

High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success



Short Stops

Fresh eyes

Even kids who like to read can find textbooks challenging. If a reading assignment stumps your child, encourage her to switch to another task for a few minutes and then reread the section. Also, suggest that she look over graphics like tables, charts, and fact boxes—they might help clear things up.

Close quarters

You don't have to go on a big outing to spend quality time with your teen. Just doing regular, everyday activities near each other can create closeness and conversation. You might read over work papers in the living room while your child plays with a pet or browses a magazine, for example.

First aid

Does your high schooler know what to do if someone is choking or stops breathing? Encourage him to learn by taking a first aid or CPR course through the Red Cross (call 800-733-2767, or visit redcross.org to find nearby classes). *Idea:* Consider enrolling together to double the chances of saving a life one day.

Worth quoting

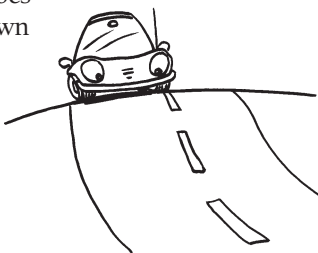
"What you dislike in another, take care to correct in yourself."

Thomas Sprat

Just for fun

Q: What goes up and down a hill but never moves?

A: A road.



Resisting peer pressure

Classmates can be a wonderful influence by encouraging your teen to try new challenges and offering support when she needs it. On the flip side, peers can pressure her to do unwise things she normally wouldn't do, like smoking or skipping class. Help your child resist negative peer pressure with these ideas.



Think it through

Tell your teen that when she's confronted with a risky choice, she should imagine possible outcomes. Is it worth getting kicked off the field hockey team for drinking? What could happen if she got caught shoplifting? (She could be arrested.) Discuss what the consequences would be at home, too (being grounded, having to repay the store). Being aware of results can motivate her to make smarter—and safer—choices.

Examine friendships

Explain that true friends respect others' decisions. If a friend keeps pressing your high schooler to do something she knows is wrong, it may be time to move

on. Encourage her to look for classmates who share her interests and values. For instance, she might join school clubs where she would hang out with kids who prefer writing poetry or building rockets to doing drugs.

Create an "out"

Suggest that your teen steer clear of situations where she may be pressured. If she's invited to a friend's house and suspects kids will be drinking, she could say she has other plans. Also, help her prepare for unexpected situations by practicing how to respond. ("No, thanks. I've got a big game tomorrow," or "My parents would freak—I don't want to be grounded.") Planning ahead will help her react the way she wants to. 👍

The positive side

Studies show that teens who feel connected to school earn higher grades, stay in school, and have an easier time resisting harmful peer pressure. Here are some ways to help your child develop a sense of connection.

Build relationships. Recommend that your child stop in regularly to talk with a special teacher, a coach, or an advisor. By establishing a connection outside of class, he'll feel that someone on the staff really cares about him.

Get involved. Encourage him to sign up for activities (production crew for the school play, annual mulch sale). Sports can also be a great way to connect in high school, whether or not he's an athlete. He might go out for a team or be a scorekeeper or manager. 👍



Cell phone learning

Your teen probably uses his cell phone to talk and text. But he can also use it for learning—in ways that he’s likely to enjoy:

- If his cell phone has a voice recording feature (and many do), he can use it for studying. For example, he could recite math formulas or important dates in history. *Note:* No recording device? He can leave himself a voice mail and listen to it to check his facts.
- Working on a group project? He can use his phone’s three-way calling feature for conference calls with his partners. They could update each other on their progress, go over questions, and make follow-up plans.



- Take a poll. Teens may need to conduct a survey for a psychology experiment. They could text the survey question to friends or even use a group polling site like *textthemob.com* (free for the basic version).

- Play mind-stretching games. Games like Sudoku or solitaire come with most cell phones. Kids with smartphones can download free apps for word, math, and strategy games—or even “planetariums” to view the night sky.

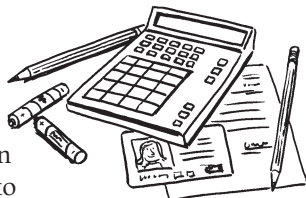
- Write a novel. Does your child know that writing “mobile novels” is popular with teens in Japan? He can write a story using the text feature on his phone and “publish” it at sites like *textnovel.com* or *cellstories.net*. 👍

Smart steps to the SAT, ACT

High school juniors who want to attend college should be gearing up to take entrance exams this spring. Here are steps to help your teen prepare:

- Have her look for test dates online or in the school counseling office and register early. Some testing locations fill up quickly—and late registration costs extra.
- Encourage her to get sample tests from her counselor or find study guides in a library or bookstore. She can also take practice exams online (*sat.collegeboard.org/practice* or *actstudent.org/sampletest*). *Tip:* Be sure she mimics the test environment (sits at a desk, sets a timer, takes breaks only between sections).

- The night before the exam, she should put the admission ticket, a photo ID, pencils, a calculator with extra batteries, and a watch in one spot. Have her get plenty of sleep and eat a healthy breakfast before she goes. 👍



Q & A

No more nagging

Q My teenager leaves her homework until the last minute and then is too tired to do it. When I remind her, she says I’m nagging. What can I do?

A You want to be sure your child does her homework, and she wants you to stop reminding her. The good news is, you can both get what you want.

Suggest that your teen let you know what she has for homework each day. Then, if she puts it off, try a friendly reminder that invites her to take charge—and doesn’t sound like nagging. For example, instead of, “When are you going to get started on your homework?” you might say, “What do you think will work the best—doing your calculus before or after soccer practice?”

Also, ask her to tell you when she has finished. You might invite her to share something she has worked especially hard on, such as a book report or a group project. 👍



Parent to Parent

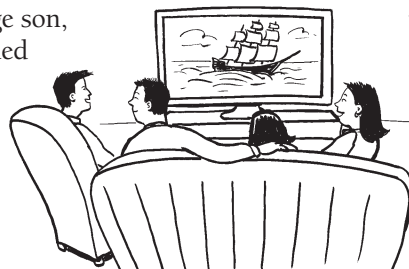
Family movie night

This winter I got to thinking about the cozy times our family spent watching movies together when the kids were younger. I thought I’d try to take advantage of the cold weather and have family movie nights again.

At first our teenage son, Andrew, wasn’t thrilled with the idea. After all, he’d rather be on Facebook with his friends or listening to music with earbuds in his ears than spend time

with Mom, Dad, and his sister! But when I asked him to be our first “director” and choose a movie for us, he got a little interested.

I hung a Movie Night sheet on the refrigerator for everyone to write down ideas. Of course, I told them the movies had to be appropriate. Then, Andrew selected the one to launch our “film series.” So far, everyone seems to be enjoying our movie time—and I’m happy to be spending a little more time together. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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