

High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

It reminds me of...

Your high schooler can understand new concepts

by connecting them with something familiar. If he's studying the nervous system, for instance, suggest he think about what it reminds him of. Maybe he'll picture it as a highway with messages traveling alongside routes or as electricity running through wires.

Build generosity

Want to teach your teen generosity? Try starting small. Keep a change jar at home. Ask everyone in the family to give a little each week, even if it's only a nickel. Then, once a month, donate what you've collected to a charity. *Idea:* Take turns choosing where your donations will go.

Talk about sexting

Many teenagers "sext" — send sexually suggestive photos, videos, or messages electronically — to flirt or show romantic interest. Tell your teens this has serious consequences, including being charged with a crime or ruining reputations. Let them know they should immediately delete any sexts they receive and not forward them. Also, check their phones often, and have them let friends know that you do.

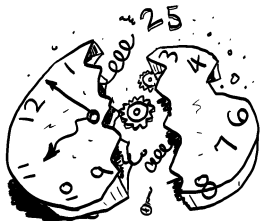
Worth quoting

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." *Arthur Ashe*

Just for fun

Q: When does a clock strike 25?

A: When it's broken.



Build collaboration skills

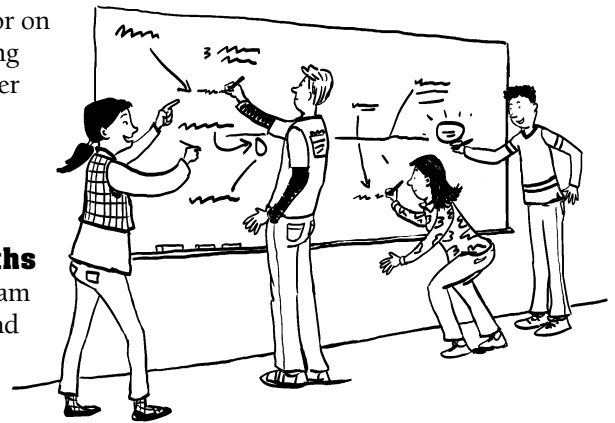
Whether your teen is doing a group project in school today or on the job 10 years from now, being able to collaborate will make her work more successful—and more enjoyable. Help her foster collaboration skills with these suggestions.

Use each other's strengths

Part of working well on a team is doing what you're good at and tapping into others' strengths. When working with a partner or group, your high schooler might have everyone say how they can best contribute. Maybe she's a confident public speaker, so she could offer to present their project. If someone else is a good organizer, he may create the deadline schedule.

Encourage cooperation

Building cooperation is a leadership skill your child can learn. She should listen respectfully to others and ask everyone else to do the same. If complaints crop up, she could turn the conversation in a more positive direction by brainstorming solutions or pointing out



what's being done to handle the problem.

Take new perspectives

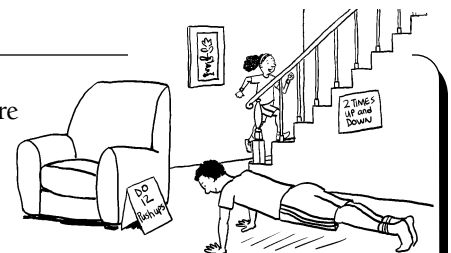
Seeing things from other people's point of view will help your adolescent negotiate, persuade others, and resolve conflict. Group projects give her a chance to practice. For instance, if there are different opinions about the format to use, she might suggest they consider how each one would work. Then, she can bridge a compromise by discussing how to combine ideas (say, opening with a video and following with a skit). 👍

Get fit as a family

Finding time to exercise in the midst of a busy family schedule can be challenging. Here are ideas for adopting an active lifestyle:

- Choose activities that will fit into times everyone is already together, and put them on the calendar. You might take a walk after dinner three times a week, ride bikes before Saturday morning chores, or do a fitness video after a weekly family meeting.

- Set up an exercise circuit around your home. Together, write exercises on separate index cards and place them in different spots. *Examples:* "Do 12 push-ups." "Run up and down the stairs 2 times." "March in place for 1 minute." 👍



The right topic

Good papers start with good topics—and that means narrowing down and choosing subject matter that lends itself to solid research and writing. These steps will help your high schooler select wisely for his next essay or research paper.

1. Do background reading. Your teen may start with an idea he finds interesting (say, American consumerism) or a general topic his teacher assigned (the Roman Empire). Either way, he should read articles and skim books to get a sense of what's out there.



2. Identify possibilities. Are there recurring themes or specific areas he would like to explore? Encourage him to jot notes as he reads. He should pay attention to how much information he finds—so he will pick a topic he knows he can support with details.

3. Make your choice. Encourage your child to compare his findings with the assignment. He needs to choose a topic that is nei-

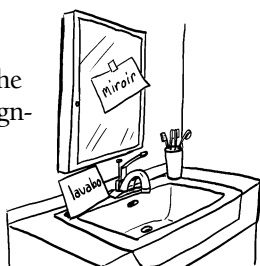
ther too broad nor too narrow for the length of the paper, for example. To narrow a broad topic, he might focus on a person, a place, or a time frame (say, Elizabeth Barrett Browning instead of major English poets). 👍

Language lessons

Taking a foreign language in school can help your teen understand her own language better and give her an edge in our increasingly diverse world. Share these creative ways to study:

- Listen to radio stations, music, podcasts, or news in the language. She can find them on YouTube or on websites like *tunein.com*.

- Let her label objects around the house with foreign-language words. Then, use them in everyday conversation (*miroir* in



French for “mirror”). Or have dinner “in Italian,” asking her to teach you words for foods you’re having (*Passami le patate, per favore* for “Please pass the potatoes”).

- Encourage her to learn and sing simple children’s songs or read children’s books in the language. She could try the library or ask her teacher for books.

- Have her practice with classmates who speak the language (say, a friend on the bus who speaks Chinese at home). Or she might talk to friends’ parents who grew up speaking the language. 👍



Parent to Parent

You can count on me

A friend who manages a retail store told me how frustrated he gets with teen employees who don’t show up for work or come in late and then get mad if they receive a warning.

So when my daughter Sara recently landed her first part-time job, we talked about what it means to be reliable. I explained that being on time, not missing shifts, and calling if she’s sick are all part of the commitment.

To get the point across, I asked my friend to talk to Sara, too. He explained that when employees miss work, the store is short on help, register lines get long, and other people have to work longer hours. He also said being unreliable hurts your chances of getting job or college recommendations—or even being kept on the job. This advice seemed to sink in, and I’m glad to see Sara getting off to a good start with her new job. 👍



Q&A

Success on standardized tests

Q Standardized tests are coming up. How should my son prepare?

A Teachers will go over test information in class, so good attendance is a must. He should find out which subjects will be tested on which dates, the format for each test (multiple choice, short answer), the material to be covered, and how long the tests will last if they’re timed.

Taking practice tests and answering sample questions will also help him get more

comfortable with the format. His teachers may administer these, or he could find samples in the library or online.

Finally, encourage him to arrive rested and alert by getting plenty of sleep and eating a healthy breakfast, not only on test days but every day. Eating pro-

tein in the morning will give him more energy. Suggest meals like peanut butter with apple slices or a smoothie made with yogurt and fruit. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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