

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Express appreciation

Thank-you notes are a sincere and inexpensive way for your teen to show appreciation. Suggest that she take the time to write them to family members, a potential employer who interviewed her for a job, and even one of her teachers. Maybe she could try writing one a month and make it a habit.

### Read what you eat

Just because a box says the food inside is “healthy” doesn’t mean it is. Encourage your high schooler to read the ingredient lists on packaged foods first. Share this easy rule: Only eat products with ingredient names he can read and understand. Chances are that if he doesn’t recognize the word, it’s not a natural or healthy ingredient.

### Guesstimate, estimate

Being able to estimate helps your teenager make good decisions on purchases, mileage, and more. Help her practice when you stop for gas: “We have \$20, and gas costs \$2.39 a gallon. About how many gallons can we buy?” Or have her estimate the number of miles you could drive on \$20 worth of gas. The more she tries, the better she’ll get at estimating.

### Worth quoting

“It is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.” *Herman Melville*

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why did the boy cut a hole in his umbrella?

**A:** So he’d know when it stopped raining.



## Study with a goal

The new year is the perfect time for fresh beginnings. Encourage your teen to think about his study routine and to consider approaches like these for setting—and achieving—his study goals.

### Be realistic

Recommend that your child set specific, realistic goals. “I’m going to take good notes in science class, review them daily, and find a tutor” is more doable than “I’m going to do well in science this term!” By keeping his goals realistic, he’ll be more likely to stick to them and succeed.

### Plan carefully

Many of the world’s most successful people plan their days down to the hour. Instead of simply planning to study “in the afternoon,” your teen might first consider how much studying he has to do and how long it will take. Then, he could break study time into 15-minute chunks.



Let him know it’s okay if he strays from the schedule at first. It’s part of learning how to manage his time effectively.

### Minimize distractions

It’s crucial for your high schooler to be able to focus on his studies. He might set a goal to cut down on distractions. For instance, just 15–20 minutes of aerobic exercise will increase his concentration. Or he could change his study location to a place that has fewer interruptions. 👍

## Build character

The values that guide your child’s choices can help her carve a successful life path. Nurture traits that will serve your teen throughout her life with these suggestions.

**Consideration** allows your high schooler to make fair decisions. When discussing family problems, for example, talk about how each suggestion may affect others. You might say, “If you use the car to drive yourself to school every day, how will that affect my getting to and from work?”

**Citizenship** puts your teenager on the road toward making a difference in the community. She could choose a cause to commit to, such as collecting donations for a homeless shelter or picking up trash at a nearby lake. 👍



# Applying schoolwork at work

There are many ways for teens to take what they're learning at school and apply it on the job. Share these examples with your teenager so she'll see how what she's doing in class will benefit her in the workforce.

■ **Reading.** An employee manual may be required reading for your child at work. It will explain how to do a job, company policies, and more. Suggest that your teen use informational reading and critical thinking skills to apply what she reads to on-the-job situations. For instance, what procedures



are in place if she needs to find someone to cover her hours?

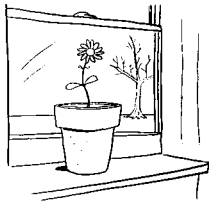
■ **Speaking.** When working directly with the public as a store clerk or hostess, your teen needs to communicate clearly and concisely. Remind her to practice now by looking people in the eye when she talks and confidently asking and answering questions.

■ **Math.** Many jobs will require your high schooler to use math. She may be asked to measure materials while working at a hardware store or craft shop. As a cashier, she'll need good number sense to check whether she input store coupons correctly. 👍

## Teen suicide prevention

Suicide is a leading cause of death among teenagers. Here are warning signs to look for and ways to get help if you notice any.

Take your child seriously if he says things like "I won't be around much longer," or "I don't care about myself." Ask whether he's depressed or considering suicide.



Other red flags include giving away possessions or becoming obsessed with art and poetry about death. There could be major changes in his personality or his eating and sleeping habits. He might start neglecting his appearance, and his grades may suddenly fall.

If you're concerned, contact a mental health professional immediately—the school counselor or your pediatrician can recommend one. More information is available by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-TALK) or texting "START" to 741741 to reach the Crisis Text Line. 👍



### Parent to Parent

## Who are my teen's friends?

My daughter Julia made a lot of new friends this year. At first, I didn't know them, because she works part-time and stays busy with extracurricular activities.

I want to stay in the loop as much as I can in her life, but I also need to help her gain independence and trust me. So I took a few steps to learn about her friends.

First, I encouraged her to invite a couple of them over for family dinners. I also said she could bring along a friend for a weekend campout. We all had a blast eating, hiking, and just hanging out.

Now that I'm getting to know more of Julia's friends, it's easier to ask about what's happening in her life. I'm building a stronger bond with her *and* learning more about the people she spends time with. 👍



### Q & A

## Getting involved in school

**Q** I always attend meet-the-teacher night and open houses at my son's high school, but are there other ways I can get connected?

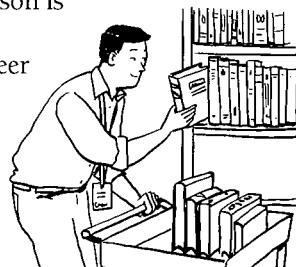
**A** Yes! There are several ways to be involved while your son is in high school.

You might volunteer to mentor or tutor teens. Or you could assist in a classroom, the computer lab, the library, or the

cafeteria. You might even help build sets for musicals and plays.

Also, attend school board meetings, principal luncheons, and PTA or PTO meetings, too. There may be opportunities like preparing grant proposals or organizing letter-writing campaigns for the school administration.

Do you have skills in a trade or technical program? Consider holding in-school workshops for students and their parents. That way, other parents can get involved, too! 👍



**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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