

April 2009

High School **YEARS**

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips



Read, type, explain

When your high schooler is faced with challenging study material, suggest that she try this approach: 1. Read the passage. 2. Type it on the computer. 3. Explain it aloud in your own words. The more ways she absorbs the information, the easier it will be to learn.

Volunteer tip

Many teens are beginning to think about careers. Ask your child's teachers if they'd like you to come in and talk about yours. You could tell students how you chose your job, what education you needed, and what you do on a daily basis.

Review movies

Your teenager wants to see a movie that you aren't sure is appropriate. Since ratings may not tell the whole story, read reviews in the newspaper or online (try www.pauseparentplay.org or www.parentpreviews.com). If you need to say no, show him the articles and explain your reasoning. Then, help him find a different film.

Worth quoting

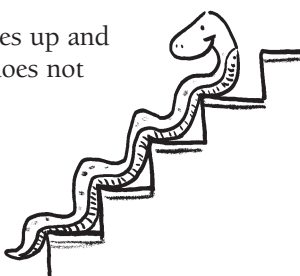
"Nothing we achieve in this world is achieved alone. It is always achieved with others teaching us along the way."

Lee J. Colan

Just for fun

Q: What goes up and down but does not move?

A: Stairs.



Keys to confidence

Teens who feel good about themselves can resist peer pressure and go after opportunities. They're also less likely to be bullied. Teach your child to hold his head high with these tips.

Practice communicating. Developing the ability to talk to all kinds of people will give your teen confidence. Suggest that he chat with his coach about last night's big game or talk to his teacher about a law that was recently passed in Congress. Encourage him to make phone calls—to order pizza, schedule a doctor's appointment, or find out if a store carries something he needs.

Set goals. Teens like to feel as if they're in charge of their lives. Have your child set short- and long-term goals for his future. A short-term goal might be to try out for the debate team or to bring up his science grade. Long-term goals could include finding a summer job or being accepted into college. When your teen is focused on achieving his goals, he will



be motivated to do well and succeed—and that will boost his self-esteem.

Conquer nervousness. Help your high schooler practice situations that make him anxious. Perhaps he'd like to ask a classmate to get together but is afraid of rejection. Help him think of what he could say if the person turns him down ("No problem. I'll catch you another time!"). Or maybe he thinks people will laugh if he asks a question in class. Point out that he's probably not the only one with the question. 👍

Spring poetry

April is National Poetry Month—the perfect time to read and appreciate poetry. Help build your child's enthusiasm with these ideas:

■ Many libraries and bookstores hold poetry readings. Put one or two on your calendar, and plan to attend together.

■ Let your child see that kids her age can be poets. She might pick up her school's literary magazine or browse Web sites that publish teen poetry (try www.poetryalive.com).

■ Encourage the whole family to take part in "Poem in Your Pocket Day" on April 30. Carry a poem to share with friends and relatives.

■ Suggest that your teen sign up to receive a daily poem via e-mail at www.poets.org/poemADay.php. She can post her favorite on MySpace or Facebook or add it to her e-mail signature. 👍



Learning with wikis

A “wiki,” from the Hawaiian word for “quick,” is a Web site that can be written and edited by anyone on the Internet. Changes appear almost instantly, which makes wikis great for collaborating. Here’s how your high schooler can use wikis to find and share information.

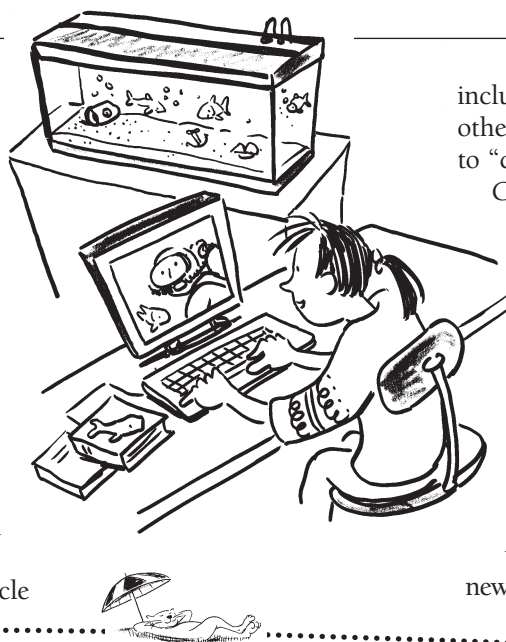
Researching

Wikis like www.wikiforkids.com and <http://wikibooks.org> are great starting points for school projects. Or your high schooler can use the most well-known wiki, www.wikipedia.org, where each article

includes references and links to pages about other topics. *Example:* “Marine biology” links to “coral reefs,” “biotechnology,” and “Jacques Cousteau.”

Collaborating

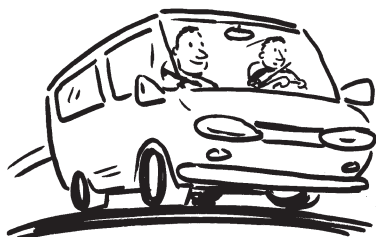
When your teen is doing a group report, suggest that she and her partners create a private wiki at a site such as www.zohowriter.com. Group members can add to the assignment as they work on it. It’s saved online, so each person can access it anytime from her own computer. When the project is due, they can print the information directly from the wiki or copy and paste their report into a new document. 👍



New driver safety

Getting a driver’s license is an exciting time for teenagers. But driving comes with serious responsibilities. Help your teen be safe on the road with these rules:

- Always buckle up, and insist that your passengers wear seatbelts, too. Follow the law and your parents’ rules about how many friends you can have in the car.



- Focus all your attention on the road. Music can be distracting, so keep the radio low or off. Don’t use cell phones for talking or text-messaging while driving—it’s unsafe and, in some states, against the law.

- **Never** drink and drive or ride with someone who is under the influence of any drug. Remember that over-the-counter drugs, like antihistamines, can make you drowsy. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

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

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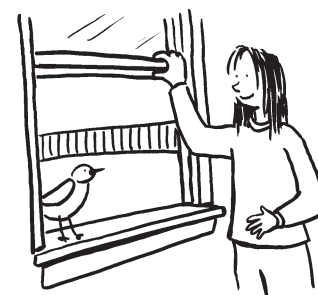
Q & A Conserve resources

Q My daughter likes to take long showers and turn the heat and air conditioning up high. How can I teach her about conservation?

A Explain that cutting down on her water and energy use will save your family money and conserve the earth’s resources. You might start by showing her your utility bills. Then, brainstorm ways to lower them.

To conserve water, your teen could take a bath or set a timer to remind herself to shower more quickly. Turning off the water while brushing teeth and running only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher will also conserve water. During the winter, keep the thermostat down. As the weather gets warmer, have your child open the windows and let in the fresh air. When you use air conditioning, turn the temperature up—even a degree or two can make a difference.

When the next bills come, have your child calculate how much water and electricity your family saved. 👍



Parent to Parent Hanging out at home

When my kids became teenagers, I wanted them to keep bringing their friends home. But they said there was nothing to do in our house.

We talked it over and came up with ways to make our basement a fun hangout spot. First, we moved all our board games down there. Then, we cleared a bookshelf for storing movies, CDs, and video games. I also

brought in a small refrigerator and stocked it with healthy snacks and juice.

Finally, we let the kids decorate their new room. They picked out colors and spent a Saturday having a painting party with their friends.

We set some rules about cleaning up and how late their friends could stay. We’re glad that their friends hang here—and that we can keep an eye on our kids. 👍

