

February 2020

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Learn from mistakes

Does your teenager take the time to read teachers' marks on her graded work? Encourage her to go through the comments and look carefully at the corrections—this can help her do better next time. If something isn't clear, she should ask the teacher for more direction.

Look into AP classes

With advanced placement classes and tests, your teen can earn college credit while he's still in high school. They may also help his college applications stand out. If his school doesn't offer the classes he wants, have him ask his counselor about self-study classes online that will prepare him for AP tests.

The power of extended family

Can't make it to your high schooler's basketball game or concert? See if her grandfather, aunt, or uncle could attend. They'll probably enjoy having the chance to watch her play or perform. And your teenager will benefit from feeling supported. You can offer to step up for a relative's child someday, too.

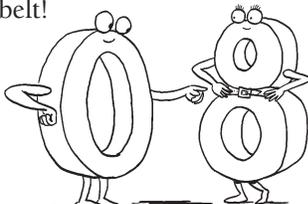
Worth quoting

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose." Zora Neale Hurston

Just for fun

Q: What did the 0 say to the 8?

A: Nice belt!



Outside-the-box study strategies

Sometimes it helps to shake things up in study sessions. Share these clever ideas with your high schooler so he will learn and remember more information—and do better on tests.

Set notes to music

Tunes make lyrics easier to recall—that's why songs get stuck in your head! If your teen needs to remember facts, like the elements on the periodic table, suggest that he set them to the tune of a catchy song. He'll be studying while he looks up information to write the "lyrics" and memorizing every time he sings his song.

Visualize it

Drawing can help your high schooler "see" material. Encourage him to create a comic strip about a historical event and write details like names and dates in speech bubbles. Or maybe he'll illustrate a tropical rain forest and label the layers or make a yes/no flowchart to sort the



properties of matter. *Example:* Is it liquid or solid at room temperature? If it's liquid, what's its boiling point?

Get up

Moving while studying can improve your teenager's focus. He might bounce a ball between questions or do one jumping jack for every five correct answers. Studying with a group? He could play "Ace Student": Grab a ball and place a wastebasket across the room. They can ask each other questions and take a shot for each correct answer. Each basket made earns a letter (A-C-E). Get all three to become "Ace Student." 👍

"How are you?"

Talking with adults doesn't always come naturally to teens. But learning to interact with people from all generations will help your child now and in the future. Try these suggestions:

- Teach your high schooler to say hello to grown-ups she encounters, like a friend's mother. Suggest asking "How are you doing?" and making eye contact to show she's listening to the answer. Then, she could make a follow-up comment. ("Your job sounds interesting.")

- Include your teenager in adult conversations, such as when a family friend comes to dinner. Remind her to ask questions from time to time—if your teen mentions a movie, she might then ask, "What movies have you seen lately?" 👍



Earth-friendly learning

Want your teenager to help the environment while also brushing up on school skills? Encourage her to try these activities.

Research options. Hold a family challenge to find new ways to make your home eco-friendly. Each person could suggest one possibility. *Examples:* Use homemade cleaners that don't contain environmentally



harmful chemicals. Switch to rechargeable batteries. Plant a vegetable and herb garden. Have your teen research each idea online or at the library. Then, she could write a plan for putting it into action, including supplies you would need and how much each costs.

Think like an engineer. Suggest that your high schooler creatively redesign things your family usually throws out. Maybe she can make a tote bag from old jeans, engineer a milk-jug bird feeder, or turn an old crate into an end table. *Idea:* She might be able to start an "upcycling" business by selling her products. 👍



Q & A Worried about alcohol

Q As my son is getting older, I'm more concerned that he will start drinking. How should I approach this?

A Talking to your child is the first step. Let him know how you feel about underage drinking, and explain that it's dangerous and illegal. Bring up the subject regularly, and ask whether kids are drinking around him. He may not say much, but he will know where you stand.

Also, encourage him to invite friends over so you can get to know them. And introduce yourself to his friends' parents at school events.



That will make it easier to call them later to make sure a party will be supervised or to share concerns.

Finally, watch for signs of alcohol use. Casually smell his breath, look for changes in his sleeping habits, and watch for falling grades or dropping out of activities. If you suspect anything, talk to him and to his school counselor or pediatrician. 👍

Poetry corner

Writing poetry is a great way for your teenager to expand his vocabulary—and it also lets him express his feelings. Suggest that he try these types of poems.

Synonyms

Have your child choose any word and put it in capital letters at the top of the page. Then, he can use a thesaurus to list three synonyms on the next line. Finally, he could say something about the word on the last line, rhyming the second and third lines:

SERENDIPITY
 Luck, fluke, fortuity.
 I love when it happens to me!

First line/last line

Encourage your teen to think of a short phrase to begin a story ("Someone once told me") and another to end it ("I know better now"). He will write the first line at the top of the page, leave six blank lines under it, and write the second line. Then, he can fill in the middle of the poem—rhyming lines if he would like. 👍



Parent to Parent Staying on top of grades

I was surprised when my daughter Aliyah got some poor grades on her last report card. I realized that I needed to monitor her grades as I did when she was younger.

I told Aliyah that we were going to start holding weekly check-ins on Fridays when I get home from work. Now she lets me know how her classes went that week and shows me

her graded work. Then, we check her grades online together. If there's a low mark, we'll make a plan for helping her bring it up.

I'm glad we've started this routine now, while Aliyah still has time to improve her grades before the end of the year. I know she and I are both looking forward to her having a better report card next time. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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