

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Cutting caffeine

Soda, coffee, energy drinks, chocolate... caffeine can add up. And the boost it provides usually wears off quickly, leaving your teen tired and edgy in class. Suggest that she track her caffeine intake for a few days. Then, discuss ways to cut back. At a coffee shop, for instance, she could order hot cider or herbal tea.

Find the elements

Here's a way to make the periodic table spring to life for your teenager. Challenge family members to a contest: Who can collect the most items around the house that contain different chemical elements? *Examples:* a helium balloon, an iron-rich cereal, a banana for potassium. Give the winner a trophy made from aluminum foil!

Dropout prevention

Earning a high school diploma takes family support. Together, investigate careers, and discuss the education required for each. Let your teenager know that high school graduates earn twice as much as those who drop out. Finally, if he mentions quitting, schedule a meeting with his school counselor right away.

Worth quoting

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Just for fun

Q: What falls in the winter but never gets hurt?

A: Snow.



Test success from start to finish

Help your teen do his best on tests by sharing these checklists for each stage of the process.

Before: Plan ahead

- Find out what the exam will cover, and create a study guide.
- Plan regular study sessions.
- Pack supplies (extra pencils, calculator, scrap paper).
- Get at least 8–10 hours of sleep, and eat a healthy breakfast with whole grains, fiber, and protein.

During: Manage time well

- Get out everything you need before the test starts.
- Read instructions carefully.
- Scan the test to see how many questions are in each section. Give yourself enough time to finish each section.
- Answer easier questions first. Circle questions you don't know, skip them, and go back to them later.

At the end: Check your work

- Be sure you have answered every question and that every answer is in the right spot.
- Reread short-answer responses and essays to make sure you've answered the questions completely and that your writing flows well.
- Proofread for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
- Double-check math calculations. 👍



College-entrance exams

Encourage your high schooler to get ready for college applications by planning ahead for entrance exams. Here's how:

■ Most colleges accept either the ACT or the SAT. Your child should research whether schools she's interested in have a preference. If they don't, she could talk to her counselor about which test might match her strengths.

■ Suggest that your teen take the PSAT or the PreACT—or both—in 10th grade. These are good practice for the SAT or ACT. *Note:* If she retakes the PSAT in 11th grade, her score could qualify her for a National Merit Scholarship.

Tip: Have your teenager ask the counselor if she's eligible for a fee waiver (if a free test is not offered). Also, she could find out about free or low-cost test-prep classes. 👍



Building trust

It's easy to focus on how you need to be able to trust your high schooler. But it's important that *she* trusts *you*, too. Consider these strategies.

Respect her wishes. If your teen confides in you, be sure to keep the information to yourself. Knowing she can count on you will make her more comfortable coming to you with any problems or concerns in the future.

Be dependable. Do what you say you'll do. If she's relying on you for a ride home after school, be there when you said



you would. If you promise to attend her school play, write it on your calendar so you don't forget and make other plans. Modeling dependability will encourage her to keep her word as well.

Keep boundaries.

While you need to keep her healthy and safe, you don't need to know every detail of her life. Talk about how you'll respect her privacy. For instance, you might look over her social media profiles to make sure she's not putting herself at risk, but you won't read her journal. 👍

Directions, please

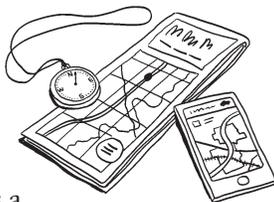
Whether your teen walks, drives, or rides the bus, he needs to know where he's going. Try these tips for helping him develop a good sense of direction.

Understand directions. Remind him that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, and help him think about the sun in relation to where he is. Also, have him pay attention when the GPS says "Go south" or "Head north" and see which way he's headed.

Know your location. When you're driving, help him notice the turns you make. ("From Poplar, we turned right on Elm and right on Pine. So to go home, which way should we turn on Elm and then on Poplar?") He'll learn to turn the opposite direction on the way back.

