

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Collaborative tales

Spark your teen's creativity—and motivate him to write—with this idea. On the first page of a notebook, write a story starter. ("Some very curious things happened that holiday season!") Leave it on the coffee table, and invite everyone to add to the tale. After a week, your child could read it aloud and begin a new story.

Game-ify study time

Making and playing this game will help your high schooler study. Have her draw a grid, write a question in each box, and add point values. If she's studying physics, she might score 5 points for correctly answering "What is a wave?" and 15 points for "What kind of wave can travel through a vacuum?" How many points can she score?

Be a thoughtful listener

"Mirroring" your teenager's words (without judgment) can keep him from shutting down a conversation. If he says, "Nothing's the same this year," you could reply, "I know you're upset that things aren't how you expected." You'll encourage him to talk through his feelings.

Worth quoting

"Find the good that's all around you. Find it, showcase it, and you'll start believing in it." *Jesse Owens*

Just for fun

Q: Where do polar bears keep their money?

A: In a snowbank!



Setting limits for teens

A clear set of rules gives your high schooler a simple, everyday way to know what you expect her to do—or not do. And that can ease tensions for everyone (no more daily battles over curfew!). Try these ideas to establish guidelines.



Work backward

Think about any issues that come up regularly. Are chores not being done? Do you always need to tell your teen to put her phone away at dinner? Focus your list on rules that address these concerns. ("Meals are family time, so leave phones in another room.")

Involve your teenager

Your teenager is more likely to view rules as fair—and follow them—if she feels her voice is heard. Say you tell her that she needs to be home (or offline) by 9 p.m. on school nights. Then, let her speak ("Special events should be different"). Make adjustments if you can ("Okay, we'll add 'unless we agree otherwise'").

Explain why

Teens may have a better attitude toward a rule if they understand it's meant to protect them rather than "control" them. If your rule is that she must let you know where she's going, point out that you want to ensure she's safe.

Stick to consequences

Seek your high schooler's input here, too: What does she think is a reasonable consequence for playing video games before finishing homework and chores? Aim for consequences tied to each rule ("No video games for two days").

Powerful presentations

Your high schooler worked hard on the written portion of his presentation. But he's not done yet! Offer these tips for sharing it with the class.

■ **Watch your speed.** Talking too fast makes your teen hard to understand. Suggest that he aim for 100–150 words per minute. *Practice:* Encourage him to read aloud for 1 minute, then count the words he read.

■ **Talk, don't recite.** Reading a script word-for-word keeps your high schooler from engaging his audience. *Practice:* Have him rehearse his presentation until he can deliver it using only bullet points on notecards or slides.



Working with the school counselor

Counselors are a vital part of your high schooler's education team. That's especially true now with the COVID-19 challenges. Here's how your teenager can get the most from this resource.

What services do counselors provide? It's a long list! Counselors do everything from helping your teen select the right classes to providing community-based mental-health referrals. Not sure if a particular service is offered at your child's school? Just ask.



How can we work with the counselor during the pandemic? You or your teen could call the school or check the website for contact information. Your high schooler may make appointments to meet with his counselor in person or virtually. Parents can also contact the counselor with questions.

Q & A Tips for teamwork

Q *The last time my daughter did a group project, she ended up frustrated because she'd done most of the work. Any suggestions for her next one?*

A Group projects teach valuable skills like teamwork and communication. The shared approach can present challenges, though, especially if students are working remotely.



Prevent new-driver mistakes

Help your teen stay safer on the road by teaching her to avoid these common errors.

Speeding

It's important for your high schooler to obey speed limits and regularly check the speedometer. Remind her that posted limits are the maximum for good conditions. If the roads are wet or icy, she'll need to slow down.

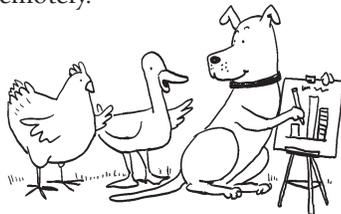


Following too closely

Keeping a safe distance from other cars can prevent accidents. Have your teenager glance at the car in front of her, choose a landmark (overpass, billboard), and count the seconds between when that car passes the landmark and when your car does. If it's less than 2–4 seconds (in good weather), she should slow down.

Getting distracted

Losing focus behind the wheel contributes to 80 percent of new-driver collisions. Set safety rules such as no teen passengers and no texting in the car. 👍



First, encourage your high schooler to pick her teammates carefully. It's natural for kids to choose friends or people they have things in common with. But an orchestra, for example, wouldn't want only violinists! If your teen is great at research, is there a classmate who's good with graphics? Selecting people who work hard and meet deadlines is important, too.

Once your teenager's team is in place, a detailed plan assigning each person a specific responsibility and firm deadline can keep them organized. Also, holding regular group calls will help ensure that everyone participates. 👍

Parent to Parent Homemade gifts

A few years ago, my family started a new holiday tradition: We all make one gift for each other. At first, it was just to save money. But it's become something my kids, Santiago and Ana, really enjoy — plus, they're discovering new ways to be creative.

Last year, Santiago made bookmarks for me and crafted a bracelet for Ana from twine and washers. He was touched by the

game-storage box Ana decorated for him, and he helped her bake me a batch of cookies. And I've knitted a beanie for Santiago and made bath bombs for Ana.

Even though we give some store-bought gifts, the homemade presents are a highlight. Santiago pointed out that those are the ones we remember because they're made with love. 👍



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
www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5605