

High School 1 YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

United front

Teenagers have a knack for pitting one parent against the other. When disagreements about curfew or other rules develop in front of your high schooler, you might say, “We want to talk this over. We’ll give you an answer later.” Then, get back to him soon with your decision.

Figure it out

Encourage scientific thinking by tapping into your high schooler’s natural curiosity. For instance, ask her how an iPod works or what causes thunder. Listen as she explains her theories, and suggest that she explore the answers in library books or online.

Cut the caffeine

Specialty coffee drinks are more popular than ever with teens these days. But caffeine can make your child anxious, jittery, sleepless, or dehydrated. Have him pick decaffeinated lattes or tea instead. Or better yet, help him get in the habit of drinking water or fat-free milk rather than coffee.

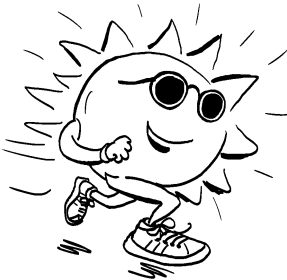
Worth quoting

“We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be.” *Kurt Vonnegut*

Just for fun

Teacher: How fast does light travel?

Student: I don’t know, but it sure gets here early in the morning.



Test-taking strategies

Danielle and Marley, both average students, take the same history exam. Danielle earns a high grade, Marley a low one. What made the difference? Danielle used test-taking skills that Marley didn’t know about. To give your teen a boost at test time, share these tips for handling different types of questions.

True/false

Watch out for words that affect the meaning of a statement, such as “all,” “none,” “always,” and “never.” If any portion of the statement is false, the answer is false. Be sure to guess when you don’t know an answer—you’ll have a 50 percent chance of getting it right.

Multiple choice

Try to answer the question in your mind before you look at the choices. Then, read all of the options carefully. If you aren’t sure of an answer, start by crossing off any choices you know are wrong. Finally, choose from the remaining ones.



Essay

Think about your answer before you start writing. Jotting an outline in the margin or on scratch paper can help you organize your thoughts. Pay attention to exactly what the question is asking. For instance, are you supposed to describe a process or compare and contrast it with something else? *Idea:* Begin your essay by rephrasing the question. (“The major event that caused World War II was...”) 👍

Why friends are important

Peer pressure receives a lot of bad-mouthing, especially during the high school years. The good news is that peers can be a positive influence. How?

- Having friends who care about learning makes teens more likely to try harder in school.
- Friends give high schoolers a chance to become more independent—an important part of growing up.
- Peers provide youngsters with a sounding board during times of confusion or stress.
- Friends meet teenagers’ needs for acceptance and belonging.



Remember: The best way to prevent your high schooler from forming dangerous bonds is to keep the lines of communication open. Open up your home to your teenager and his friends. That way you can get to know the people in his life and try to spot any signs of a negative influence. 👍

Everyday etiquette at home

Do your family members rub each other the wrong way sometimes? Good manners and consideration for others will go a long way toward smoothing ruffled feathers. Try these guidelines.

Be courteous. It takes work to keep a household running. But everyone can help by being responsible and following two simple rules: “If you use it, put it away. If you dirty it, clean it.” That way, others won’t feel resentful when they go to use the item.



Consider others. Encourage your child to think about how his actions will affect family members. He can try to be considerate in what he does (such as not playing loud music when his sister is on the phone) and what he asks for (he wants to go to the mall, but he knows his parents are busy).

Use “magic” words. “Thank you,” “excuse me,” and “please” aren’t just for guests. For example, a polite “please” makes any request sound nicer and less like a demand. And a sincere “thank you” makes others glad to help you. 👍



Stay organized

Developing stronger organizational habits will pay off in the new year—and later. Help your high schooler keep track of her assignments and important papers with these suggestions.

1. Keep a to-do list. Update it daily.
2. Print out calendar pages from the Internet, and fill in assignment and test dates in different colors. Keep this sheet at the front of your binder or above your desk at home.
3. Empty your backpack regularly and your locker periodically. Decide what to keep or toss.
4. Write the subject and date on every page of notes. Number the pages so you can keep them in order.
5. Spend a few minutes each night gathering items needed for the next day (gym clothes, math book, homework assignments). Put them in your backpack or by the front door. 👍



Parent to Parent

Talking to teens about sex

I had been avoiding talking about sex with my son because I just wasn’t comfortable bringing up the subject. But when his friend’s girlfriend became pregnant, I knew I couldn’t wait any longer.

I asked Tyler about his friends’ situation. And I’m glad I did, because he was obviously pretty concerned. We discussed how his friends’ futures would be affected. I told him that having a baby is a huge responsibility for adults—let alone teens—and we talked about how the situation could have been prevented.

Then, I shared my values with Tyler and explained my reasoning. While this was a difficult conversation for me, it opened the door to other important topics, such as the risk of STDs and HIV from unsafe sex. I’m glad I raised these issues, and I hope that by continuing the discussion, Tyler will feel comfortable coming to me with his questions. 👍



Q & A Secrets to motivation

Q My daughter recently brought home low grades on an English paper and a science project. I

feel she could have done better. How can I motivate her to try harder?

A Let your teen know that you believe she could do better and that you are available to support her.

You might start by asking what she thinks kept her from doing her best. If she feels overwhelmed, talk about ways she could

adjust her schedule. If she says she’s bored, try linking what she’s learning to real life—seeing the relevance might spark her interest. For instance, show her newspaper, magazine, or online articles that are related to her studies. Then, ask her opinion of what she read.

Finally, see how she would like you to help. Maybe you could quiz her before an exam or proofread her essay. If things don’t improve, call or email her teacher for advice. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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