

# High School YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

## Short Clips



### Wishes vs. goals

Does your child wish he could do better in school? He can turn his wish into a goal by planning ahead and taking specific steps. For example, if he wants to get a higher grade in French, he might decide to find a conversation partner or visit the language lab once a week.

### Proofreading made easy

Your teen can proofread school papers more efficiently with this simple tip. Suggest that she make a list of her most frequent mistakes (spelling "their" as "there," forgetting quotation marks). Then, she can check her paper for each mistake one at a time.

### Cutting back

Many families are watching their budgets. If you've slowed your spending, tell your child why and explain what he can expect (fewer restaurant meals, less driving). Then, work together to find inexpensive alternatives, such as picnics and bike rides. He may discover that he can have fun while spending less.

### Worth quoting

"Imagination is the preview of life's coming attractions."

Larry Eisenberg

### Just for fun

**Q:** March's mother has four children. The first three are named April, May, and June. What is the name of the fourth?

**A:** March!



## Getting organized

When it comes to having a successful school year, being organized can make all the difference! Research shows that students who are organized do better in school and don't get as frustrated during daily routines. Help your child get off to a good start this year with these ideas.

### Create a homework spot.

Help your teen choose a quiet place with plenty of light, such as the dining room table or a desk in her bedroom. She might stock a cardboard box or plastic tote with school supplies like pens, highlighters, a calculator, and reference books (pocket dictionary, thesaurus). She'll also need a place to store notes and old quizzes so she'll have them at exam time.

**Keep a clean locker.** An organized locker will let your child grab supplies quickly between classes. For instance, she might store books and folders for morning classes on the top shelf and



afternoon materials on the bottom. Also, suggest that she put extra pens and pencils in a pouch inside her locker.

**Manage time wisely.** Good time-management skills can help your teenager stay organized. Remind her to read her agenda book each morning so she'll remember to turn in assignments and budget time for after-school activities. Also, hang a family calendar in a central location (kitchen, hallway). Ask everyone to fill in their activities so your child can plan around family obligations or arrange for rides. 👍

### Team up with teachers

You and your teen's teachers make a powerful team. Together, you can help your high schooler achieve his best.

■ Back-to-school night is a good opportunity to meet your child's teachers. Introduce yourself personally to each one. Touching base now can help you feel more comfortable contacting them later with questions or concerns. *Tip:* If you can't make it, call or e-mail teachers to let them know you're interested in your teen's education.

■ Stay informed about school activities and your child's progress. You might visit the school Web site regularly to learn about upcoming events. And find out if you can check your teenager's grades electronically. 👍



# Letting go

Daily challenges are part of life in high school. But how do you know when to step in and when to let your teen handle a situation by himself? Read these two common scenarios for advice.

**1. Scenario:** Your child forgets his gym clothes. He calls from school and asks you to bring them.

**Solution:** If this is the first time he has forgotten them, and you're available, consider helping out. But tell him you



expect him to plan better next time (put the clothes in his backpack the night before). Explain that he'll have to do without them if he forgets again.

**2. Scenario:** Your teenager gets a grade that he thinks is unfair and complains that his teacher doesn't like him.

**Solution:** Encourage him to talk to the teacher on his own. Remind him to be polite ("Can you explain my grade, please?"). If your child's grades begin dropping, however, contact his teacher and set up a conference. 👍

# Online safety

Ask your teen if she can imagine growing up without the Internet, and she'll probably laugh. But she needs to realize that, along with its many benefits like homework help and socializing, there are pitfalls. Help your child avoid them with these steps:

- Supervise your teen's online activities. Just like in the real world, ask where she's going and who she's talking to. If she has a Facebook or MySpace profile, sign up for an account and "friend" her.

- Your child's screen names and e-mail addresses should be anonymous ("surfsup" rather than her name and date of birth).

Also, have her avoid chat rooms completely, since strangers may try to get teens into private chats and even meet them in person.

- Remind your high schooler that everything she posts online may become public. That means she should never write comments or upload photos she wouldn't want parents, teachers, or employers to see. 👍



.....

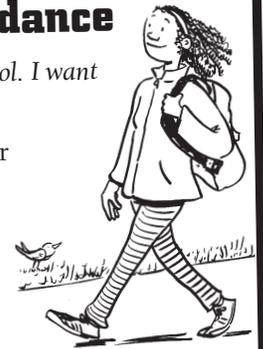
## Q & A Encourage good attendance

**Q** Last year my daughter kept asking to take days off from school. I want to get off on the right foot this year. What do you suggest?

**A** The more time your daughter spends at school, the easier it will be for her to stay on top of her studies. She'll hear class discussions, be able to ask questions, participate in science labs, and find out about assignments.

Make it clear that you expect your teen to attend every day, since school is her job. Suggest that she do homework early so she's not up late finishing it, and help her set a bedtime that allows for about nine hours of sleep. If her work is finished and she feels refreshed, she'll be more likely to go to school without complaining.

Also, try to plan appointments for after school or weekends, and vacations for when school's not in session. Your teen will get the message that school comes first for your family. 👍



## Parent to Parent Everyday reading and writing

My son loves math and science, but English class has never caught his interest. One day he said, "I'm going to be an engineer—I won't have to read or write much once I'm out of school."

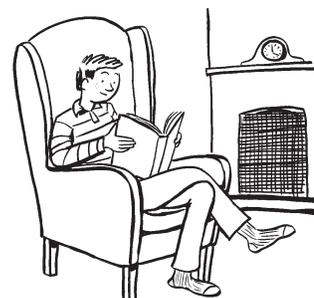
I told him that for one week, I'd keep track of everything I read or wrote. At the end of the week, I shared my list with him. He was really surprised by how long it was.

In addition to reading a novel at bedtime, I read magazines for my job and

reviews to help choose a car. Plus, I wrote memos to coworkers and sent e-mails to friends and relatives.

Now when I see my son reading or writing (say, to figure out how a gadget works or to write

lyrics for a song he's composing), I point it out. That way, he can see the importance for himself—and he's surprised by how often he reads and writes, too. 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,  
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.  
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
540-636-4280 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5605