

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Listen up!

Listening is an important part of a high school student's day in class. Encourage your teen to be an attentive listener by remembering the acronym SOLER. She should Squarely face the teacher, Open her posture by uncrossing her arms, Lean in a bit to show interest, make Eye contact, and Relax.

Promote problem solving

As your child approaches adulthood, you might think of yourself as a "consultant." Instead of telling him what to do, pose questions to help him problem solve for himself. For instance, rather than saying, "You should start your project now," you could ask, "How can you schedule your time to finish your project by Friday?"

Be a parent volunteer

Reach out to your teenager's school to find out how you can volunteer. They may need parents to speak at a career night, chaperone a dance, or serve on a parent committee. Let your high schooler know about your involvement—she'll see that her school is important to you.

Worth quoting

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."
Eleanor Roosevelt

Just for fun

Q: What's the worst thing that can happen to a geography teacher?

A: Getting lost.



Respect for others, respect for yourself

What does it mean to be respectful? Talk with your high schooler about these key building blocks of respect.

Respectful language

Kind, thoughtful words convey respect. Sometimes your teen might make a comment that sounds disrespectful ("Why would you do that?"), even if that wasn't his intention. Or he may lace otherwise kind words with sarcasm ("Nice going, Jim"). Let him know that he should think about both what he says and how he says it. He might not realize how his choice of words and his tone affect others.

Behaving respectfully

The saying "Actions speak louder than words" is true when it comes to respect. Your teenager can show respect in many ways: by using good manners, giving off positive vibes with his body language (smiling, nodding), and obeying rules.



Idea: Your actions count, too. Model respect in front of your child every day (treating cashiers with respect for the job they're doing, for example).

Self-respect

If your teen respects himself, he's likely to make better choices. That's why it's important that he set boundaries, stick to his values, and practice positive self-talk. **Idea:** Suggest that he treat himself the way he'd like his friends to treat him. He'd feel hurt if a friend called him a loser, so he shouldn't think or talk that way about himself. 👍

Motivated to write nonfiction

Much of the writing your teenager does in her classes is nonfiction. Suggest these real-life activities for extra practice.

■ **Op-ed pieces.** Is your teen passionate about solving the homeless problem or ending bullying? She might pen a letter to the editor of the town or school newspaper with suggestions for how to help.

■ **Grant proposals.** Your high schooler could get funding for a group she's involved in or for a community organization she cares about. Encourage her to talk to her school counselor or see ysa.org/grants for ideas. 👍



Investigate future careers

Like many high schoolers, your teen might not know what she wants to do when she “grows up.” Now is a great time to explore her options. She’ll brush up on school-success skills, too, with these ideas.

→ **Identify strengths.** Suggest that she ask herself questions (“What am I good at that I also enjoy?”) and write down her answers (math). Then, she could use this information to find careers that match (accountant, statistician). *Bonus:* This will sharpen her critical-thinking abilities.



→ **Read about careers.** At the library, have her find career resources like *What Color Is Your Parachute? for teens* (Richard N. Bolles and Carol Christen). This book will help her link her passions, such as art or technology, with possible college majors (digital design) and dream jobs (animator). *Bonus:* She’ll boost her reading and research skills.

→ **Talk to people in different jobs.** By chatting with relatives and neighbors, she can get the skinny on what it’s really like to work as a teacher or a cake decorator. *Bonus:* She will practice communicating and listening. 👍



Parent to Parent Bond over interests

I was struggling to connect with my older daughter—she’s all about sports, and sports have just never been my thing.

So when it was time to visit colleges with Trina, I decided to surprise her with tickets to a basketball game at one of the schools. She was happy to explain different aspects of the game to me, and it was great to enjoy the game together. Plus, it gave us something to talk about afterward.

That led me to another idea. Since I’ve been wanting to get in better shape, I asked to join Trina on her training runs for an upcoming race. She’s fine with taking walk breaks when I get tired, and she has been encouraging me. I’m looking forward to cheering her on at her race. But the best part? We’re talking, laughing, and really connecting. 👍



Driving danger zones

Keep your teen safer in the car by helping him understand these three leading causes of car accidents.

- 1. Teen passengers.** The more friends your teenager has in his car, the more likely he is to have an accident. Insist that he obey your state’s law about how many passengers he can carry. Also, let him know *your* consequences for breaking it—in addition to his being responsible for fines if he’s pulled over.
- 2. Cell phones.** Forbid texting while driving. Here’s a way to impress the importance of this on your child. Ask him to read the last text he sent and think about whether that text was worth getting into a crash—possibly leading to serious injury or even death.
- 3. Alcohol.** Be firm that your high schooler must never drink or get in a car with someone who has been drinking. Let him know he can call you at any time for a safe ride home with no repercussions. 👍



Q & A Step up class participation

Q My son gets good grades on written assignments, but his teachers say he rarely participates in class. How can I encourage him?

A Talking in front of others is an important life skill. Your son will feel more confident if he’s prepared. For example, while reading a novel that will be discussed in class the next day, he can jot down points he would like to make.



If he struggles to find something original to say during the discussion, he could “piggyback” on others’ points. He might comment on what another student says or answer a classmate’s question. Also, recommend that he jump into the discussion early. The longer he waits, the harder it may seem to chime in.

At home, let him practice speaking up by having him order pizza, make doctor appointments, and call companies’ customer service departments. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

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

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