Read maps.

Give your teen practice using road maps by asking him to plot routes for trips. If he uses a website like Google Maps, he could print out the map and use it to give you directions as you drive. 👍



Q

The lowdown on vaping

Q I know vaping has gotten popular with teens, and I'm worried my son might try it. What should I do?

A Start by talking to your son about your concerns. You might ask whether any of his friends vape and what he knows about e-cigarettes.

Then, explain that most vaping liquids contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and especially harmful to teens' developing brains. Also, just because there's no tobacco involved doesn't mean vaping is safe for the lungs. Experts say more research is needed on the long-term effects of vaping.

Finally, be aware of signs that your son could be vaping. Many vaping liquids come in fruity flavors that parents may smell. Also, the sleek, colorful designs of e-cigs make them easy to disguise. Some e-cigarettes resemble flash drives or pens, for instance. 👍



Parent to Parent

Be professional on the job

As the manager of a fast-food restaurant, my friend Cathy hires a lot of teenage workers. I thought it would be a good idea for my daughter, Jill, to talk to her about being a good employee since she just landed her first part-time job.

Cathy told Jill that employers want people who are responsible, ethical, and team-oriented. She also

discussed examples of professional behavior, such as being prompt, wearing clean clothes or uniform, showing respect for all employees and customers, and finishing tasks on time. And she explained that Jill shouldn't use her phone at work without permission.

Hopefully Jill will use the tips from Cathy to be successful in her new job—and that success will lead to future jobs. 👍



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Short Clips

Learning together

When your teen seems especially into a subject he's studying in school, explore it as a family. You can watch a movie on the Industrial Revolution or survey family members about inherited traits like blue eyes or dimples. If your child enjoyed a novel in English class, read and then discuss it together.

DID YOU KNOW?

Teenagers are less likely to wear seat belts than people in any other age group. Explain to your child that buckling up every time she's in a car cuts her risk of injury or death in a crash by 50 percent. Set a rule that when she drives, she cannot start the car until everyone is fastened in. And make a point of doing the same when you're the driver.

What's new in the dictionary?

Language is constantly evolving, which is why dictionaries add new words and definitions every year. Ask your high schooler to search the internet for "2019 dictionary updates," then look for the words in daily life. He might see *glamping* (glamorous camping) in an outdoor magazine or *schnoodle* (a schnauzer-poodle mix) on a dog-lovers' forum.

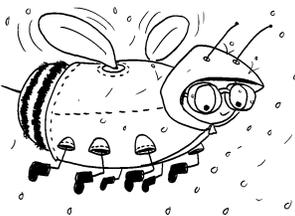
Worth quoting

"Those who wish to sing always find a song." *Swedish proverb*

Just for fun

Q: Can bees fly in the rain?

A: Not without their yellow jackets!



Kindness is cool

Your teenager is going through a lot of changes, so it's normal for her to sometimes focus on herself instead of others. Show her how kindness can be cool and uplifting with these activities.

Spread kind words

Suggest that your teen text or private-message kind, thoughtful comments to peers. She might compliment a student council member for delivering a powerful speech. Or she could offer encouraging words to a basketball player after a tough loss. Then the next time she sees the classmate, she can follow up face-to-face.

Do kind acts

Little things can really brighten someone else's day. At home, she could do a chore for a sibling who is studying for a big test or go to the store for a dinner ingredient you forgot. In school, have her look for ways to show kindness toward staff. Perhaps she'll thank a cafeteria



worker, hold the door for a custodian, or reshelve books she's not using to avoid making extra work for the librarian.

