

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Attendance is key

Send your teen the message that attending school every day is crucial. Schedule doctor appointments and other commitments after school hours. Take family vacations during school breaks or over the summer. And don't allow him to stay home just because he's tired or says he needs a break.

True friendship

Help your teenager understand that being "popular" and having friends aren't the same thing. Ask what she thinks a true friend really is. How do friends treat each other? What are strong friendships based on? Your discussion can show her that having true friends—and being a true friend—is more important than being popular.

In praise of praise

Take time to notice when your teen does something good—you will encourage him to repeat the behavior. For instance, if he does chores without a reminder, helps a sibling with a problem, or gets a good grade on an assignment, let him know you're proud of him. That tells him, "This is what I want you to do"—without nagging or lecturing.

Worth quoting

"Either write something worth reading or do something worth writing."
Benjamin Franklin

Just for fun

Q: Why did the music teacher need a ladder?

A: To reach the high notes.



Get more out of homework

Your high schooler can learn more from the homework she does each night with these ideas for extending the learning.

Discuss reading

It's your student's job to do her reading, but you could make it more engaging by asking about the books she's assigned. If she's reading a novel for English class, let her tell you the story, describe the characters, and explain the main conflict. For a biography, discuss the events in the person's life. What problems did the person face? How were they solved?



Find out more

Encourage your high schooler to go beyond the textbooks she brings home. She could add to her learning by exploring math websites related to her assignments or checking out historical fiction from the library. Reading newspaper and magazine articles about the subjects she is studying is another way to make the material more relevant.

Take field trips

Why not use the work your child is doing as a reason for visiting local museums or other sites? She might learn more about an author whose home is open to the public or deepen her science knowledge with a trip to an arboretum or a botanical garden. These outings can be a lot of fun—and make learning come alive. *Tip:* Call ahead to find out about days with free or discounted admission. 👍

Why do I need to learn this?

"I'll never use this!"

Sound familiar? If your teen complains that he'll never need the information he's learning in school, show him how learning is useful by actually using it! You might:

- Make a game of incorporating his English, social studies, or foreign language vocabulary words into your daily conversations. Keep score of who can work in the most words.
- Cook or bake together, and ask your teen to double, quadruple, or halve fractions to adjust quantities in recipes. Or involve him in building projects that require measuring dimensions. 👍



Prevent distracted driving

Help your young driver avoid the dangers of distracted driving by sharing these facts and setting important rules.



Put away phones

Your teen may be surprised to hear that it takes 4.5 seconds on average to read a text. Tell him that looking at his phone for that long is the same as driving the entire length of a football field at 55 miles per hour—with his eyes closed. Make an “engine on/phone off” rule: He can’t start the car until his phone is off and can’t turn the phone back on until the engine is off.

Focus on driving

The risk of an accident increases when a driver does *any* secondary task. This includes not only using a cell phone, but also eating, drinking, changing the radio station, and talking with passengers. Make sure your teen is aware of this. Then, consider rules like “No eating while driving” or “No passengers besides parents.”

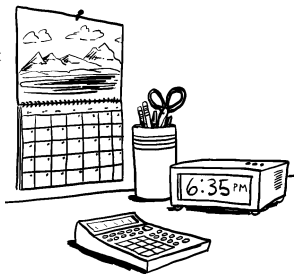
Beware of other drivers

Point out to your teenager that he’s not the only one who can be distracted. Tell him to watch for erratic behavior by other drivers, such as weaving, sitting too long at a stop sign or green light, or slowing down and speeding up. Driving “defensively” will heighten his awareness and help him compensate for others’ mistakes. 👍

Be resourceful

Does your teenager know how to tackle and solve problems for herself? Try these steps for helping her become more resourceful.

1. Suggest that your teen make a list of issues she faces and solves each day, such as conflicts in her schedule. She should also list resources to handle these issues, whether physical tools like calendars and calculators or mental ones like patience and compromise. This will help her see the tools already at her disposal.



2. Resourceful people are able to deal with unexpected situations. Encourage your high schooler to join a new group at school, try a different hobby, or even play a game she’s not familiar with. Facing challenges like these can give her practice in talking to people who have different interests, stepping outside her comfort zone, and adapting to new situations. 👍



Q & A Managing money

Q My daughter is starting to make money at a part-time job. How can I teach her to be financially responsible?

A Great question! This is a topic many parents worry about because developing bad money habits now can lead to real problems down the road. First, talk with your teenager about saving a portion of her earnings and not spending more than she makes.

Then, consider showing her your family budget, as well as bills for things like mortgage, rent, utilities, or insurance. That will help her better understand where money will go when she grows up—and how money is used responsibly.

Finally, encourage her to draw up her own budget listing how much she will bring in, where she plans to spend money, and how much she will save. Making and using a budget now will give her a leg up for when she’s on her own. 👍



Parent to Parent The power of proofing

Recently, our son Justin’s writing assignments were coming home with sloppy mistakes and points taken off. “Spell-check should fix it,” Justin said. But spell-check can’t catch everything.

Since I do a lot of writing for my job, I suggested this idea that works for me. After finishing a writing assignment, I put it away for an hour. Then, I come back and reread it with “fresh eyes.” When Justin tried this, he was

surprised at how often he caught an error that he hadn’t seen before.

We also made it a family activity to look for mistakes when we read newspapers, magazines, books, store signs, billboards, and websites. It’s always more fun to find someone else’s errors than to see your own!

And seeing these mistakes printed for the whole world to see made Justin understand how important it is to double-check your work. After all, no one wants to mess up in front of everyone. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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