

# High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Hard work vs. talent

Ever hear your teen say, “He’s so smart, math is easy for him,” or “She’s lucky she’s good at lacrosse”? Help your high schooler see that talent is only one piece of the puzzle—it’s hard work that makes people soar. Encourage her to put in the time and effort to reach her own goals.

### “Overnight” careers

If your teenager works best late at night or early in the morning, he could consider a career suited to night owls or early birds. Together, think of examples: police officer, truck driver, emergency room doctor or nurse, pilot, flight attendant, or pastry chef. Then, have him research the education needed for any that interest him.

### Fall family outings

Invite your teen to look for activities your whole family can enjoy this season. She might suggest visiting a farm to pick pumpkins and take a hayride. Or maybe she’ll want everyone to train for a “turkey trot” walk or run. You’ll create nice memories and stay connected with your high schooler.

### Worth quoting

“Be sure to put your feet in the right place, then stand firm.” *Abraham Lincoln*

### Just for fun



**Q:** How do you get a mouse to fly?

**A:** Buy it an airline ticket.

## Doing your own work

A majority of students admit to cheating during high school—whether out of pressure to get good grades, a desire to fit in, or the fact that today’s technology makes it easy. Use these tips to help your teen understand the value of doing his own work.



### Deal with pressure

Ask your teenager, on a scale of 1–10, how much pressure he feels to earn high grades. Then, try to relieve any pressure on your side by explaining that you care more about his learning than his grades. If he’s stressed about getting into college, be sure he knows that schools look at many factors—and that there are lots of good choices out there.

### Have the courage to say no

Brainstorm how to respond if a friend asks for test answers or to copy an assignment. *Example:* “We could get in trouble. Let’s study together so we’ll both know the answers.” Also, point out that he

shouldn’t discuss test questions with a friend who will take the same exam later.

### Be careful with technology

Help your teen see the difference between using technology as a tool and using it to cheat. He may be allowed to do basic calculations on his phone—but not use an app to solve complicated equations. Copying from online sources can be another problem. Suggest that he minimize the window while taking notes, then open it and compare the source with his notes to be sure they’re accurate yet original. 👍

## Parent involvement, high school style

While your high schooler is the one responsible for working with teachers and staff, your participation is still important. Consider this advice.

■ **Attend school events.** Introduce yourself to her teachers, and find out how they prefer to be reached (email, phone call).

■ **Get to know your teen’s school counselor.** The counselor is the contact point on everything from course and college planning to serious problems like drug use and mental health concerns.

■ **Check grades.** Online systems or teacher reports will alert you to missing assignments or low grades—as well as good marks that you can cheer. 👍



# Reading: The best vocabulary builder

Spot a teenager with a good vocabulary, and you've likely spotted a teenager who reads a lot. In fact, reading is the best way to build a strong speaking and writing vocabulary. Share these ideas.

**Seek out variety.** Books set in other places and time periods expose your teen to words she might not otherwise come across. Suggest a goal of reading a book set on every continent, or hang up a world map for marking locations she reads about. She might also read historical fiction to match topics she's studying.

**Absorb meanings.** Encourage your high schooler to learn new words as she reads. She could figure out definitions from the context or use a dictionary, an app, or an e-reader's



look-up feature. To make the words "stick," have her post them on sticky notes—and remove each one when she knows the word. Or she might jot them in a notepad.

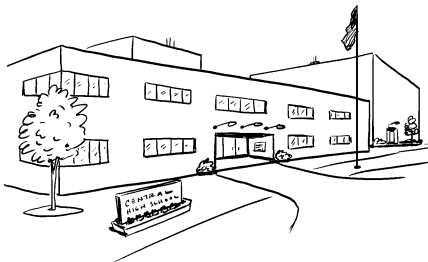
**Use new words.** The more your teen says and writes new words, the faster

they'll become part of her vocabulary. Notice when she says an interesting word, and even ask her what it means. Also, recommend that she incorporate the words into school papers, emails, or games like Scrabble or Words with Friends. 👍



## Attendance tips

Every class counts when it comes to school success. Here are three ways to make sure your high schooler keeps his attendance up all year long.



**1.** Help your teen stay healthy. Remind him to get enough sleep, wash his hands regularly, and eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.

**2.** Show him that school comes first. Schedule appointments for before or after class—or during lunch or study hall if necessary—and plan holiday travel for when school is closed.

**3.** Encourage your high schooler to be prompt. Make sure he gets out the door in time to attend all of first period. 👍

## Learn to lead

**Q** I know both colleges and employers like applicants to have leadership experience. How can I help my son be a leader?

**A** Taking on leadership roles at home and in school will give your teenager skills to last a lifetime.

Ask your son to spearhead a family project. If you're planning a camping trip, he could select campsites, decide the best way to pack the car, and take charge in pitching your tent.

When your high schooler works in a small group in class, he can develop leadership skills, too. For example, he might help members compromise on a topic or presentation format. Finally, suggest that he consider seeking a formal leadership role. Depending on his interests, he could offer to chair a student government committee, run for vice president of a club, or be team manager of a sport. 👍



## Parent to Parent A parent—not a friend

My daughter Emma recently missed her curfew by 45 minutes. Instead of apologizing, she said, "Oh, come on, Mom, don't punish me, I'll be your best friend!" Her response reminded me of something I've seen a lot of on Facebook: moms referring to their daughters as their best friends.

I told Emma I love her and enjoy her company, but my number one job is to be a parent. I pointed out she has a lot of friends—but none of

them are in charge of making sure she stays safe and learns to be responsible.

Emma wasn't happy when I moved her curfew up 45 minutes the next weekend. But on Sunday, we stopped for ice cream while running errands and had a nice conversation. Afterward, she surprised me by apologizing for missing curfew.

I hope Emma sees that we can hang out and have fun—but that she still needs a grown-up in charge. 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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