

March 2020

High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



Short Clips

Homework tip

If your high schooler has trouble getting started on homework, suggest that he visualize how good he'll feel when he finishes. Imagining himself relaxed and enjoying a favorite activity like reading his new graphic novel or playing his guitar might give him the motivation he needs to sit down and begin.

Teaching tolerance

Your teenager will more readily accept people who look, talk, or act differently from her if you set an example. Let her hear you use the correct terms for ethnicities, places of worship, traditional clothing, and disabilities. Not sure what word to use? Ask your child to look online—you'll both learn something.

"Can"-do nutrition

Canned fruits and vegetables are an affordable option for some of the 5–9 produce servings your teenager needs daily. Choose fruits packed in their own juice and veggies with no added salt. Then, have your teen find ways to eat them. He might top his oatmeal with peaches or toss artichoke hearts with his favorite pasta.

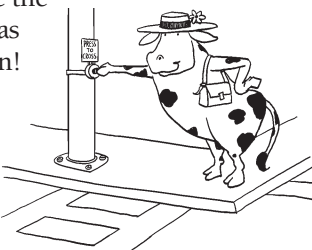
Worth quoting

"Believe you can, and you're halfway there." *Theodore Roosevelt*

Just for fun

Q: Why did the cow cross the road?

A: Because the chicken was on vacation!



Standardized test strategies

By taking practice tests and being strategic on test day, your teen can do her best on standardized tests. Share these ideas.

Find the right pace

Working too fast or too slow may result in careless errors or an unfinished test. Taking practice tests can help your child find the right pace. Have her set a timer for the minutes allowed and mark where she is when it beeps. She should adjust how long she spends on test questions and individual sections until she can comfortably finish on time.

Know test lingo

Encourage your teen to read the directions on practice tests and notice words that appear frequently. On a reading test, for example, she might see *analyze*, *compare and contrast*, *demonstrate*, *argue*, or *interpret*. If she's not sure what a particular question means, she could ask a teacher.



Be strategic

If your high schooler is stumped by a question on test day, she could put a mark by it and move on. Then she can go back to it later. For multiple-choice questions, suggest that she cross out obviously incorrect answers and decide among the most likely ones. *Tip:* Words like *sometimes/always*, *best/correct*, and *none of/all of* in questions often provide clues to the right answer. 👍

Teen-friendly ways to say "I love you"

Knowing he's loved makes all the difference to a high schooler's self-esteem, academic success, and happiness. Try these ideas with yours.

Use secret code. Maybe a childhood favorite "I love you from your nose to your toes" can become "Nose to toes, dude" when you drop off your teen at practice. Or give him a fist bump, then put your hand over your heart.

Make adjustments. Your child may have outgrown snuggle time, but back pats and hugs will let him see how much he means to you.

Show him. Smile as your teenager comes into the room. Give him your full attention when he talks to you, and show up for things that are important to him. 👍



Help wanted: How to find a summer job

A summer job pays off in terms of money for your teen and skills for a future career. Suggest this game plan for finding one.

Start early. Talk about types of jobs your high schooler would want (Retail? Something tied to a future career interest?). Narrow his focus by considering how he'll get to work (Could he walk? Use public transit?) and likely hours (Will he work days or nights? Weekends?).



Write a résumé. Even if your teenager doesn't have work experience, he might list activities and the traits they show. *Examples:* student government (leadership), sports (teamwork), National Honor Society (work ethic). Look for résumé templates online or at the library.

Use all resources. Many jobs are found through word of mouth. So your child should ask everyone—classmates, friends' par-

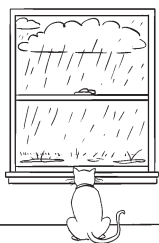
ents, relatives—to keep an eye out. Also, suggest that he look at online job search sites and in person at stores. The more options, the better! 👍

Q & A Signs of teenage depression

Q My daughter is sleeping a lot, avoiding friends, and snapping at everyone. Could it be depression?

A Teenagers are prone to ups and downs. But when the lows are ongoing or severe, it might signal depression, a serious health problem that needs to be addressed. Changes in eating and sleeping habits, social isolation, and extreme irritability can be symptoms.

Start by talking with your daughter. Tell her what you've noticed, and ask her to share what she's going through.



If she won't talk, or if what she says concerns you, seek advice from her pediatrician or school counselor. They can suggest next steps.

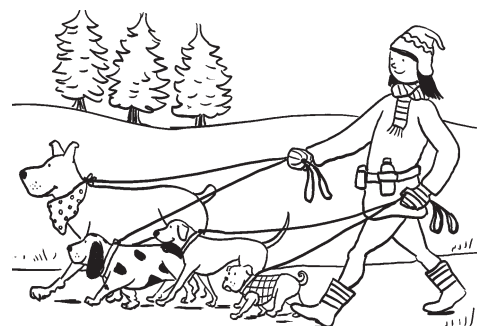
If you suspect your teen has suicidal thoughts, get help immediately and don't leave her alone. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255 or suicidepreventionlifeline.org) has advice and resources. 👍

Practical math

"When will I ever use this math?" The next time you hear that, share real-world ways your high schooler could need math in her life.

■ **As an entrepreneur:** Say your teen wants to earn \$500 for a gymnastics summer camp and decides to start an after-school dog-walking business. If she charges \$12.50 per dog and can walk 4 dogs at a time, how many walks will she need to take to make enough money for her camp?

■ **As a savvy consumer:** Say your family needs to choose a new phone plan. Plan A costs \$90 per month plus 20 cents per text. Plan B costs \$110 a month with unlimited texts. How many texts would you send each month for the two plans to cost the same? Which is better if your family averages 75 texts? 👍



Parent to Parent

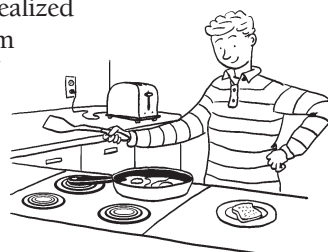
Steps toward independence

My friend told me her son had a bumpy start at college. It wasn't the academics, she said. The problem was that he wasn't comfortable handling everyday tasks like laundry and making appointments. I realized I wasn't doing my son Malcolm any favors by taking charge of everything.

Malcolm and I decided that he'd get himself up for school, make his breakfast, wash his

clothes, and keep track of his schedule. I explained that these weren't "chores," but opportunities to make decisions about when to get up, what to eat, and how to manage his time.

I told my son I'm here to answer questions (like how to use household appliances). We'll add to his list as he gets comfortable with his new independence. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5605