

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Discuss grades often

Make a point of regularly talking with your high schooler about his grades. That way, you won't be surprised when report cards come out. You can ask if he's struggling with any courses and discuss how he could get help. Be sure to praise good or improved grades, too.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Only about one-third of teens hold a job today, compared with just over half in 1979. Having a job will teach your child responsibility, and it will look great on college and future job applications. For her to stand out from the crowd when looking for work, suggest that she create a resume, practice interview skills, and dress neatly for the in-person meeting.

### Handling my IEP

If your teen has an Individualized Education Program, he can take more responsibility for it as he gets older. Encourage him to review his IEP with his school counselor. They can talk over changes that would help him, such as more time on tests or using speech-to-text software. Letting him advocate for his own needs prepares your teen to speak up in the future.

### Worth quoting

"I have decided to be happy because it is good for my health." *Voltaire*

### Just for fun

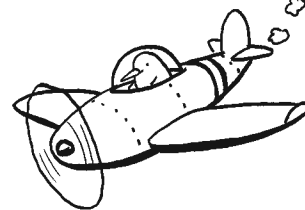
**Q:** What do lazy dogs do for fun?

**A:** Chase parked cars.



## The language of respect

Build a family culture of respect by using a kind tone with your teenager and encouraging her to do the same. You can tell her, "It's not just *what* you say but also *how* you say it." Consider these suggestions.



### Expect certain behavior

Hold your high schooler accountable for her words and actions. If she says or does something disrespectful, let her know that it is not acceptable—and that you won't respond or do what she (unkindly) asked.

**Try this:** "What you just said was disrespectful. I'll listen when you speak nicely."

### Offer guidance thoughtfully

When your teenager reaches out to you for advice, respond respectfully. Taking her questions or concerns seriously will help her feel comfortable coming to you in the future without fear of being criticized or judged.

**Try this:** "I'm here to help any way I can. And if I don't know how, we can find the answer together."

### Build consensus

Do you or your teen sometimes act like there's only one right way (your way)? You can model respectful behavior by showing that you value her point of view even if you disagree with it. Then, remind her to respect your opinion, too.

**Try this:** "I respect what you have to say. Please explain what you're thinking." 👍

## Boost vocabulary

There's a word for that! When your high schooler has a strong vocabulary, he will write and speak with more confidence. Share these vocabulary-building tips.

■ **Review daily.** He might spend 15 minutes a day studying vocabulary from his classes. To cement the meanings in his mind, he could think of synonyms (words with similar meanings) and antonyms (words with opposite meanings) for each one.

■ **Read widely.** The more your teen reads, the more he's exposed to unfamiliar words. Keep magazines, newspapers, novels, and nonfiction books around the house and in the car for easy access.

■ **Practice context.** Using new words in a sentence helps boost understanding. Encourage your teenager to use the words during dinner conversation—and to explain what they mean if they're new to you. 👍



# Homework success

Your teen can improve his homework routine with these three strategies.

**1. Plan it out.** Scheduling is an important first step. When will he complete homework? Have your teenager write on a calendar all his regular activities (drama club, tennis team practice) and commitments (babysitting a sibling). If there is not a free block of time every day for homework, he'll need to cut back. *Note:* Suggest that he review his schedule regularly and make adjustments if he's having trouble finishing his assignments.



**2. Take a bite-sized approach.** Does your high schooler know where to begin with long-term projects? He could hone his planning skills by breaking up bigger projects into smaller parts. With a long essay, for example, he can tackle each task (create an outline, do research) on a different day.

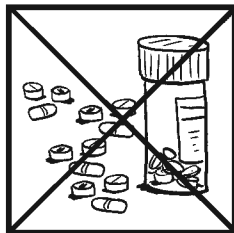
**3. Get a support system.** If your teen lines up help ahead of time, he'll avoid a last-minute panic the night before an assignment is due. He should have at least one "homework buddy" from each class to reach out to. And remind him that his teachers are happy to answer questions. Many are available before and after classes or at lunchtime. 👍



## Q & A Dangers of opioids

**Q** A student at my daughter's high school almost died of an opioid overdose. Luckily, he received the antidote naloxone in time. But with so many kids trying opioids, I'm worried. What can I do?

**A** You've already taken an important first step by being aware of this problem.



Using the student's overdose as a teachable moment, talk with your daughter about the dangers of drug use—especially the addictive and deadly nature of opioids. If you have any reason to suspect your teenager is using drugs, seek professional help at once.

Explain to your teen that even though naloxone can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, that doesn't make it okay—or safe—to use opioids. The antidote doesn't cure a person's addiction or prevent future overdoses. Also, naloxone must be given right away by someone who knows how to use it. 👍

## Pursuing a high-tech career

If your high schooler loves technology, she might consider making it into a future career. These resources can help her get started.

### School clubs

Encourage her to join an after-school STEM club. She'll meet like-minded students and be able to work on activities like creating a video game or learning how to use 3-D printers. Your teen's school might offer a coding club, robotics team, or computer science club.



### Groups

Several nonprofits help young people learn about STEM careers through summer programs, online learning, contests, scholarships, and internships. Four to check out: [girlswhocode.com](http://girlswhocode.com), [code.org](http://code.org), [iridescentlearning.org](http://iridescentlearning.org), and [techprep.fb.com](http://techprep.fb.com).

### DIY learning

Your teen can teach herself tech skills with free online resources. For example, she could create a website using WordPress, learn to code on Codecademy, or build an app with MIT App Inventor. 👍

## Parent to Parent Follow the news

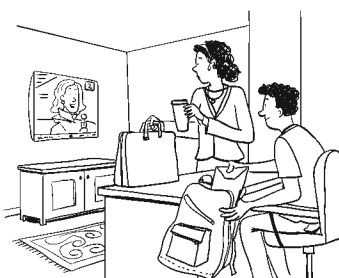
My son, Juan, didn't pay attention to the news at all. I wanted him to know what was going on in the world, so I tried a few simple things.

For starters, we now listen to the TV news while we're getting ready for school and work, and I'll put on news radio when we're in the car together.

We make it a family habit to discuss current events at dinner, too. This has presented some good

opportunities to talk about telling fact from fiction. When Juan brought up a funny-but-false online meme, we discussed how important it is to get information from credible sources.

Then on Sundays, we read the newspaper together and share our favorite articles. Juan is getting a much clearer view of the news now—and we're getting a chance to talk more about what's going on. 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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