Be kind anonymously

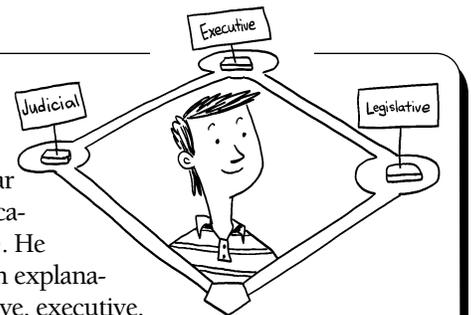
Encourage your high schooler to be kind "just because"—and not in search of praise. She might write compliments ("You rock!") and slip them under family members' bedroom doors. Or if she has a part-time job, she could leave a basket of muffins in the employee break room with a note that says "Take one." 🍌

Now I remember!

Learning and remembering information for tests will be easier with strategies like these:

- Have your high schooler think of a familiar place, maybe a baseball field, and picture locations within it (first, second, and third base). He can mentally assign facts to each, perhaps an explanation of each branch of government (legislative, executive, judicial). During a test, he'll "run the bases" in his mind to jog his memory.

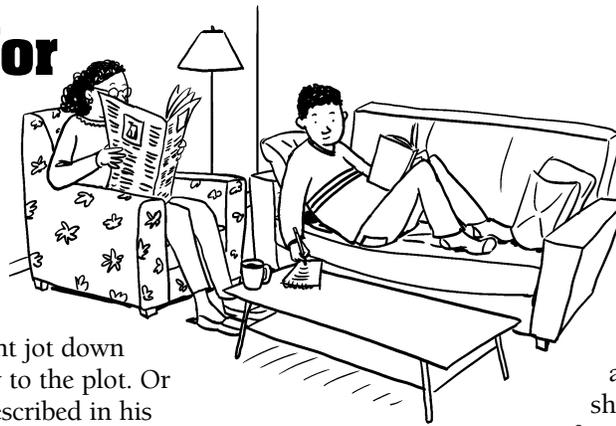
- Suggest that your child invent acronyms to remember facts or processes. A well-known one is FOIL (First, Outer, Inner, Last). It can help him simplify *binomials*, or algebraic expressions like $(2x + 3)(x + 1)$. With a little creativity, he'll think of his own acronyms. 🍌



Reading skills for every subject

Being a strong reader will help your high schooler do well not only in English class, but also in math, science, and social studies. Share these ideas.

Be an active reader. Suggest that your teen read with a pen in his hand. He might jot down a passage from a novel that he sees as key to the plot. Or he could sketch a diagram of a process described in his



biology textbook. When he reads an explanation of a math formula, he can make up sample problems.

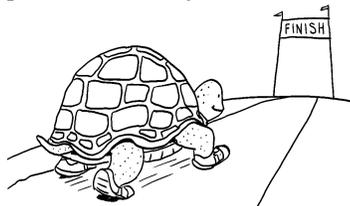
Clear up confusion.

If your high schooler doesn't understand part of what he's reading, he could skip it and keep going. The meaning may become clearer after he reads more. Then, he should go back and read the confusing portion, trying to connect it with the part that made sense.

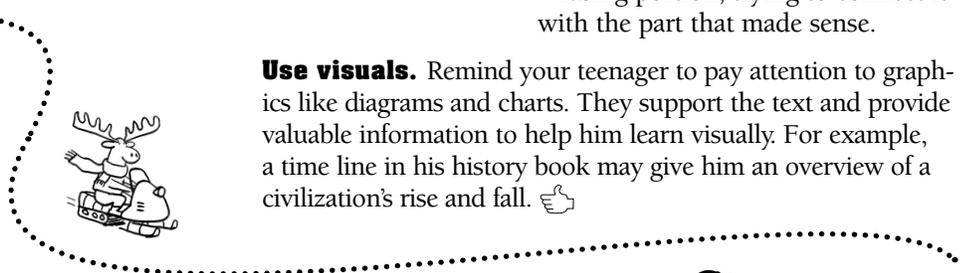
Promote perseverance

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor who said he lacked imagination. And Dr. Seuss's first book was rejected 27 times.

