

January 2009

High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips



Tutoring tip

Good students know when to ask for help. If your high schooler is struggling with a tough subject, suggest that he talk to his teacher. She might work with him after school or recommend a classmate to help. He can also call libraries and community centers to ask about free tutoring.

PE every day

Gym class does double duty: it helps busy teens fit in a workout, and it earns them school credit. Encourage your child to choose PE as an elective each year even if it's not required. She can think of it as a free gym membership—one she can enjoy with friends.

Self-discipline

Having your teen fix his own mistakes builds self-discipline. For instance, if he gets a parking ticket, let him figure out how to pay for it (work an extra shift, dip into his savings). Be sure to discuss how he will keep from repeating the mistake (watch the time when he parks at a meter).

Worth quoting

"The future depends on what we do in the present."
Mahatma Gandhi

Just for fun

Q: Who can shave 25 times a day and still have a beard?

A: A barber.



Research right

Finding information for a report or project can be easy. The challenge is finding *good* information—facts that are useful, interesting, and accurate. Guide your teen through these steps to help her become a top-notch researcher.

1. Know the assignment

Before heading to the library or logging onto the Internet, check the directions. Do you need primary sources (first-hand accounts like interviews, letters, or diaries), secondary sources (information from books, Web sites, or magazines), or both? How many sources are required?

2. Choose keywords

Brainstorm keywords for your topic. For a report on "the pros and cons of the space program," you might try "space exploration," "pros cons space program," and "NASA future."

3. Conduct the search

Type the keywords into an Internet search engine or your library's database. You can narrow your search by selecting "Advanced Search" and entering specific words or phrases, dates, or types of Web sites. To find the best information, look carefully through several pages of links, reading the descriptions and source lines for each.

4. Evaluate credibility

Before using any source, evaluate the author's credentials. Check his biography or title to see if he's an expert. For Web sites, choose extensions such as .gov (government), .edu (school or university), or .org (nonprofit organization).

5. Collect information

Print Web pages or save them to a computer file, check out books, and make copies of journal articles. Jot down the information needed to cite sources properly (title, author, URL, publication



year, page numbers). Organize the materials into folders by subtopic to make writing your paper easier. 👍

Career planning

Would your teen like to get paid to do what he enjoys? Help him turn his favorite activity into a job—and maybe a future career.

If he likes a particular class, such as photography, suggest that he ask his teacher if she knows a place that needs part-time help (photography studio, film lab). A high schooler who tinkers with cars might see if a local garage is hiring.

When your child begins working, encourage him to ask questions ("How did you get into mechanics?" "What kind of training did you receive?"). He'll learn what he needs to do to pursue the field. 👍



Test success

Different kinds of tests call for different strategies. Share these ideas with your high schooler.

Multiple choice. On a reading test, skim questions before reading the passages they accompany. This will let you know what to focus on as you read. Try solving math problems before looking at the possible answers. If your solution is among the choices, it's likely to be right.



Short answer. Read each question carefully so you know what you're being asked. Write neatly, and keep your answers brief, clear, and to the point. Don't leave any answers blank—teachers may give credit for partial answers.

Essay. Make a quick outline to organize your thoughts before you write. Cross off each idea as you add it to your essay. Leave a few minutes at the end to proofread your work and be sure you've answered the question completely.

Tip: No matter what kind of test you're taking, being prepared is the best strategy. Briefly review class notes each night. You'll learn information instead of just memorizing it, and you'll always be prepared for a surprise quiz. 👍

Parent to Parent

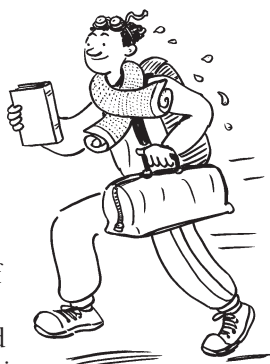
On-the-go teen

Between the swim team, the school newspaper, and band practice, my son Sean had only one evening "off" each week.

When his grades started dropping, I told him he had to cut back. Together, we discussed the pros and cons of each of his activities.

Sean wanted to keep swimming since he hopes to compete in college. And he couldn't quit band because he was getting credit for it. So he talked to the newspaper adviser to see if he could cut back on his hours. She said he could be a freelance reporter even if he couldn't stay late for staff meetings or to edit articles.

Now, Sean has two free evenings each week. We have a little more family time—and his grades are beginning to improve. 👍



Q & A Stop cyberbullying

Q I've been hearing a lot about cyberbullying. How can I protect my child?

A Cyberbullies use e-mail, IMs, text messaging, and postings on blogs and social-networking sites to threaten or insult others. They are usually people your teen knows, such as classmates spreading ugly rumors. To help your child steer clear of cyberbullies, use these safety rules:

- Be sure her instant-messaging contact list includes only people she knows well. She should delete anyone who makes her feel uncomfortable.
- If a cyberbully e-mails your child, she needs to mark the message as "spam" or block the writer's address. Report further attempts to the e-mail provider.
- Have her make blogs and social-networking profiles private. She should adjust settings so she can approve posts before they appear on her page.

Note: Tell your teenager never to respond to cyberbullies. If she feels frightened, she should talk to you, a teacher, or her school guidance counselor. 👍



Stay involved

Jessie's mother shelves books in the school library once a week. Sean's father contacts local pizza parlors and other businesses to set up school fund-raisers.

These parents have found ways to volunteer at high school—and you can, too! Teachers will appreciate the help, and your teen will know you value his education. Contact the school office or PTA to see if you can do any of these tasks.

At school

- Make copies in the office.
- Decorate bulletin boards or hallway displays.
- Help plant and maintain a school garden.
- Answer phones in the health room or career center.

At home

- Type or assemble school directories or newsletters.
- Add information to the school Web site.
- Organize a phone tree.
- Make calls to recruit volunteers for school events. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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