

February 2021

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Money lesson

Talk with your high schooler about the expenses that come with using a car. Show him your insurance bill, for example, and explain how it's calculated (safe-driver discount, number of people covered). Go over the maintenance schedule and how much the services cost. *Tip:* Have him use his own money to refill the gas tank when he drives.

### Crafty organizer

This idea will help your teen keep track of her busy schedule at a glance. Have her paint seven wooden clothespins different colors, then write a day of the week on each. She can clip the clothespins to twine strung along her bedroom wall and easily attach note cards with each day's activities. ("Math test today!")

### Summer programs

It's not too soon for your teenager to start thinking about a summer learning program. Whether he's hoping to earn college credit, sharpen his engineering skills, or learn tae kwon do, there are plenty of choices. Many have March deadlines, and some may offer a limited number of scholarships. So have him talk to his school counselor now about options.

### Worth quoting

"Patience is also a form of action."

Auguste Rodin

### Just for fun

**Q:** What kind of tree can you grow in your hand?

**A:** A palm tree!



## Ways to show kindness

Now more than ever, treating people with kindness can really make a difference in people's lives. Here are everyday ways for your teen to be kind to family, friends, and strangers.

### Add it to the list

Have your teenager write an act of kindness on her to-do list. She might make a note to shovel a neighbor's walk or to color with her little brother. At the end of the day, she can feel good about checking the act off her list.

### Use your (kind) words

Ask your child how she feels when someone greets her kindly. Remembering that good feeling may inspire her to do the same to others. For example, in the drive-thru at a restaurant, pharmacy, or bank, she could say, "Hi, how's your day going?" to the cashier or teller.

### Make a kinder online world

Suggest that your high schooler send someone a personal message to



say how much she liked a post. ("I watched the video of you playing piano. It was beautiful!") *Idea:* Have her pick one day each week to spread kindness online.

### Give the benefit of the doubt

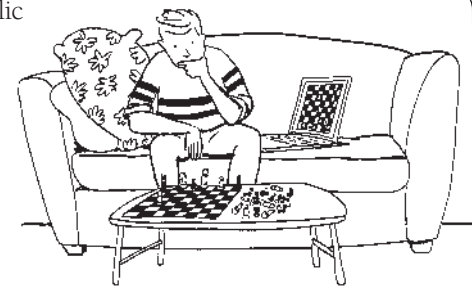
There is kindness in thinking the best of people. If your teen is annoyed that a friend read her text but didn't reply, encourage her to consider what the cause might be. Perhaps her friend's phone battery died or a parent needed her help. 👍

## More reasons to love the library

Your teenager probably knows the public library is full of great books. But does he know about the other amazing (free!) things it offers? Share these ideas.

**Clubs.** Encourage him to join a book club for teens, virtually or in person. The library may also have clubs centered on interests like creative writing, chess, or coding. He can get to know like-minded people while he learns.

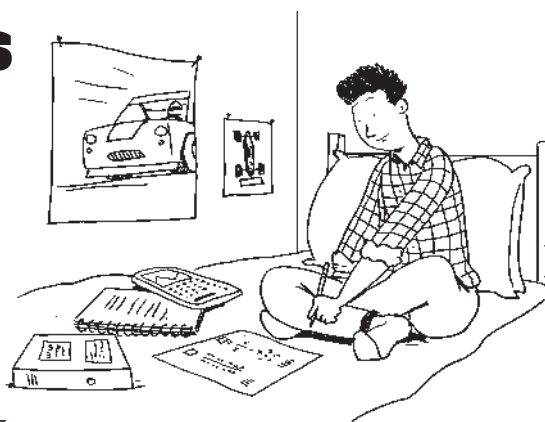
**Online content.** Most libraries provide online access to e-books, audiobooks, magazines, and even music. The library website will have details on how to download free apps for reading or listening on a phone, tablet, or computer. 👍



# Math strategies

Algebra? Geometry? Calculus? No matter which math class your high schooler takes, strategies like these will help him do his best.

**Stick with it 'til you get it.** Each math skill builds on those that came before it. So your teen needs to master factoring equations in algebra before he can find the roots of a function in calculus. If something isn't clear in class, encourage him to ask his teacher questions until it is. If he's stuck on a homework problem, suggest calling a "math buddy" to talk through the solution.



**Make a glossary.** Have your child keep a notebook or computer file of math vocabulary and formulas. He could include sample problems with each entry, as well as the acronyms he'll use to remember formulas. *Example:* "PEMDAS = Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally" for the order of operations. He can add to his glossary regularly and consult it when he does homework.

**Get comfortable with the calculator.** Suggest that your teen draw a large diagram of his graphing calculator on poster board. Next to each key, he might write what it is (say, square root), what it does, and examples of problems that require it. Then, he could hang the diagram by his desk. 👍

# Fun with geography

It's a big world out there. Here are two ways to encourage your teen's interest in geography:

■ Post a map on your kitchen wall. Suggest that your child circle places she's learning about in history or the settings of novels she reads in English. If she loves baseball, she could also circle each city that has a major-league team. And a movie buff can find the locations where her favorite films were shot.



■ Play geography games while waiting for a pizza delivery or sitting in traffic. *Examples:* Take turns thinking of countries for each letter of the alphabet. Challenge each other to identify state or world capitals. Name a landmark, and see who can be first to tell where it's located. 👍

## Ask

### Ask about school (and get answers)

**Q** I want to know how things are going for my daughter in school. But it's like pulling teeth to get anything besides "fine." Any ideas?

**A** It's great that you want to stay in the loop. Teens whose parents are involved in their education tend to have better grades and fewer behavioral problems.

Some prep work might help. Over breakfast or in the car, ask what she has coming up that day. Then, use that information to head off the dreaded "fine." Instead of "What did you do today?" you'll be able to ask, "You had your presentation today, right? What part did you think went best?"

Not every question will result in a detailed answer. But regular small conversations can add up to a fuller picture of your daughter's school life. 👍



## Parent to Parent

### Fit and "green"

Our family likes to stay active, but it's hard to find the motivation to get outdoors in the winter. My son Rob suggested "plogging"—or picking up litter while jogging. He explained that it first became popular in Sweden, then spread all over the world as a way for people to help the environment and get exercise.

So we put on gloves, grabbed some bags, and went for a "plog." We quickly discovered that

bending and squatting to pick up trash gave us more of a workout than just jogging!

This has become a regular thing for our family. Sometimes we go "plicking"

—picking up litter while hiking. Knowing we're making a difference in our neighborhood while getting fit gives us the boost we need to actually get out and get active! 👍



## OUR PURPOSE

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

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