

High School 1 YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Start a portfolio

Having a portfolio could come in handy when your teen graduates. Encourage him to start now by placing essays, graphic designs, or other projects in a folder. Or he could put documents into a computer file and add audio or video to make an “e-portfolio.”

Word rich

The larger your high schooler’s vocabulary, the better she will communicate when speaking and writing. Suggest that she build her “word bank” by doing crossword puzzles or playing board games like Upwords, Taboo, or Balderdash. Or she could compete with others in Words with Friends on a cell phone, tablet, or computer.

Be a mentor

Does your teenager like to babysit? Have him think about a job or a volunteer position involving children. He’ll develop patience and empathy, along with job experience. He might consider working after school at a day care center, tutoring elementary schoolchildren through a community program, or helping to coach a sports team.

Worth quoting

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

Khalil Gibran

Just for fun

Q: Why did breeders cross a homing pigeon with a parrot?

A: So if it got lost, it could ask for directions!



Winning work habits

Habits can be established in as little time as a month. So if your teenager picks up good work habits now, they could become a natural part of her routine all year. Here are some approaches for her to try.

Think “now”

Recommend that she scan assignments immediately to see what’s required and how much time they may take.

Also, the day that long-term projects are given, she should break the work into steps and begin on the first task. Have her ask herself, “What can I do now to make the work easier later?” *Example:* Pick up supplies this week for an art project next week.

Create a network

Advise your teen to reach out to classmates to discuss material, ask questions, and even check each other’s work. She could set up a study group or invite someone to be a study partner. Suggest that she



talk to friends who are good students and ask them for study tips. Chances are they’ll be flattered, and your high schooler may get some good ideas.

Get connected

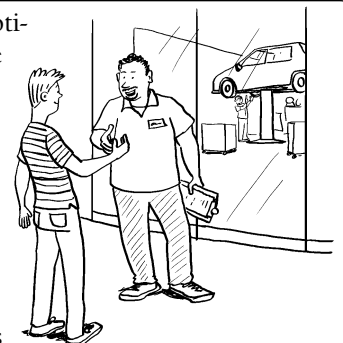
The more your teen relates what she’s learning to the outside world, the more likely she is to absorb and remember it. She might find movies or read articles that deal with a topic she’s studying. For instance, she could watch a documentary on the civil rights movement or look for YouTube videos that show chemical reactions. 👍

Learning with purpose

Encourage your teenager to stay focused and motivated this year by setting goals for each class. Share these steps.

1. Identify what he would like to achieve in every course. Maybe he wants to be able to carry on conversations in Spanish, earn a B in math, or learn how to change brake pads in auto technology class.

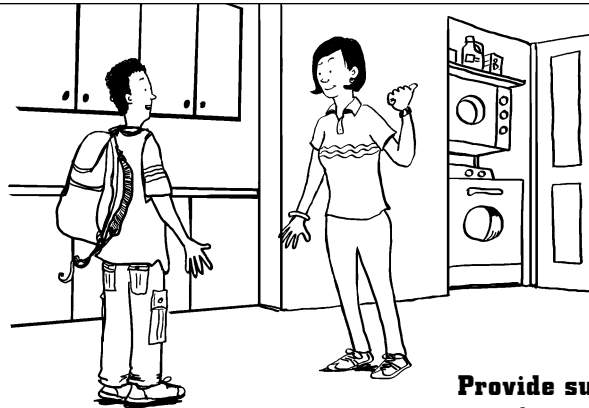
2. Brainstorm ways to reach each goal. He could practice Spanish with a friend or do extra problems in his math book, for example. Or he might arrange to work with a neighbor who tinkers with cars or to shadow an auto mechanic at a local garage. 👍



Ready to be responsible

A responsible high schooler makes life easier for your whole family. Instill responsibility in your teen with the following tips—you'll also prepare him for the future, when more people will be counting on him.

Set parameters. Make an agreement up front connecting what he *wants* to do with what he *needs* to do. If your teen borrows your phone charger, he should return it before you need it. If he wants to have friends over, he must promise they will straighten up afterward.



Hold him accountable. Spell out what will happen if he doesn't keep his end of the bargain. If he loses a piece of your charger, for example, he would have to replace it. If he and his friends don't clean up before they leave, he'll have to do it himself—before he can go out again.

Provide support. Help him come up with ways to remember responsibilities. He could put checklists or reminders on a bulletin board in his room. Also, you might use a one-word system to remind him without nagging, like asking, "Laundry?" to make sure he's finished his chores before going to a movie. 👍



A leadership role

Being a leader is a good way for your child to gain self-confidence and to improve her communication and teamwork abilities. Consider these ideas:

- Have her look for ways to take a more active role in school. Maybe she could be a teacher's assistant or apply for an editor's job on the yearbook.
- Encourage a leadership attitude so she views herself as someone who can make a difference. When she mentions changes she would like to see, ask how she might make them happen (run for student council, start a new club at school). Then, suggest that she do it!



- Recommend ideas for showing leadership at her job or in the community. At work, she could set an example by being on time, working hard, and doing what needs to be done without being asked. In your neighborhood, she might plan a cleanup day or organize a community yard sale. 👍

Q & A

Gaining social media skills

Q It seems like many jobs now require social media skills. My daughter already loves being online—how could she develop skills that will help her get a job one day?

A Writing for real audiences can give your child valuable practice with social media. She might start a blog about causes she believes in (creating less waste, feeding the homeless) or subjects she loves (country music, tennis). Suggest that she ask friends and family to follow her blog—she'll have an instant online community. Also, including a link to her blog can give her a leg up on college and job applications.

Another idea is to post reviews. She might explain why she liked a local restaurant or business on yelp.com, share favorite books at shelfari.com, put travel reviews on tripadvisor.com, or give opinions about music or TV shows at teenink.com.

Finally, she can (and probably already does) post regularly on Facebook and Twitter. Remind her to make sure she would be comfortable with college admissions officers and future employers seeing her comments. 👍



Parent to Parent

High school: Parents wanted!

When my son, Will, started high school, I figured volunteering didn't matter since he was a teenager. Then I attended the school's parent night and learned that being involved would show Will his education was important to me.

I couldn't make a huge commitment, but I signed up for the PTA's email list so I could find out when

they needed short-term help. I was able to find ways to pitch in, including working the snack bar during a football game and making a dish for a teacher-appreciation potluck. Other people I've talked to have helped with fundraisers and set up for dances.

Being in the loop has given me something to talk about with Will. Plus, I like meeting the other parents! 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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