What did Disney and Dr. Seuss have in common? They persevered—and achieved great success. Try these ideas to build perseverance in your teen.



1. If she's struggling with something like understanding chemical formulas, remind her of a time when she struggled, persevered, and succeeded. Looking back can motivate her to move forward.
2. Encourage her to break out of her comfort zone by leading a skit in her improv group or trying stand-up paddleboarding. New experiences give her the chance to overcome fears and setbacks.
3. Help your teen respond positively to and learn from her failures. Say her story isn't accepted by the school literary magazine. Rather than giving up, she can ask the advisor for feedback. That will help her improve—and motivate her to try again. 👍



Use visuals. Remind your teenager to pay attention to graphics like diagrams and charts. They support the text and provide valuable information to help him learn visually. For example, a time line in his history book may give him an overview of a civilization's rise and fall. 👍

Parent to Parent

Parent-teen bonds

When my son Daryl was younger, I gave him hugs and kisses every day. But now that he's in high school, he shies away from this kind of affection.

I talked with a neighbor who has adult children. She said teenagers don't tire of hearing a parent say "I love you"—even if they don't say it back. The catch? Say it when their friends aren't around, because it might embarrass them. She believes that staying close and loving during the teen years contributed to helping her kids stay out of trouble and mature into well-adjusted adults.

Now I don't hesitate to tell my son that I love him. Also, I've discovered that Daryl is okay with pats on the back and high-fives. Asking about music he likes and attending his wrestling meets are other ways I show love.

Love looks different during the teen years. But Daryl still knows how much he means to me. 👍



Q & A Breaking up is hard

Q My daughter is going through a tough time after breaking up with her boyfriend. How can I help her?

A While you can't make everything "all right" (as much as you'd like to!), you can give your daughter support. Start by letting her know you're available anytime she feels like talking. She might not open up right away, but she'll know you're there for her.

Then, you could lightly suggest ways to help her move on. For instance, she should resist the urge to call or text her ex-boyfriend—or to check his social media accounts.

Also, encourage your daughter to get involved in other activities to take her mind off him. For instance, she might join a cycling or poetry club. She'll spend time with friends and have something new to fill her days. 👍



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Apologies matter

Saying “I’m sorry” to your child when you make a mistake shows you care about her. If you say something you regret, don’t be afraid to apologize. Take responsibility for your actions, and you’ll teach her to do the same. Plus, she’ll feel more comfortable admitting her own mistakes in the future.

Shoplifting warning

Some teens think stealing is a harmless thrill. They may be dared by friends to try it (or to distract store clerks while their friends do it). Make sure your children understand that taking anything without paying for it is dishonest and illegal. Remind them that if they shoplift, they could be arrested.

Spelling double-check

It can be tempting for your high schooler to rely on the computer for correct spelling. But spell-check can’t guarantee an error-free paper. Encourage him to reread his work carefully and look up any words he isn’t sure of. He’ll become a better speller—and turn in better work.

Worth quoting

“Nothing happens unless first we dream.” *Carl Sandburg*

Just for fun

Teacher: What happened at the Boston Tea Party?

Jack: I don’t know, I wasn’t invited.



Successful group projects

Group projects are not only a regular part of high school today, they’re an excellent way to prepare your teen for college and a career.

Working with other students gives him valuable experience communicating, negotiating, and solving problems while exploring a topic in depth. Here are pointers to help him build collaboration skills.



Pick wisely

If the teacher doesn’t assign groups, your high schooler should choose people he feels he can work well with and whose strengths complement his. For example, a strong researcher may want to partner with a student who is a creative designer. Remind him that close friends may not be the right fit.

Lay the framework

Your teen could suggest that the group agree on the best times and places to work together. At the first meeting, members can divvy up parts and list resources they’ll need (library books,

maps, poster board). They might also set up a way to report their progress between meetings, such as texting daily or using a file-sharing site. This will help ensure that each person does his part.

