

High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips



Stay tuned

When you and your teen are in the car together, try listening to radio talk shows or public-radio broadcasts. Your child will stay in touch with current issues such as politics and economics or hear interviews with fascinating people. Plus, the programs can spark interesting discussions for the two of you.

Green lunches

Lunchtime is prime time for going "green." If your high schooler buys, suggest that he take only what he needs (food, plastic utensils, napkin, and straw). If he packs lunch, have him carry a reusable bag instead of a disposable one. Using fewer products reduces landfill waste and conserves energy.

Taking worries seriously

Is your teen upset about a problem with a friend, a bad hair day, or her freckles? Worries like these may seem small to you. But they're real to her, and she'll feel understood if you take them seriously by listening and showing concern. *Example:* "I'm sorry you're feeling that way. What can I do to help?"

Worth quoting

"It is today that we create the world of the future." *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Just for fun

Q: Where were English kings usually crowned?

A: On the head!



The character of kindness

Kyle holds the door for someone at the grocery store. Megan sends a get-well card to a neighbor. John delivers clothing and household items to the Salvation Army. These high schoolers are all doing something nice without expecting anything in return.

Being kind not only makes you feel good about yourself, it encourages others to be kind. Share these ways your teens can show kindness.



Find daily opportunities

Look for ways to practice acts of kindness. You might put coins in an expired parking meter or give up your place in line to someone with small children. Or step in when family or friends need help (read to a sibling who's sick, study with a classmate who's struggling).

Be a volunteer

Check the school guidance office, local clubs, or places of worship for ideas. Offer to bag groceries at a food bank or sort donated toys for a gift drive, for

example. *Tip:* Find a friend to join you—it will be more fun to volunteer together.

Say it in writing

Send a thoughtful note or card to a family member or friend. It can be a birthday card for a cousin or a "Thinking of You" note for a friend who's going through a tough time.

Give to a charity

Ask everyone in your family to put their loose change in a jar for a month, and donate it to an organization like your local cancer society. Or fill zipper baggies with items for homeless shelters (toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shampoo). 👍

Home(work) for the holidays

Winter break is a great time for your teen to catch up on her studies. Here are some suggestions.

Check plans. Together, go over your family's holiday commitments. Your high schooler can schedule homework around events such as shopping and parties. Suggest that she consider when she'll feel motivated (before an out-of-town trip or after).

Think ahead. Encourage your child to ask teachers about assignments that are due after the break. She should make sure she understands the instructions and knows what supplies she'll need to do the work. *Tip:* If teachers don't give assignments over the break, suggest that your teen use her time off to read a book or write in her journal. 👍



Boosting word power

Knowing the meanings of words—or how to figure them out—will help your child understand higher-level information and do better on tests and college-entrance exams. Try these three ideas for building vocabulary:

1. Check out word books from the library, and leave them around the house. *Painless Vocabulary* and *Vocabulary Cartoons II: SAT Word Power* use cartoons and rhymes to make words easy to remember. Browsing through books like these will expose your teen to new words.
2. Being familiar with prefixes and suffixes can help your child decode words. For example,



if she knows that “inter” means “between” and “intra” means “within,” she can figure out that interstate commerce means business between states and intrastate commerce means business within a state. Here’s a fun way to involve the family. Take turns naming a prefix (mis-) and calling out as many words as possible that use it (misread, misinformed, misinterpret).

3. Encourage your high schooler to play word games. She might do crossword puzzles in the newspaper or pick up inexpensive puzzle books in stores. She can also Google “crossword puzzles” online. Or she could download free word games to a smartphone or another electronic device if your family has one. 👍



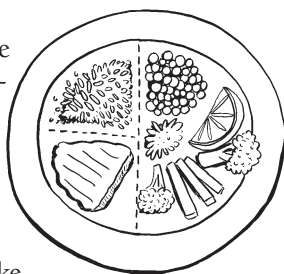
Parent to Parent Money maturity

Healthy New Year’s!

Fun-filled social gatherings usually mean one thing: food. Your family can keep good health on the menu. Try these strategies:

■ If you’re going to have a heavy meal, drink a glass of water or eat something light before you go. Then, when you get there, enjoy eating—in moderation. *Tip:* If you’re at a relative’s house, don’t be afraid to say no to seconds or desserts. (“Not right now, thanks. Maybe I’ll have some later.”)

■ Fill your plate with fruits, veggies, and lean proteins (fish, chicken). Take smaller servings of high-calorie foods like cheese dip and creamy side dishes. A good rule of thumb is to fill ¼ of your plate with grains and starches, ¼ with protein (meat, poultry), and ½ with fruits and vegetables. 👍



My daughter plans to move out after she graduates. I realized I had better help her learn how to manage money now so she will be able to handle finances on her own.

I started by reviewing our monthly bills with Melanie. We sat down and went over our rent, electric bill, car payment, and phone statement. Then, I suggested that we each track purchases like groceries, gas, clothes, coffee, and entertainment for a month.

My daughter made a spreadsheet of our expenses. She was surprised when she saw how quickly the expenses added up. Together, we came up with ways we could spend less. I told her I’d buy coffee two days a week instead of five. She said next weekend she and her best friend would make popcorn and watch a DVD at home instead of going out for pizza and a movie.

I feel better knowing that my daughter is practicing habits like these before hitting the “real world”—and we’re both saving money. 👍



Q & A Teens and discipline

Q I know my son wants more freedom. How can I set reasonable limits and choose consequences that will work?

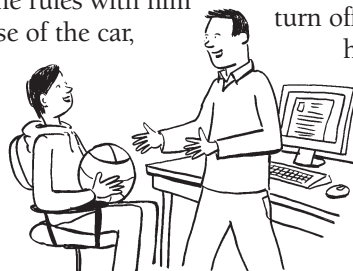
A It’s only natural that your son wants to be treated more like an adult. Explain that if he respects the rules, he’ll earn more freedom.

Start by reviewing the rules with him (chores, curfew, and use of the car, for example). Then, remind him what the consequences will be for not following them.

Your son will be more apt to do what

he’s supposed to do if you choose consequences that really matter to him. These days it seems to mean more for kids to lose the use of their electronics than to be grounded. So you might consider taking away computer time or video games if your teen neglects schoolwork or chores. Or you might make him turn off his cell phone when he’s at home if he breaks curfew or keeps the car out too long.

Finally, be sure to stick with the consequences. If your son sees that you mean business, he’ll be more likely to follow your rules. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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