

October 2009

High School 1 YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips



What's another word?

When your high schooler writes a paper, does he often repeat the same words? A thesaurus offers interesting word choices and can help build his vocabulary. For example, *slow* might become *creeping* or *sluggish*. Suggest that he try a print thesaurus or an online version like www.thesaurus.com.

Eat breakfast

If your teen skips breakfast to lose weight, let her know that her plan will probably backfire. Eating a healthy meal before school will jump-start her metabolism and keep her from overeating later. Quick ideas include granola and berries mixed with nonfat yogurt, or peanut butter on toast with a banana.

Apologies count!

Saying "I'm sorry" to your child when you make a mistake shows you care about him. If you say something you regret, don't be afraid to apologize. He'll respect you for it, and he'll feel more comfortable admitting his own mistakes.

Worth quoting

"While we try to teach our children all about life, our children teach us what life is all about."

Angela Schwindt

Just for fun

Q: Why do birds fly south for the winter?

A: Because it's too far to walk!



Parents + teachers = A recipe for success

Children outgrow toys, clothes, and fads. But one thing they never outgrow is their need for parents and teachers to work together. A strong home-school partnership increases your teenager's likelihood of enjoying and finishing school.

Try this three-step plan to develop strong relationships with your teen's teachers.

1. Respect

Treat teachers with the same regard you want them to show your child. For example, speak politely and avoid jumping to conclusions. If you have personality differences, try to set them aside and remember you share a goal: your high schooler's success.

2. Communication

Stay in touch with teachers throughout the school year. If you missed the school's open house, send each teacher a note to introduce yourself and ask the best way to contact them (e-mail, phone).



Then, whenever you have a concern, don't wait to touch base. And if you have something nice to report ("Tanya really appreciated your help with her science project"), be sure to say that, too.

3. Involvement

Volunteering in your teen's school can make a difference in her achievement. Whether you have a lot of time or a little, you'll show her that you support her education. Call the school to learn about ways to lend a hand. You might help set up for college night or a chorus concert, bake cookies for a teacher appreciation event, or serve on a parent committee. 👍

In-the-know teens

What did the president say in his latest speech? Who won a place on the Olympic ski team? Your high schooler can answer these questions by reading the news each day.

The newspaper. In the morning or after school, share newspaper sections (front page, sports, arts) with your teen. Reading and discussing the day's news can inspire him to stay up-to-date.

News sites. Your child can go online to read about topics that matter to him. Suggest sites designed for teens, such as <http://classroomedition.com/cre/students.html> or www.nytimes.com/learning/index.html. Ask him to e-mail you interesting articles, and you can do the same from your favorite news sites.

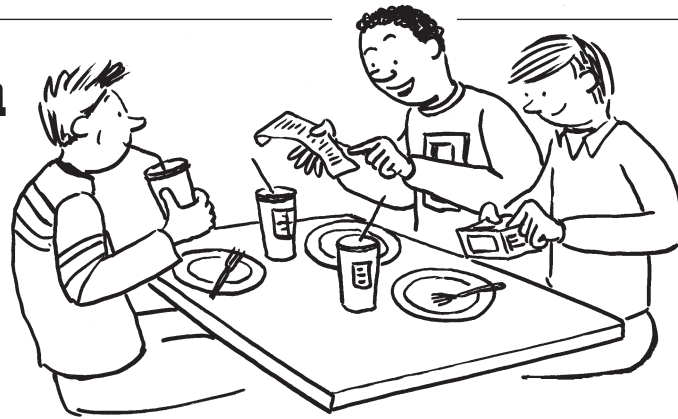
Tip: Suggest that your child test his news knowledge at www.parade.com/paradeclassroom. 👍



Real-life math

Faced with challenging math homework, your child may wonder, “When will I ever use this?” Offer these real-life examples to show him that math really does add up—now and in the future.

Right now. When your teen goes out to eat with friends, the check needs to be divided fairly. He can be the one to add up each person’s charges, figure out the tip, divide the tax, and tell people how much they owe. If he’s active in clubs or sports, he may help plan fund-raisers, proms, or sports banquets. He’ll need to work



with price quotes and attendance estimates to set prices that cover costs.

Down the road. Your high schooler may not know what he wants to be when he grows up, but he’s likely to need math for almost any job. Discuss a range of careers with him, and find the math in each one.

For example, a house painter has to figure out how much paint to buy, an insurance agent needs to understand life-expectancy tables, and a pharmacist must make sure medicine dosages are accurate. 👍

Stretch your boundaries

“Notice: You are now leaving your comfort zone.”

That’s the feeling your teen may have when she tries something new. But taking a “good risk” can build her confidence and broaden her horizons. Share these ideas:

- Try a new fitness activity like racquetball or diving, or take one of your current interests to the next level (plan a canoe trip, join an outdoor club).
- Run for office, such as student council representative, robotics club treasurer, or 4-H club president.



- Sign up for a demanding course like pre-calculus or honors Spanish, or an elective that’s unusual for you (poetry writing, astronomy).

- Get to know someone outside your group of friends. For example, invite a new student to hang out, or ask a classmate from the chess club to go to the movies. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

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

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Parent to Parent Family field trips

Like most teenagers, our daughter would rather be with her friends than with us. I wanted to have more family time, and my brother gave me a great idea. He said his family plans a day trip one Sunday a month, and now his teenage boys look forward to it.

We started by asking Serena to help us find places to go. At first she groaned, but then she started to get a little excited when we added her ideas to our list. She Googled dolphins—her favorite animal—and found an aquarium about two hours away. I thought of a historic village where volunteers demonstrate blacksmithing and butter making.

Our first trip—to a butterfly exhibit at a nearby nature center—was great. My husband and I were happy to spend time with Serena, and I think she enjoyed being with us, too! 👍



Q & A Is it a learning disability?

Q I’m worried that my son might have a learning disability. He’s a slow reader, and he often runs out of time on tests. Is it too late to get a diagnosis?

A A learning disability can be diagnosed at any age. Call your teen’s school counselor to request a conference with his teachers. You can go over the problems you see and ask the teachers if they think his grades reflect his ability.

If they agree there might be a problem, a

school specialist will evaluate your son. Then, if a learning disability is found, he will get an individualized education program (IEP) with accommodations like extra time on tests.

Or the teachers may not feel that testing is needed. In that case, ask for suggestions on ways to help your child. Keep a close eye on the situation, and contact his counselor with any more concerns. 👍

