

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Gifts for grads

Need a graduation gift for your high schooler? She might like something practical. If she's headed to college, consider a cozy blanket for her dorm room or a piece of luggage. If she's going straight to work, you could give her a new outfit to start her business wardrobe or a bus pass or gas gift card to get to her job.

### The dangers of binge-drinking

Talk with your teen about the risks of binge-drinking, or consuming 4–5 alcoholic drinks in a single sitting. Explain that *any* alcohol is dangerous and illegal for him, and bingeing can be deadly. He should call 911 right away if a friend shows symptoms of alcohol poisoning (unable to stand without help, passed out).

### Don't forget that!

If your child frequently forgets her keys or phone, have her take responsibility for remembering them. Suggest that she store her items in a bowl near the front door. Or she can come up with a reminder to recite before she leaves the house. *Example:* "KPW" for "keys, phone, wallet."

### Worth quoting

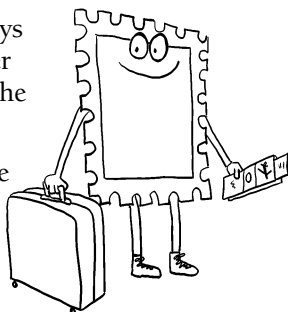
"Of all the things you wear, your expression is the most important."

Janet Lane

### Just for fun

**Q:** What stays in the corner but travels the world?

**A:** A postage stamp.



## Learning all summer long

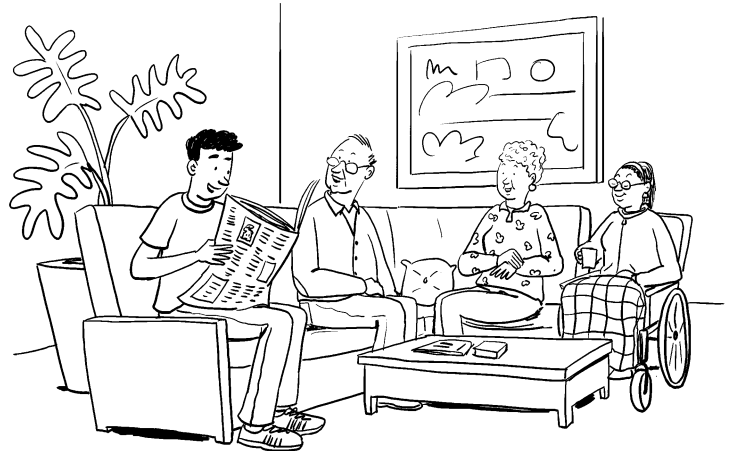
To help your teen keep his mind sharp and avoid the "summer slide," encourage him to tap into the learning opportunities all around him. Here are a few ideas.

### Be a volunteer

Suggest that your child pursue volunteer work. He'll practice academic skills while helping others. At a senior center, he could read the newspaper to residents—he will keep up with current events and learn new vocabulary. In a food pantry, he might build real-world math and technology skills by creating a spreadsheet to keep track of inventory.

### Hang out at the library

The public library is full of ways to learn while keeping cool. Have your high schooler check the website or visit your local branch. Then, let him choose activities to try, on his own or with a



friend. Maybe he'll join a book club, attend a poetry slam, or take a robotics or video production course. *Bonus:* He can check out new books each time he's there.

### Start a business

Encourage your teen to think of a business he'd like to start, such as tutoring younger kids, portrait photography, cake decorating, or birthday party entertaining. He could create a business plan, then design a website to promote his services. He might use an app to keep track of appointments or gigs. 👍

## Year-end checklist

The last day of school is approaching fast. Give your child this checklist to help her take care of end-of-year details:

- ✓ Write thank-you notes to teachers or staff, perhaps a school counselor who helped you with a problem, or a drama teacher who stayed after rehearsal to go over your lines together.
- ✓ Take bags to empty your locker. Doing a little each day during the final week will make the last day of school easier.
- ✓ Return textbooks to teachers and library books to the media center.
- ✓ Wash and return gym and sports uniforms, and turn in equipment. 👍



# Responsible with technology

How can you help your child stay safe and make good decisions in the digital age? Consider these suggestions.

- 1. Launch a conversation.** Mention that you read an article about cyberbullying and sexting, and ask your high schooler what she's heard. *Note:* Cyberbullying includes spreading rumors and sending mean or threatening messages. Sexting involves sharing inappropriate photos or texts.
- 2. Explain risks.** Point out that kids who are targets of cyberbullying may become depressed and even harm themselves. People who cyberbully could be banned from sites or



apps. And sexting is illegal and can ruin reputations.

- 3. Use privacy settings.** Have your teen show you how the controls work on social media sites and apps. Encourage her to select settings that allow only trusted friends to contact her and see her posts.
- 4. Discuss photo sharing.**

Before your teenager sends a photo, she should ask herself whether she'd be okay with it appearing on every classmate's phone. If not, she shouldn't share it—because that's the kind of thing that can happen. And if she receives a questionable photo, it's important to delete it right away. 👍



## Q & A The last report card

**Q** My son struggled in a couple of subjects this quarter. How should I handle his final report card?

**A** When your child's final report card comes, use it as a tool to celebrate his progress—and plan for improvement.



First, look for areas to praise. Did any grades go up? Did he do well on exams? Did he get high marks for effort? Also, check attendance and tardy records, along with teacher comments. Did your teen attend class regularly, arrive on time, and complete assignments by their due dates?

Finally, review the report card together, and have him list ways he can improve in the fall. *Examples:* Ask teachers for help when needed. Avoid leaving assignments until the last minute. 👍

## Everyday science

Spark your high schooler's interest in science by letting him see how it relates to his life. Try these tips.

### Experiment at home

Suggest that your teen browse library books or search online for science experiments. He could investigate density by discovering if bowling balls float or learn about air pressure by collapsing a soda can in boiling water.

### Watch the weather

Have your child observe clouds and read forecasts in the newspaper for a week. Can he predict the weather? *Example:* "The clear sky tonight probably means cooler temperatures in the morning. In the afternoon, temperatures will rise, and the barometric pressure will drop, so there's a chance of evening thunderstorms."

### Solve "mysteries"

Encourage your teen to keep a log of questions he thinks of and look up answers when he has time. Maybe he'll do research to learn how GPS works or why roller coasters rely on gravity. 👍



## Parent to Parent Family time

Jill, our 15-year-old, groaned every time we asked her to go somewhere with us, like her sister's dance recital or a neighborhood cookout. I wanted her to participate in our family outings, but I didn't want her to be miserable or spoil our time together.

I talked to a friend who has raised a couple of teenagers, and she suggested that we pick and choose what Jill had to do. We decided that supporting siblings at their

events is a must, but Jill could sometimes skip "fun" family activities like the park or a museum. My friend also said family time might be more appealing if we let Jill think of places to go or take along a friend.

My daughter still complains sometimes about family outings. But all of us—Jill included—enjoyed the ideas she has come up with, such as driving go-karts at a local track or watching a play at our community center. 👍



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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