q & A Boost vocabulary

**Q** My son sometimes doesn't recognize words I think he should know. How can he continue building his vocabulary now that he's in high school?

**A** Make it a family affair by putting everyone on the lookout for words they haven't heard before. Family members could jot words down in a notebook as they come across them. Maybe your teen hears the word *epiphany* or you see an unfamiliar term like *aural*. When you have 20 or so words, look up their meanings, and use them to play games like 20 Questions or Jeopardy.

Also, since reading is the best way to build vocabulary, consider setting aside regular family reading time. Encourage your son to try to figure out words from their context as he reads, which also will help when he takes college entrance exams. If he reads that an event is *imminent*, for instance, details in the paragraph might help him guess the event is about to occur right away. 👍



## Location, location

A good grasp of geography will expose your teen to the big world out there—which she'll need to be a part of when she hits the workforce. Suggest she explore places she has never visited with these activities.

### Write a story

Encourage her to look up facts about a destination that intrigues her, perhaps Prague or Bora Bora. Then, she could craft a story in that setting. She might incorporate facts she has learned in history class to make it a historical fiction piece. Or she can bring in science by turning

it into a science fiction tale set 50 years from now.

### Plan a "trip"

Thinking about places she's studying as if she were going to visit will give your child a different perspective. Have her consider the best time to go to Venice, for example, and what to see or do there.

She could look up the currency she would have to use and even practice a few phrases in the local language—just so she's ready if someone gives her a plane ticket! 👍



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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