

High School YEARS

Working together for lifelong success



Short Stops

Happy beginnings

Help your teen leave the house in the morning on a positive note. Giving a high five or saying, "Have a great day!" can set the tone for the whole day. If you leave before your child does, try putting a note on the table or sticking one to her backpack.

On the map

Which ocean borders Europe? Is Hawaii north or south of the equator? To increase your high schooler's knowledge of geography, suggest that he print out blank maps (try www.eduplace.com/ss/maps). You can challenge him to fill in details like countries and their capitals, lakes, and mountain ranges. Where would he like to travel someday?

Scavenger fun

Turn off the TV, power down the computers, and enjoy a flashlight scavenger hunt tonight. Hide items (red socks, tube of toothpaste) around the house, and give everyone a list of the "treasures." Then, shut off the lights, and use flashlights to search. The person who finds the most items sets up the next round.

Worth quoting

"That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way." *Doris Lessing*

Just for fun

Q: What lets you walk through walls?

A: A door!



Building responsibility

The ultimate goal of parenting is to work yourself out of a job. After all, you want your teenager to be capable of handling daily duties so she can stand strong when she's on her own. Start preparing your adolescent for adulthood by teaching her to be responsible. Try these steps:

1. Tell her up front that she is in charge of a certain job (say, monitoring her bank account or setting the table for dinner). Let her know it's up to her to get it done from now on.
2. Work with your high schooler side by side so she can see how to do it. For instance, you might show her how to enter what she spends in her checkbook and then calculate the balance.
3. Remind your teen that privileges come with responsibility. *Example:* She may be able to drive your car, but in



return, she's expected to do errands for you while she's out.

4. Don't rescue your teenager if she doesn't take care of a responsibility. If she overdraws her bank account, she will have to pay bank fees.
5. Give her new tasks one at a time. That way, she can get used to doing them without being overwhelmed. Once she seems comfortable and a job has become a habit, you can move on to the next responsibility. 👍

Savvy searches

When your child looks for information on the Internet, he may end up with thousands of results. Share these techniques to help him narrow his searches.

Quotation marks. If you're searching for exact words, put them in quotation marks ("astronomy careers") to get results that include both words together. *Note:* It's generally not necessary to use articles or prepositions.

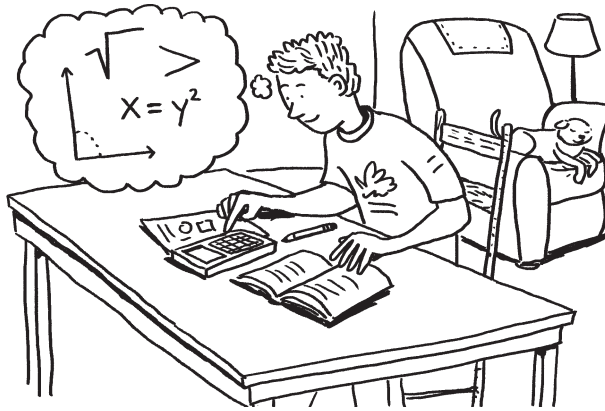
"Advanced" searches. Use the "Advanced" feature to specify words you do—and don't—want. For example, when writing an essay about an author's nonfiction works, *include* the author's name and "nonfiction" and *exclude* "fiction." You can also choose a domain type to search for more accurate information (.edu for educational sites or .gov for government sites, for example, rather than .com, which can be created by anyone). 👍



Math 101

Algebra... geometry... calculus. You can help your teen tackle high school math by suggesting the right approach. Here are strategies he can try:

- **Ask** questions in class. Thinking about possible questions (“What’s a polynomial?”) will keep your child focused on what the teacher is saying.
- **Practice** math problems daily while the lessons are still fresh. Applying formulas soon after he learns them will let him see if he understands them or needs help.



- **Write** math definitions and formulas in a handy place like a notebook or computer file. Your teen could include sample problems to show how each is used.
- **Learn** the functions of each calculator key (square root, exponent). If he’s comfortable using them, he’ll be able to solve problems faster.

■ **Show** your work. Writing down each computation will help your child make sure he doesn’t skip steps. It also makes it easy to review his work for mistakes—and some teachers give partial credit for steps done correctly even if the answer is wrong. *Tip:* He should be careful to line up numbers properly to avoid careless errors. 👍

Parent to Parent Completing college applications

My son Matt, who’s a senior, kept putting off his college applications. Whenever I mentioned it, he just sighed and said he’d do them soon. I could tell he was feeling overwhelmed.



I suggested that he tackle the process by making a checklist of things he had to do and marking each one off as he

completed it. Soon, he had a list that included filling out the applications, writing essays, getting letters of recommendation, and requesting transcripts.

Also, I told Matt that if he had a central spot to keep forms, he’d be able to find everything easily. He liked that idea and created a “College” folder on his laptop, with subfolders for each school.

My son seemed relieved to have a clear place to start, and I’m relieved that he’s getting the applications turned in. 👍



Q & A

Worried about drug use

Q I’m afraid my teenage daughter is on some kind of drugs. What should we do?

A Signs of drug use may include a change in appearance or mood, falling grades, and drug paraphernalia. If you notice any of these, talk to your daughter about it when the two of you are calm and have plenty of time.

Whether she says she has or hasn’t tried drugs, let her know where you stand. Start by explaining that you want her to stay safe because you love her. Then, tell her that drugs are dangerous, addictive, and illegal, and if you discover she’s using, you will get outside help for her. 👍



Heard the news?

Knowing what’s going on in the world can help your teen form educated opinions about current events and relate to what she’s learning in school. Encourage her to stay on top of the news with these ideas.

Print

Keep newspapers and magazines lying around, and let your teenager see you read them. Mention topics that affect her (a change in the SAT, the cost of gasoline), and suggest that she read them. Then, ask her opinion.

Broadcast

When you’re in the car, tune into news radio for interviews on subjects that

interest your child (global warming, food trends). Or watch television shows like *60 Minutes* or *Dateline*, which could spark discussions about foreign news or happenings in the United States.

Online

The Internet offers the quickest access to breaking news. Your teen could follow news organizations on Twitter (*cnnbrk* for CNN, *nytimes* for the *New York Times*) or sign up for text or email alerts from news sources. She can also visit news sites like *www.channelone.com* that are geared to teens. Or she might download free news or sports podcasts to an MP3 player to listen to anytime (try <http://espn.go.com>). 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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