Create a timeline

Setting deadlines will keep everyone on track. Your child could encourage group members to estimate how long their piece will take. Then, the group can build a schedule leading up to the due date. *Tip:* They’ll need to leave time to put everyone’s contributions (bibliography, charts) into the finished project. 👍

Foreign-language fun

Give your teenager a playful twist on practicing her foreign language with these ideas.

■ **Create a playlist.** Suggest that she find songs in the language she’s studying, perhaps online or at the library. While she listens, she will pick up words she knows and discover new ones. Plus, she’ll hear how to properly pronounce words.

■ **Act it out.** Encourage her to act out a scene from her favorite movie, saying the dialogue in the language she’s learning. She’ll work on translation and speaking skills as she puts on her skit. 👍



Ace that interview

Your teen may be eager to gain job experience and make money through summer work. Help her wow prospective employers by sharing these interview basics.

Getting ready...

- Look up directions to the business. Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes early.
- Think about how your experiences make you the ideal candidate for the job. *Example:* Being on your school debate team requires a clear speaking voice—a must for answering office phones.



- Practice interviewing with family or friends so you'll be comfortable on interview day.
- Pick out what you will wear, and make sure the clothes are cleaned and ironed before the big day.

When you arrive...

- Be polite to everyone. Receptionists and other staff

may give employers their opinion of you.

- Turn your cell phone off. A phone pinging or ringing during an interview shows a lack of respect.
- Use a confident voice. Avoid unnecessary words (“like,” “um”) and “text speak” (“def,” “obvs”).
- Be enthusiastic. Tell the interviewer you'd love a chance at the job, and ask when she'll be making a decision. *Tip:* After the interview, email or write promptly to thank the person for her time. 👍

History now and then

The word “history” may make your teen think of ancient times and people he never knew. Make the past more personal by encouraging him to explore your own family's yesteryear. Try these hands-on projects together.

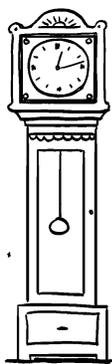


Do a family history—digitally. Free audio recorders let family members tape themselves reading their life stories (check out audacity.sourceforge.net). You can save the sound files for listening to years down the road. Or you might make multimedia scrapbooks with pictures, sound, and video.

Find out what's in a name. Have everyone research their first names, including origins and meanings (use sites like behindthename.com). Explain why you chose your child's name—and where your own name came from.

Talk about heirlooms.

Special items handed down from one generation to another can take many forms (jewelry, books, clothing, furniture). Let each person pick an item to ask older relatives about. Then, share what you discover. 👍



Q & A

Standardized test time

Q My son is nervous about the upcoming standardized tests. How can I help?

A Feeling confident and ready will go a long way toward soothing your son's nerves. Make sure that he's in school for any test prep days, and suggest that he practice at home with sample questions or old tests. All of this will make him feel more confident when test day arrives.

On that day, have him eat a balanced breakfast, arrive at school on time, and bring any supplies he may need, such as a calculator, extra batteries, or pencils.

Finally, go over any test-taking tips his teachers send home. For instance, he should begin each test by reading directions and questions completely before answering. For multiple-choice questions, he can eliminate answers that are obviously wrong. And for essays, he should jot down an outline before he starts to write. 👍



Parent to Parent No complaints!

When my daughter Anna walked in the door after school, she would automatically start talking about all the bad things that had happened that day. Calculus was confusing, a friend annoyed her, and the bus was late. Her frustration soured everyone's mood.

To improve her outlook, I told her I wanted her to start telling me one good thing about her day before

she mentioned a bad one. I explained that her complaints were not a fun way to be greeted when I hadn't seen her all day. And while I wanted her to share her feelings, she needed to focus on positive things to put negative ones in perspective.

Anna seems more aware now of when she starts to complain. In fact, if she's on the verge of venting when she walks in the door, she usually catches herself and thinks of something good to say first. 👍



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