

High School 1 YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Sharing the road

Being courteous toward other drivers will keep your high schooler safer behind the wheel. Encourage him to allow room for other vehicles to change lanes or merge onto highways, and remind him not to tailgate. Also, explain that he should only blow the horn to prevent a collision—not to “scream” at other drivers.

Essential elements

Here’s a way to make the periodic table spring to life for your high schooler. Challenge family members to a contest: Who can collect the most items that contain different elements? *Examples:* a helium balloon, an iron-rich cereal, a banana for potassium. The winner could get a trophy made from aluminum foil.

Being satisfied

Teenagers can be tempted to compare their belongings (electronics, clothing) to those of classmates. Help your child avoid this pitfall by having her think about the good things in her life. She might end each night by writing down something she’s grateful for (good friends) or happy about (getting an A on a test). Suggest that she read over those notes when she feels envious of others.

Worth quoting

“Life isn’t about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.”

George Bernard Shaw

Just for fun

Q: What do you get when you cross a sheep and a porcupine?



A: An animal that knits its own sweaters.

Keep talking

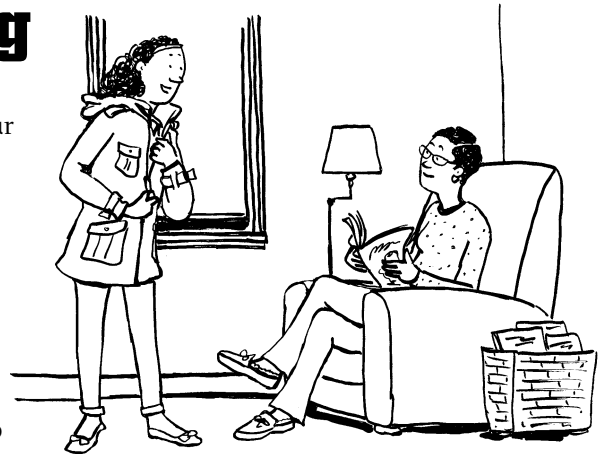
Good communication with your teenager can strengthen your bonds, making good days even more enjoyable and hard ones easier to weather. Pave the way for better conversations with these strategies.

Talk “just because”

It can be hard not to make a point or turn every conversation into a lesson. But keeping up a dialogue about everyday things can make your child more comfortable coming to you with bigger questions. Ask about topics that have her attention (a new movie, her favorite performer). Also, try participating in activities she enjoys—she’ll be more likely to open up when she’s having fun. You might talk about your day while the two of you shoot hoops or bead necklaces, for example.

Watch body language

The way you hold yourself can send your teen the message that you want to listen. When she talks, try facing her, looking her in the eye, and nodding so she knows she has your full attention.



On the flip side, avoid body language that will make her feel like you’re not listening (looking elsewhere, tapping fingers) or that she’s being judged (arms crossed, hands on hips).

Time it right

Your child probably has a certain time when she’s more interested in talking. It may be after dinner, before bed, or at night when she comes home from football games or friends’ houses. Consider hanging around at those times (for instance, browsing a magazine in the living room). Making yourself available can give you an important window into her world. 👍

Tracking progress

Keeping tabs on your child’s grades will alert you to problems early—and give you reasons to say, “Good job!” Here are two ways to monitor his performance.

Online. If your school offers online access to grades, create an account, and check his grades regularly (say, weekly). If something concerns you, like a lower-than-usual test score, ask how he plans to handle it. *Note:* Encourage your teen to check often for posted grades and his updated GPA so he can stay on top of his own grades.

One-on-one. Ask your child to show you his returned papers such as reports and quizzes. You can compliment him for hard work or suggest that he ask teachers how to bring up sagging grades. *Note:* If you feel your teenager needs more help, contact teachers or the school counselor for advice. 👍



Homework support

Your teen is in charge of getting his homework done, from the answers he gives to making sure it's turned in on time. But behind the scenes, you can help set him up for success. How?

Create the right environment.

A comfortable workspace will help your high schooler perform at his peak. If he likes to do assignments at the kitchen table, you might ask other family members to play or work



quietly if they're near. Also, make sure he has good lighting and enough room to spread out.

Check in while he's working.

You may be able to interpret a question, read over a rough draft, or quiz him on vocabulary words. You could also be a sounding board as he brainstorms short-story ideas or considers which format to choose for a project.

Encourage him to ask for assistance. If your teen seems stuck, suggest that he call a classmate or switch to another assignment and come back to that one later. If he's especially frustrated, you might recommend taking a break (you could even offer a mug of hot chocolate or a healthy snack). 👍

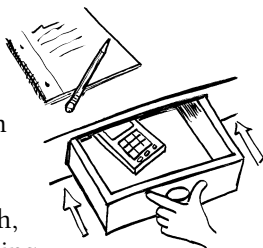
Q & A Cell phone obsession

Q I know teens love their cell phones, but I'm afraid my daughter might be addicted to hers. Help!

A Your child's cell phone use could be unhealthy if she constantly checks her phone, gets very anxious if she can't find it, or becomes moody if she doesn't get an immediate response to a text or post.

You might point out how being glued to her phone can isolate her. It can cause her not to pay attention to people she's with, because she's using the phone or thinking about using it. It may also make her feel like she doesn't need to spend "face time" with friends, which can lead to missing out on fun experiences with people and on having close relationships.

To wean her, suggest keeping the phone in another room so she doesn't reach for it out of habit. You could also set times she's not allowed to use it, such as during meals or while she's studying. 👍



Believe in yourself

Having confidence can help your high schooler tackle challenges, whether she's taking midterms or learning a new job. Encourage her to believe in herself by giving her a chance to:

Make decisions. Relying on her own ability to make small decisions will give her confidence to make bigger ones like what career to pursue. Ask your teen to make choices whenever you can. You might have her pick out dinner or select a paint color for her bedroom.

Solve problems. Resolving day-to-day dilemmas will show her she can overcome obstacles. When she has to decide, say, whether to stay in jazz band, join her in thinking through the pros and cons, but let her make the final call.

Try new things. Succeeding at something she wasn't sure she could do will build her self-esteem. She might sign up as team manager for the basketball team or try a new hobby such as fishing or calligraphy. 👍



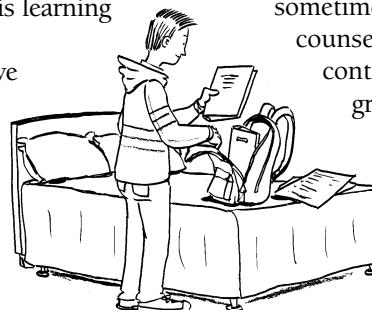
Parent to Parent Managing Asperger's

Starting high school has been a big adjustment for our son Seth, who has Asperger's syndrome. His schedule varies more now, and the kids are even more social than in middle school. But with the support of his school counselor and a new social skills group, he is learning to manage better.

In middle school, we discovered that Seth felt less anxious and did better in school if he knew what to expect. So now, he types up a schedule each night for the

next day, highlighting any changes from his regular routine. And his IEP team decided that Seth could retreat to the counselor's office if he feels too stressed.

Seth's biggest challenge is still fitting in with the other kids. He isn't interested in dating or sports, and the kids sometimes poke fun at him. His counselor recommended that he continue going to a social skills group, and she suggested a few for high schoolers. We're hoping this will help him learn how to pick up more on social cues and hopefully make a few friends. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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