

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Encouraging words

The type of feedback you give your teen can make a difference in the way he sees himself. Instead of saying “You’re a natural at math” when your child aces a math test, try focusing on his effort. (“All your hard work really paid off!”) He’ll get the message that effort leads to success.

Say no to tanning beds

Is your teenager talking about getting a “base tan” before her prom or summer vacation? Share this eye-opening fact: Early use of tanning beds significantly increases her lifetime risk for skin cancer—up to 75 percent. Let her know there is no “safe” exposure to UV rays and that healthy skin is beautiful skin.

Memory strategy

Here’s a memory “hack” for your high schooler. He can visualize a familiar place (maybe your house) and assign each piece of information he studies to a different room. For the French verb *etre* (to be), he might picture *je suis* (I am) in his room and *nous sommes* (we are) in the kitchen. During a test, he could “walk” through the house.

Worth quoting

“If you hear a voice within you say, ‘You cannot paint,’ then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced.”
Vincent Van Gogh

Just for fun

Q: Who can shave 10 times a day and still have a beard?

A: A barber.



A smart summer plan

The brain is like a muscle—it needs exercise to stay fit. To keep your teenager’s mind active while school’s out, try mixing learning opportunities with summer activities. She’ll have fun and get off on the right foot next fall.

Start a book club

Your child and her friends can vote on a book to read each month and bring discussion questions to book club meetings. Perhaps they’ll select books about important issues of the day and give their perspectives. Or they could choose books from the school’s summer reading list.

Learn during outings

Ask your teen to research activities for your next day trip or vacation. Then, have her create a spreadsheet with prices, times, and locations. While you’re out, encourage her to think about possible careers. At a maritime museum, she can ask the docent, curator, and historian



about their jobs. During a park ranger program, she might learn about careers like ecologist, biologist, or trail builder.

Plan projects

Taking on an interesting summer project lets your teenager develop new skills. She could design a mobile app for tracking physical activity or create a website for a relative’s small business. Or she might take a craft workshop and make candles, soap, or jewelry for herself or to sell online. 👍

Out with the old, in with the new

Your teen can wrap up this school year now—and prepare for the next one later in the summer—with these helpful checklists.

Last weeks of school:

- Clean out locker and backpack.
- Thank teachers and coaches.
- Return library books.

Last weeks of summer:

- Put back-to-school events on the family calendar.
- Find sign-up and tryout dates for clubs and teams. Get signed permission forms and a physical.



- Adjust sleep schedule by going to bed a little earlier each night.
- Organize computer. File last year’s documents, and create new folders for the upcoming year.
- Gather school supplies. 👍

A college action plan

Summer is a great time for your high schooler to get a head start on the college application process—no matter what grade he'll be in. Suggest that he tackle these tasks.

Rising sophomores or juniors

■ **Make a college list.** Ask your teen what he might want in a college (size, location, major). He can use a tool like nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator and list possible matches. *Idea:* Visit local campuses to get a sense of what community colleges or large or small universities are like.

■ **Keep track of experiences.** Have your teen prepare for college applications now by creating a list of



extracurricular activities, leadership roles, paid and volunteer work, and academic accomplishments. He could keep awards, newspaper clippings, and letters of recommendation in a folder.

Rising seniors

■ **Finalize choices.** Suggest that your child choose schools to apply to and put application deadlines on a calendar. Arrange visits or take virtual

tours through a site like campustours.com.

■ **Plan essays.** If any schools on his list use the Common Application, good news: He can start writing his essays now since the prompts are already available. For other colleges, he could find out when essay questions will be available or even check past years to see if the same questions are repeated so that he can get an early start. 👍

Healthy relationships

More than 60 percent of teenagers say they've been physically or emotionally abused by someone they've dated. Share these facts to help keep your high schooler safe.

Relationships can be healthy or unhealthy. Examples will help your child understand the difference. In a healthy relationship, her partner respects her opinions and expects her to enjoy time with friends. In an unhealthy one, a partner might make unwanted visits to her job or ask to see her texts. *Tip:* The "Relationship Spectrum" quiz at lovesrespect.org has good resources.



It's never OK for someone to hit, force, or threaten others. Remind your teen to come to you or another adult immediately if she's uncomfortable about someone she's dating. She could also call the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline (866-331-9474). *Note:* If your high schooler is in danger, she should call 911. 👍

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 CCH Incorporated
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com
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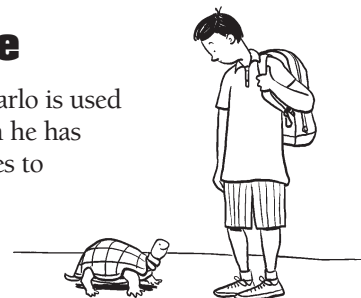
Parent to Parent

Practicing patience

Thanks to technology, my son Carlo is used to getting things fast. In fact, he gets annoyed when he has to wait for anything, such as posted grades or replies to texts. When he texted "Mom!" five times in a row, I decided to address the issue with him.

I suggested that when he feels impatient, he could think about *why* there's a delay. Maybe his grade wasn't posted quickly because his teacher had 50 papers to read. Or perhaps someone can't answer a text because they're driving.

Also, I shared ways I cope with delays, like keeping a book in my bag so I have something to read while I wait, or doing deep-breathing exercises. Carlo still gets impatient sometimes, but I'm happy to wait until he masters this! 👍



Q & A

Digital literacy for today's teens

Q My daughter believes everything she reads online. She'll often share links with outdated or untrue information. What should I do?

A Teenagers like to get news and information from social media and other online sources that aren't always reliable. After all, anyone can post "news." Encourage your daughter to ask these questions:

"When was this written?" An older article or one without a date may signal that the information

is no longer accurate or relevant.

"Who wrote it?" Is the information from a credible source? Suggest that your daughter bookmark sites that tend to be trustworthy. These include educational (.edu), nonprofit (.org), and government (.gov) sites or publications with fact-based, fact-checked work.

"Why was it written?" Help your child distinguish between news and opinion. If the writer is trying to make an argument, the information could be accurate but one-sided. She might want to seek other opinions and check facts. 👍

