

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Create a portfolio

Encourage your teen to celebrate this new beginning—and track his progress—by starting a portfolio. He might include reports, artwork, or projects across a range of subjects. *Bonus:* If a college or an employer asks for work samples, he will know exactly where to find his best photos or essays.

FAFSA: File early

Is your senior headed to college or trade school? Circle October 1 on your calendar. That's the first day to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). While the deadline is June 30, 2022, more funding is available when you apply early. Fill out the FAFSA at studentaid.gov or on the free myStudentAid app.

An adaptable child

Your teen's world is constantly changing, making adaptability a valuable life skill. Ask her to think of a situation where she had to adapt, such as switching to remote learning last year. What did she learn that she could apply this year? Maybe she found that online study group meetings were an efficient option.

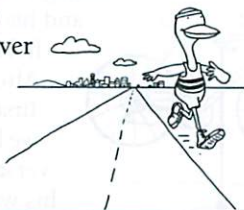
Worth quoting

"A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions." *Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.*

Just for fun

Q: What runs between two towns but never moves?

A: A road!



In charge of my success

As your child gets older, more of the responsibility for her success in school lies with her. Here's how to hand over the reins.

Attend every class

Teens who attend school regularly are more likely to graduate. Help your high schooler overcome roadblocks to attendance. Does she sometimes sleep through her alarm? She could put her clock across the room *and* go to bed earlier. Do friends pressure her to skip class? Brainstorm responses like "No way. I don't want to fall behind." *Tip:* Schedule non-urgent appointments outside of school hours.

Set up a network

Encourage your child to reach out to classmates to discuss material, ask questions, and even check each other's work. Suggest that she talk to friends who are good students and ask them for study tips or to be a study buddy. Chances are

they'll be flattered, and your high schooler may get some good ideas.

Communicate with teachers

Although it's important for parents to stay in touch with teachers, your teen needs to be comfortable contacting them, too. Say she doesn't get credit for a paper that she's sure she handed in. She should be the one to email her teacher and ask about it. Or if she's struggling with Latin, she could arrange to meet with the teacher to get extra help. 👍



Beyond "How was your day?"

If you're growing weary of one-word answers when you ask about your teen's day at school, it might be time to change your strategy. Try these conversation starters to get him talking:

- "Describe a meme that would sum up your day."
- "What do you wish you could change about today?"
- "If you looked back on this day a year from now, what would stand out?"
- "How would you rate your day on a scale of 1 to 10? Why?"
- "Which actors would you cast in a movie about your day?"
- "Tell me something you learned today that you think I don't know." 👍



Talk about peer relationships

What's one way to help your teen develop healthy, positive relationships? Talk with him about your own values and challenges when it comes to friends and peers. Use these ideas.

Reflect on values. Discover what matters most to you and your child in a friendship. You can each jot down your top three values, then trade papers. Did you list any of the same things? Maybe your number-one



value is loyalty while your teen wrote, "Fun to be around." Explain your choices. Why might dependability or a supportive attitude be more important than a sense of humor or athletic talent?

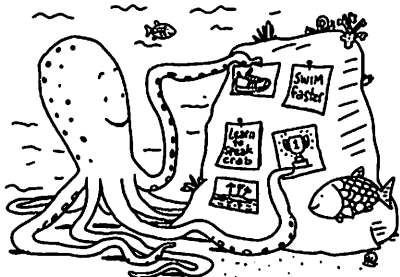
Share challenges. Every relationship has its ups and downs. Discuss difficulties you each face in your relationships.

Perhaps your child's teammate is a poor sport when your child wins a track event or you have a friend who tends to spread rumors. Brainstorm ways to handle each situation, like sitting next to a different teammate after a win or changing the subject when a rumor starts. Putting himself in your shoes may help him think more clearly about his own relationships. 🍷

A vision board

Setting goals can be easy. Reaching them can be a different story. Help your teen keep her eye on the "prize" by creating a vision board—a display of words and images related to her goals.

Suggest that your high schooler gather items that will keep her focused on college or a career. She might choose her science fair award if she wants to major in biology or a picture of a kindergarten classroom if she's interested in teaching. She could also collect inspirational quotes, photos of places she'd like to visit, and powerful words that communicate her goals.



Now your teen can arrange her treasures on poster board or a bulletin board in a fun, colorful collage showing all the things she wants to accomplish, learn, and be. Recommend that she keep her vision board where she'll see it frequently—and update it as her goals evolve. 🍷



Books teens will read

Q My daughter says books are boring. How can she choose books she'll want to read?

A Start by encouraging your child to ask friends what they're reading. If they share interests, they may also have similar tastes in books.

Also, teens often enjoy books that are based on or inspired by popular TV shows or movies. Your daughter could try a graphic novel version of her favorite sci-fi show or superhero movie. Or the two of you might read the book version of a movie that's coming out soon, then plan to see the film together.

Once your high schooler finds a book she really loves, it will likely lead her to more that she'll enjoy. A librarian, teacher, or bookseller can show her similar books, or an online bookstore will automatically offer recommendations. 🍷



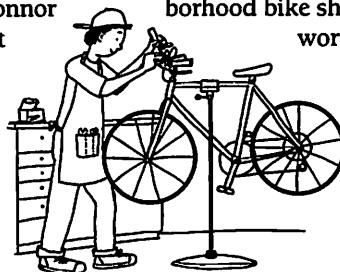
Expectations for working students

When my son Connor started applying for part-time jobs, I wondered how he would juggle work and school. So I talked to my sister, whose teenage daughter works in a restaurant.

Using my sister's advice, Connor and I made an action plan that spelled out how many hours he could work and when he would do homework. I also had him list expectations I set, including "Maintain my GPA" and "Turn in homework on

time." I explained that if he meets those expectations and wants to work more hours, I'm fine with that. But if his grades drop, he'll work only on weekends until he brings them up again.

Connor landed a job at our neighborhood bike shop. He has been working for a month now, and his grades are holding steady. After he gets his first report card, we'll have a conversation about his workload. 🍷



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