

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Family traditions

As kids get older and busier, family traditions can fall by the wayside. That's too bad, because those traditions are a great way to keep families strong. Pick the ones that are important to you, whether it's a weekly taco night or a first-day-of-spring hike, and keep them on your family agenda.

### Lost and found

Here's an easy way to help your teenager keep track of her important things. Have her create a storage space for items like her student ID, phone charger, and house keys. She could put a bowl on her desk or hang a hook on her wall. That way, she'll always know where to look.

### Good food habits

You can't always control what your teen eats, but you can do simple things at home to promote healthier habits. For example, stock the fridge with juice instead of soda. And buy fruit, unsalted popcorn, raw carrots, and other healthy snacks rather than junk food.

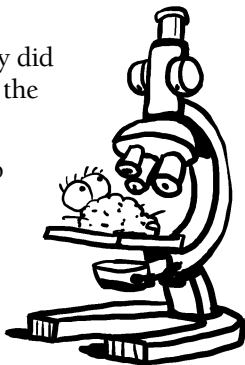
### Worth quoting

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant." *Robert Louis Stevenson*

### Just for fun

**Teacher:** Why did the germ cross the microscope?

**Paul:** To get to the other slide.



## Let's get started!

Putting things off until the last minute is a common temptation for teenagers—and even for adults. Help your high schooler develop a "do it now" attitude with these strategies.

### Break it up

Perhaps your teen doesn't know where to begin. Suggest that he divide big projects into smaller parts. For instance, finding research articles, reading them, and writing a draft can all be separate steps. Have him schedule each one with enough time in between so they don't seem overwhelming.

### Dive right in

Students often put off projects because they seem too hard. Encourage your teen to read through the instructions carefully. He might realize that the material is more familiar than he thought or that he's done a similar project before—and feel more prepared to start. He could also ask the teacher for guidance or get input from classmates.

### Find solutions

Tell your child to watch out for activities he uses to avoid beginning tasks, such



as daydreaming, watching television, eating, or texting. Help him come up with alternatives. For instance, he could work in a room that doesn't have a TV or move away from a window where he ends up gazing out for long periods.

### Finish what you begin

Another form of procrastination can be getting bored with one thing and starting another. Let your teen know it's best to finish the job he's doing first. The sense of satisfaction and accomplishment he'll feel will fuel him for the next thing on his list. Then, when he finishes everything, he might treat himself to a bike ride or a new book from the library. 👍

## Opening lines

You'd probably like to talk more with your teen. Try these tactics to spark a nice conversation.

● **Observe her mood.** "You seem happy. What's up?" Your teenager may be glad you've noticed how she feels and tell you what's going on.

● **Seek her opinion.** "I heard what happened at school. Do you think the students handled it right?" Kids form strong opinions during the high school years, and your child might appreciate sharing hers with you.

● **Ask her for advice.** "I can't remember how to quit the apps on my phone, and they are draining my battery. Will you show me how?" Seeking her expertise can lead to discussions on her interests. 👍



# Be safe online

Would your teen give her name and address to strangers? She might if she uses the Internet carelessly. Talk about ways your child can protect her privacy and remain safe when she's online.

**Guard information.** She should give a name, address, or phone number *only* if a site is secure. URLs for secure sites begin with *https* (rather than just *http*), and there should be a “lock” icon in the address bar. She could also read the site's privacy policy to see how the information will be used.

**Don't meet strangers.** Warn your teen not to “meet” people on the Internet—and certainly not to meet them in



person. She will never know if someone is actually who he says he is. Rather than talking to strangers online, she should stick to people she knows in person, like classmates or cousins.

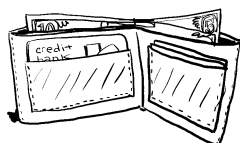
**Protect passwords.**

Remind your high schooler never to give her passwords to anyone but you. That includes her email and Facebook passwords or ones for family accounts like Netflix or Amazon. Revealing a password can let others see your private information, use your account, or charge purchases to you. 👍



## Parent to Parent Ready for a credit card?

Recently my son Corey got a credit card offer in the mail. The offer said if I would cosign, Corey could have a credit limit of \$1,000. I was shocked! Sure, he wanted his own credit card. But he needed to learn some money management skills first.



So I suggested that we open a joint checking account. The account comes with a debit card that looks like a credit card, but the purchases come out of the checking account. That way he knows he's spending real money.

I also explained to him how credit works—and cautioned him to read the fine print. Credit card money is borrowed, and interest rates can be high. If Corey shows he is responsible with money, eventually I'll let him apply for a credit card. In the meantime, I feel that he's on the path to understanding his finances. 👍

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Testing 1-2-3-4

Standardized test season is around the corner. Share these four tips to help your teen do his best.

- 1. Arrive prepared.** Have a brain-boosting breakfast, such as oatmeal with fruit. Wear comfortable clothes—layers are best in case the room is too hot or cold. Find out ahead of time what you should take with you (pencils, calculator, water).
- 2. Read carefully.** Be sure you understand the directions for each section. If you're unsure, ask the teacher. Then, read each question closely—misunderstanding just one word might make a difference.
- 3. Skip questions you can't answer.** Move on rather than getting bogged down on a tough problem. You can go back and work on it if you have time.
- 4. Check your answers.** Look to see that you've shaded the correct answers on the answer sheet or computer screen. You could double-check the question number against the answer sheet every few lines. 👍



## Q & A Staying in school

**Q** My daughter has announced she wants to drop out of school. How can I get her to stay?

**A** There are several things you can do to increase the chances that your daughter will graduate. First, connect her with adults who can help. If her school or local youth center offers mentoring programs, sign her up. Or ask her school counselor to meet with her regularly. Also, see if her school has programs for students at risk. Students who are

frustrated often succeed in smaller classes or in hands-on programs like vocational training or school-to-work partnerships.

Finally, encourage your daughter to do whatever it takes to graduate. Here's a fact that may get her attention: The average high school dropout earns \$10,000 less a year than the average graduate—not to mention that it's simply harder to get a job without a diploma. 👍

