

# High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

## Short Clips



### Standardized tests

If your high schooler is gearing up for standardized tests, share this tip. Suggest that she read each question and all possible answers carefully. Also, she should answer the easiest questions first and mark the ones she skipped so she can go back to them.

### DID YOU KNOW?

According to a recent study, less than 10 percent of high schoolers get enough sleep on school nights. Being sleep deprived can make students drowsy during the day, cause headaches, and affect learning. Try to encourage your teen to get his homework done early so he can relax and still get 8 to 9 hours of sleep.

### Secure shopping

Does your teen like to buy clothing or music online? Tell her to look for an *s* in the URL (<https://>) or a closed padlock at the bottom of the screen. These are signs that a site is secure, or less prone to hacking. She should also be sure to read customer reviews and return policies and check shipping charges.

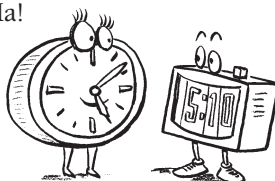
### Worth quoting

“Don’t bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself.”  
*William Faulkner*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What did the baby digital clock say to the mother analog clock?

**A:** “Look, Ma! No hands!”



## Time to talk

Fifteen minutes may not seem like much. But research shows spending that amount of time each day talking with your teen can keep your lines of communication open. Try these four ways to make the minutes count:



1. Chat with your child when he’s relaxed and in a good mood. Try knocking on his door before he goes to bed or greeting him when he comes home from an evening out with friends. Start a conversation about your night and his, rather than asking him a lot of questions.
2. Watch for cues that your teen wants to talk. If he has something on his mind—or just feels like talking—he may linger nearby while you cook or offer to go along to the grocery store. Invite him to share news by casually asking how things are going.

3. Do an activity together. Your high schooler may feel more comfortable discussing his life while you’re taking a walk or driving to a baseball game. Be ready to listen extra closely if he mentions a serious topic such as a new relationship or a friend who is in trouble.
4. Reconnect after interruptions. If you have to stop a conversation to take a younger child to soccer practice, for instance, let your teen know you still want to talk. (“I’ll be back in 30 minutes. Can we talk more then?”) Then, follow through when you get home. 👍

## Sparking creativity

Creative thinking can help your high schooler do better in all subjects. Share these ideas to get her imagination flowing:

- Suggest that she choose a theme (animals, flowers) and snap photos. Then, she can make a photo collage at a Web site like [www.smilebox.com](http://www.smilebox.com) or print the photos and arrange them on poster board.
- Ask her to invent new uses for items. *Example:* Line a napkin basket with fabric and store jewelry inside.
- Have your child paint pictures while listening to favorite songs. How do her paintings change with different types of music? 👍



# Reading for information

Whether she's reading a textbook, using an instruction manual, or following a recipe, nonfiction reading is an important part of your child's life. Encourage her to enjoy nonfiction in her spare time—she'll get more comfortable reading for information, and she may develop new interests, too. Suggest books like these.

## How-to's

Reading can teach your child to do almost anything. Have her visit the library and check out books like *How to Cook Everything*:



*The Basics* by Mark Bittman or *Seize the Story* by Victoria Hanley. Then, she can use the book to try what she has learned, such as making fruit salsa or writing creative dialogue.

## Memoirs

Reading life stories can help your teen see the world from others' points of view. She might read *Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-li Jiang for an account of life in 1960s China or learn about school desegregation in *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Pattillo Beals.

## Facts

Books like *The New York Times Guide to Essential Knowledge* or *Guinness World Records 2010* are ideal for busy teens because they can be read in short bursts. Suggest that your child bookmark interesting facts to share with family members at dinner. 👍

# Campus visits

When your child is applying to colleges, seeing campuses firsthand can help her decide which schools best fit her needs and personality. Try these ideas:

- Help her list schools she's interested in and highlight those within driving distance. Together, plan which ones you will visit.
- Have your teen schedule tours and information sessions online or by phone. She can also set up interviews if the school offers them. Suggest that she prepare questions for tour guides or students she will meet.



- While on campus, visit the library, dining halls, student union, and other college hangouts. Encourage your teen to imagine herself studying or socializing there.

*Tip:* If traveling isn't an option, your child can take virtual tours on college Web sites. Also, schools may offer to schedule interviews with alumni in your hometown. 👍

### 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

## Behind-the-scenes support

Our family used to go to all of our son's choir concerts and baseball games. But once Jason got to high school, we felt like he no longer wanted us to attend his events.

I talked to my older sister, and she said that her son never seemed happy to see her in the hall after his high school plays. But as an adult, he told her how much it had meant to have her in the audience.

Before Jason's next concert, I reminded him that we would be there, but I encouraged him to go out with his friends afterward. When the performance ended, I gave him a thumbs-up and told him to have fun. He acted like he was glad to see us, and before his next baseball game, he even asked if we were coming. 👍



## Q & A Every class, every day

**Q** *The school counselor called to say my son Justin has been skipping classes. How should I handle this?*

**A** Teens skip class for many reasons. Your son might be skipping because his friends do. A class may be too hard or too easy, or he might be avoiding a particular classmate.

Ask the counselor to set up a meeting with your teen, his teachers, and you to discuss solutions. If he's having trouble with his classes, they can suggest ways to help. Or they might take away privileges. For example, if he's

skipping classes after lunch, they might not let him leave campus for lunch anymore.

Finally, regardless of the reason, let your high schooler know that missing class is unacceptable. Make sure he understands that skipping can lead to a failed course and perhaps not graduating with his class.

Also, spell out your consequences for his behavior. For example, you might ground him for a weekend or not allow him to attend an upcoming event like a school dance. 👍

