

March 2021

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Seeds of success

Motivate your high schooler to do her best by showing her that her education is important to you. How? You plant the seeds for your high schooler's success every time you ask how her algebra test went, sit nearby while she does science homework, or tell her you're proud of her work on a history project.

Test accommodations

If your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), review it together before he takes standardized tests. Make sure he understands any testing accommodations he's entitled to. That way, he'll be ready to speak up for himself on test day.

The power of forgiveness

Letting go of anger doesn't always come easily for teens (or parents). But holding on to resentment toward someone can hurt your child more than the other person. Encourage her to imagine a grudge as a heavy rock—would it be easier to go about her day while holding the rock or after setting it down?

Worth quoting

"Don't let yesterday take up too much of today." Will Rogers

Just for fun

Q: What do you get when you cross a cheetah and a burger?

A: Fast food.



Time-management tips for teens

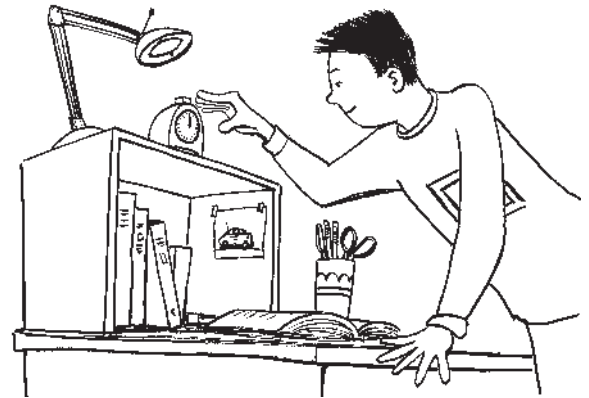
Schoolwork, activities, social obligations ... your high schooler has a lot to juggle each day! Help him learn to make the best use of his time with these strategies.

Spend time to save time

Encourage your high schooler to review his calendar each weekend and make a list for the upcoming week. He might sort items by category: "Urgent" (studying for a test), "Important" (starting a research paper), and "Optional" (playing video games). Then, have him fit his list into his weekly calendar alongside commitments like homework, chores, and practices.

Identify time-wasters

Talk to your teen about how everyone has a limited "basket" of minutes each day. Then, ask him to think about how many minutes he wastes on things (searching for papers, mindlessly scrolling through social media). How could he reclaim that time? Maybe he will



color-code folders and close browser tabs he's not using for schoolwork. *Tip:* Remind him that some "saved" minutes can go toward fun activities!

Use tools

Share tools that help you manage your time. You could show your high schooler how you fill in your calendar or set phone alerts for important obligations. Suggest this idea, too, called "time boxing": If there's something he's been putting off, set a timer (15 minutes), and commit to working on it until the buzzer sounds. Knowing he can stop after a certain point will help him get started. 👍

Alternatives to nagging

Having to remind your teenager three or four (or 10!) times to do something can be frustrating. Try these ways to get results *without* nagging.

Put it in writing. Sometimes a brief, friendly text message or a note on the refrigerator ("Please send a thank-you note to Grandma for her gift") is the simplest way to remind your teen about a task.

Watch your words. Asking "Did you email your question to your teacher yet?" can put your high schooler on the defensive. Instead, try a question that suggests you trusted her to handle it: "What did your teacher think about your idea for the project?" 👍



Make a college action plan

If your high schooler is considering college, it's not too soon — or too late — to make a plan to reach her goals. Consider these steps.

Find the best fit. If your child is just starting to look at colleges, encourage her to make a checklist of what's important to her (majors, size, location). She can research colleges at the library, at college fairs, and online (try collegescorecard.ed.gov).

Get the latest information. The pandemic brought a number of changes. For example, some universities are offering virtual tours or aren't requiring ACT or SAT scores for now. The school counselor can help your teen find



up-to-date information on admission requirements and procedures.

Figure out finances.

Look for ways to make college more affordable. Your teen could start at a community college, for instance, or attend a local university to save on housing costs. She can also apply for scholarships and financial

aid. *Note:* Have your family's finances changed? If your child already received a financial-aid award letter, contact the college with your updated information. 👍



Parent to Parent Talking about alcohol

During a walk recently, my daughter Sandra mentioned that her friend Teresa had snuck hard seltzers into her backpack for them to drink after practice. I knew that if I freaked out, Sandra would clam up. So I chose my words carefully.

First, I asked how she reacted. She said she used an excuse we'd role-played: "My parents would ground me if they found out!" Then I asked if she was tempted to drink. When she answered, "Maybe, because everyone does," I pointed out that lots of kids don't—and it's not weird to say no. I also told her I was proud of her choice.

Sandra nodded, then mentioned a new movie she wanted to see. I let the subject go, but I feel better knowing she had opened the door to talking with me about tough topics. 👍



Q & A A respectful household

Q My son is usually well mannered with others, but at home he can be downright rude. How can I help him be more respectful toward our family?

A Teens are often more polite with people they're not close to. That might be because they know family will love them no matter what! That doesn't excuse rudeness, though.

Rather than calling out your son, try sitting down as a family to talk about what each person thinks it means to be respectful. Your teen might say that entering his room without knocking is disrespectful toward him. But he may not realize he's being rude if he doesn't respond when you ask him to walk the dog (even if he does it anyway).

Using those insights, encourage family members to try to show more respect. Hopefully, as everyone gives more, everyone will receive more, too. 👍



Use the scientific method

Thinking like a scientist can help your high schooler in science class—and in everyday life. Encourage him to conduct a real-life experiment with this idea.

1. Observe and question. Your teen can start with something interesting he notices ("I focus better during study sessions when music is playing") and ask a question ("Does the type of music matter?").

2. Do research. He might read studies about what kind of music helps people concentrate (say, instrumental vs. music with lyrics).

3. Pose a hypothesis. Your child's hypothesis could be, "If I listen to instrumental music, I'll focus better than if I listen to music with lyrics."

4. Perform an experiment. Maybe he'll study to instrumental music on some days and to music with lyrics on others. He could make a tally mark each time he gets distracted.

After a week or so, he may notice that he makes fewer tally marks while listening to one type of music than the other. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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