

# High School YEARS

Working together for lifelong success



## Short Stops

### Prepared for class

How can your child make the most of class time?

One way is to be prepared when the bell rings. He can do this by being in his seat, having paper and pen ready to take notes, and shutting out distractions so he stays focused.

### Mealtime manners

When your teen is invited to a friend's house for dinner, remind her to have good table manners. She should place the napkin in her lap and wait for others to be served before eating. If she doesn't like a particular food, she can refuse it by politely saying, "No, thank you."

### Motivating books

Positive thinking can lead to less stress and better health. Suggest that your teen read books that will help him develop a positive attitude. He might try *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* by Sean Covey or *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Kimberly Kirberger.

### Worth quoting

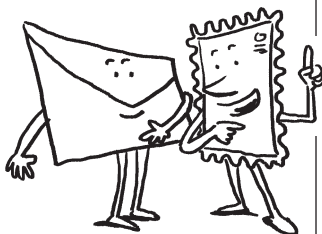
"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

Anne Frank

### Just for fun

**Q:** What did the stamp say to the envelope?

**A:** Stick with me, and we'll go places!



## Back at it!

It's fall, and another school year is under way. Help your teen get off to a strong start with these building blocks for success.

**Goals.** Encourage your child to identify specific goals ("I want to get at least a B in physics"). Suggest that he write each goal on a piece of paper or an index card.

Having them in writing can mean the difference between thinking about doing something and making it happen. Under each goal, he should write steps to take ("Review notes nightly," "Make study guides"). Then, he can put the goals on his desk or tape them inside subject folders so he sees them daily.

**Routines.** Predictable routines will ease pressure and help your high schooler plan ahead. Before bed each night, he should get clothes out for the next day and place his backpack and other items by the door. In the morning, encourage



him to have a healthy breakfast to help fuel his brain. He should also plan a consistent time for homework (after school, after dinner).

**Balance.** Help your child decide how many "extras" he can handle. When he fills in his planner with obligations (school, work), what does his schedule look like? What would it look like if he added chorus or yearbook, for instance? Once he gets a realistic picture of how each activity would affect his schedule, he can make decisions about what will fit. 👍

## Organized parents

Parents can help children succeed in school by being organized, too. Try these tips:

- Turn in required paperwork (emergency forms, medical information) as soon as possible. Designate a spot for forms your child will need you to complete throughout the year.

- Know how to get help. Ask the school which administrators and counselors are assigned to your child. Plug their information into your phone or address book. You might also want to include the school office number and the number for reporting absences.

- Keep a calendar and colored markers in a common space. Each person can write her activities in a certain color (Mom = purple, Thomas = blue). Check it often so everyone knows about upcoming events. 👍



# Writing right

From term papers to essays on tests, writing plays a big part in a high school student's work. Here are some strategies your teenager can use to write effectively.

## Pinpoint problems

Many students grapple with the same errors (spelling, capitalization, subject-verb agreement, punctuation) over and over. What corrections to your child's writing have been made most often in the past? Looking through graded papers can make her aware of pitfalls so she can pay special attention to them when she writes and proofreads.



## Find examples

If your teen is unsure of a rule, such as whether a quotation mark should go inside or outside of a period, she can look in a writing guide like *The Elements of Style* (William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White) or online at websites such as [www.chompchomp.com/rules](http://www.chompchomp.com/rules).

## Check it over

Your high schooler should ask a parent or friend to read what she has written. If something isn't clear, she may need to make revisions. Perhaps a change in voice (active instead of passive) or adding transitions between paragraphs will clarify her writing. 👍

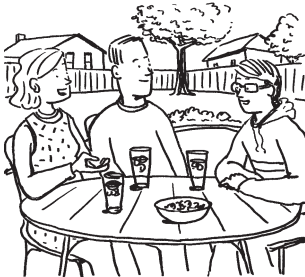


## Q & A Rules for teens

**Q** Now that my child is a teenager, I find myself worrying more when he goes out with his friends. How can I set rules to help keep him safe?

**A** Begin by explaining your concerns to your high schooler. Even if he doesn't show it, he'll see that you care about him.

Then, talk about rules, and ask for his input. While you have the final say, considering his viewpoint will make him more likely to go along with what you decide. For example, you might be flexible about how much of his allowance he saves but stand firm on non-negotiable rules such as no drinking and driving.



When rules are set, be clear about what will happen if your teen doesn't stick to them. Finally, follow through on the consequences so he knows you're serious. 👍

## Parent to Parent Career minded

My sophomore-year daughter Julie was upset when her best friend told her she wanted to go to medical school when she graduates. "I have no idea what I want to do," Julie said.

First I told her that, while it's a good idea to start thinking about a career, she has plenty of time to explore her options. Then, I suggested that she talk with her school counselor. In addition to browsing career books at the library, he recommended that my daughter make a list of things she enjoys and some jobs related to them. He said she could contact local business owners to find out more about their work.

Since Julie loves animals, she included veterinarian and dog trainer. Together, we jotted down questions about the education required and daily duties for these jobs. Then, she called our dog's vet, who agreed to talk with her on Saturday morning.

My daughter is excited about her meeting, and her list of questions keeps growing. 👍



## Tolerant teens

Day by day, your child encounters people who are different from him in some way (culture, age, race, religion). Try these ideas to help your teen respect differences and get along in an increasingly diverse world:

- Discuss stereotypes of different groups and why they're unfair. No two people are alike, no matter what their backgrounds are. Judging an entire group could cause your teen to miss out on great friendships.

- Connect with people from other cultures. Suggest that your child invite an exchange student to study with him. Have him look for things they have in common. He may be surprised at how similar they are.

- Encourage your teen to read articles, books, and websites that will give him insight into issues about tolerance. Your local librarian can suggest ideas. For example, he might look for first-hand accounts of people involved in the civil rights movement. 👍



**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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