

High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Truth + tact

Teenagers sometimes follow up an unkind remark with “I’m just being honest!” Remind your high schooler that he can be honest *and* polite. If his grandmother gives him a sweater he doesn’t like, for example, encourage him to find something nice to say that’s still truthful, like “This will keep me really warm!”

Simple study trick

At the end of the school day, your teen can “download” what she learned in each class onto one index card. Condensing her notes helps her pick out the most important information. She could store the cards with her class notes. They’ll make useful study aids at test time.

DID YOU KNOW? The Common Application, used by almost 900 colleges and universities, now includes an optional section where students may share how COVID-19 has impacted their lives. If your family faced illness or financial hardship, or your teenager was unable to complete schoolwork due to the pandemic, he could write about it on his application.

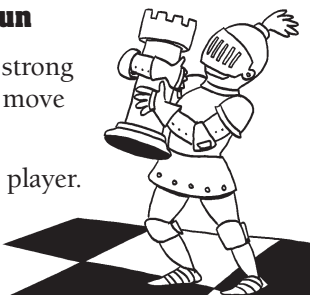
Worth quoting

“You can’t cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water.”
Rabindranath Tagore

Just for fun

Q: Who is strong enough to move a castle?

A: A chess player.



Staying close through the teen years

How do you give your high schooler the space she needs while remaining close? It’s an important puzzle to solve: Teenagers who stay connected to their parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors and more likely to become responsible adults. Consider these solutions.



Just knock

Teens spend a lot of time in their rooms, especially if they’re home more often right now. Make it a point to occasionally knock on your child’s door. Simply say, “Hey. How’s it going?” or “I’m making smoothies. Want to join me?” She may invite you in or come out. Or she might not this time. Either way, she’ll know you’re there and she’s important to you.

Build bridges

Finding everyday ways to enjoy each other’s company is key to staying close. Pay attention to things that interest your high schooler. Maybe she’s into graphic

novels. Ask her to suggest one you’d like. Yoga? Follow along with a YouTube video together.

Watch your “goodwill” balance

Having at least five positive interactions for every negative one is a proven secret to successful relationships. Aim to make “deposits” in your teen’s goodwill “bank” throughout the day with warm interactions: a hug goodbye, a smile when she walks in, a compliment on her gaming skills. It might feel silly to keep count at first, but you’ll get in the habit of showing you care. 🤝

Guess the geometry term

For a cool angle on geometry, play this version of the word game Taboo.

1. Get 20 index cards. On each card, have your teen write a geometry term (*octagon*) and five related words (*shape, eight, sides, vertices, stop sign*). Form teams of two, and divide the cards evenly.
2. Set a one-minute timer. One member of the first team picks a card and says clues to help his teammate guess the term, but he can’t say the related—“taboo”—words! (“A square has four. What has twice as many?”) Choose cards and guess until time’s up.
3. Give everyone a turn to give *and* guess clues. The team that gets the most right wins. 🤝



Think critically

Knowing how to think critically about information will help your teenager in school and in life. Share these strategies.

Focus on the facts. When your child does research, encourage him to ask, “Can this information be proven?” and “How would I be able to prove it?” If he can’t think of a way to objectively prove a statement (“The Beatles were the best band of all time”), then it’s an opinion or an argument, not a fact. A fact would be “The Beatles



sold more than 500 million albums worldwide.”

Consider viewpoints. Hold a friendly debate to help your teen think critically about others’ perspectives. Does pineapple belong on pizza? Each of you should state your side and back it up with one fact. You might say, “Pizza toppings shouldn’t be sweet because pizza is a savory food.” Your teen could counter, “Most toppings *are* savory, but thanks to pineapple, you can order a pizza with all five food groups.” When you’ve finished debating, have either of your opinions changed? 👍

Practice, s’il vous plaît!

Si, ja, oui! Here are ways for your high schooler to build her knowledge of a foreign language at home.

Device settings

Suggest setting her smartphone’s voice assistant or her smart speaker to the language she’s studying. She’ll pick up vocabulary and pronunciation as she listens to the devices. And changing the language on video games and turning on language-specific closed captioning for TV lets her see *and* hear the words.

Scavenger hunt

Send your teen on a search for household objects by giving her a list of them in the foreign language. (Use her textbook or a bilingual dictionary.) For French, you might include *le fromage* (cheese), *la fleur* (flower), and *le chapeau* (hat). Add colors like *rouge* (red) and *bleu* (blue) to make it more challenging. Can she find them all? 👍



Q & A

Protect against cyberbullying

Q What should I do to help protect my daughter from cyberbullying?

A With teens spending more time online these days, that’s an important question to ask.

Make sure your daughter knows what cyberbullying is: using texts, social media, emails, or chat to hurt, embarrass, or threaten others. Explain that she should tell you right away if she’s targeted. She may fear that you’ll take away her devices or restrict social media access if she speaks up, so let her know that you’ll work with her to find a solution.

Knowing there are ways to deal with cyberbullying will help your high schooler feel in control. Point out that deleting the posts, blocking the poster, and reporting him or her to the website or service provider can help. And using privacy settings may head off trouble before it begins. 👍



Parent to Parent

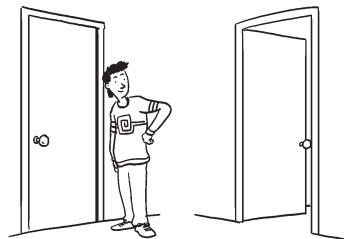
Coping with disappointment

My grandmother always said, “When one door closes, another one opens.” That’s something I’ve been sharing with my son Carter as he faces a lot of changes lately.

First, his summer coding camp was canceled because of the pandemic. Then, his first-choice elective for this semester was canceled, too. I know Carter was disappointed, but I also know he’ll have to handle challenges throughout life.

I suggested asking himself two questions when he’s dealing with something unexpected: “How can I make this work?” and “What good can come of this?” Carter decided he could take an online coding class. And he realized he got a chance to try an elective he

wouldn’t have taken otherwise. So far he’s loving his entrepreneurial skills class. Now he thinks it will help him launch a tech start-up someday! 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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