

March 2007

High School 1 YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips

► Effective reading

Here's a quick way to boost your child's reading comprehension. Suggest that she stop at the end of a page or section to make sure she knows what she has read. If she finds she has "zoned out" and can't remember the content, she can reread the pages right away.

► Clearly confident

When your teenager makes mistakes, he has an opportunity to boost his own confidence. How? By recognizing what he did wrong and taking steps to correct the problem. Knowing that he has the power to set things right will help him build his confidence back up.

► Privacy, please

Respecting a teen's privacy requires trust. You can develop that trust by staying involved. Know who your child is with and where he's going, and set rules for keeping in touch. You'll be less inclined to feel you need to intrude.

► Worth quoting

"You can tell whether a man is clever by his answers. You can tell whether a man is wise by his questions."
Naguib Mahfouz

► Just for fun

Julia: Grandpa, can you help me find the lowest common denominator in this math problem?

Grandpa: Don't tell me they haven't found it yet! I remember looking for that when I was a kid!



The "write" foot

Does your teen freeze when she has a writing assignment? Encourage her to view writing as a series of steps that begin with good planning. Share these ideas with your high schooler to help her get off on the right foot.

Know the assignment

Make sure you know the purpose of the paper and the questions to be answered. Be clear on the format, length, due date, bibliography requirements, and other instructions.

Check past papers

Look over teachers' comments on papers you've done so far this year. Are there areas you can improve, such as grammar or using more descriptive language? Focus on making those improvements.

Do prep work

Good writing starts with good legwork. Plan to spend as much time preparing your material as you do writing. *Examples:* finding information,



sorting through facts and opinions, reaching a conclusion. The more familiar you are with your subject, the easier it will be to write.

Begin writing

Once you have your facts, write an outline. That will help you see where you're short on information or have too much. Then, write a first draft. If possible, show the draft to your teacher, or take it to your school's writing lab. Use that input to edit and revise—cutting and adding details, tightening your writing, or changing your approach—until you have a paper you are proud to submit. 👍

College tests: Get ready

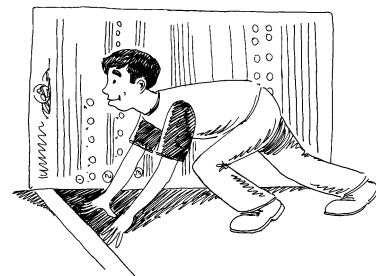
Teens taking the SAT or ACT this spring or fall will want to start thinking ahead. Here are several suggestions.

Try it out: Use practice tests to get comfortable with the types of questions you'll face. Find samples in your guidance office, or look online at www.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org.

Use time wisely: Set a timer when practicing so you can learn to pace yourself on each section.

Review facts: Write a list of math formulas, science definitions, or other information you will need to know. Review the sheet daily.

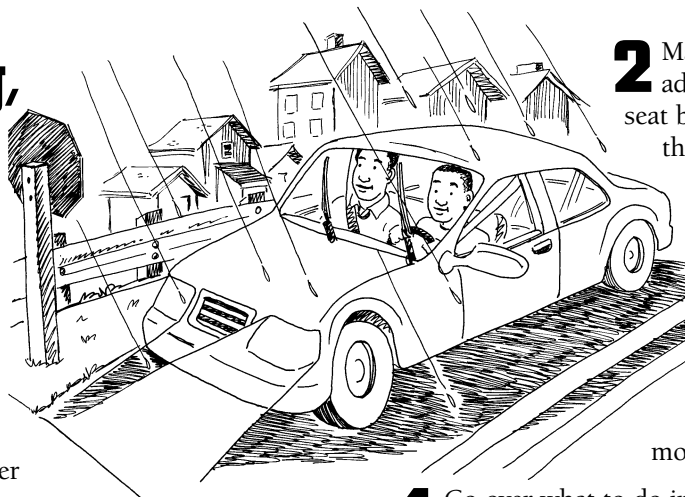
Plot a strategy: Plan to answer easy questions first and leave harder ones for last. On multiple-choice questions, cross off answers you know are wrong to help narrow your choices. 👍



Safe driving, safe teens

When it comes to young drivers, the statistics speak for themselves. Teens are more likely to be in single-car crashes than any other age driver. Try this four-point plan for keeping your child safe:

1 Start slowly. At first, you might let your high schooler drive only during daylight hours and with no friends in the car. You can gradually add in nighttime driving and, still later, allow him to take a friend along.



2 Make your safety rules clear. In addition to requiring that they wear seat belts, some parents don't permit their teens to play music or talk on their cell phones while driving. Set an example by staying off the phone and wearing your seat belt, too.

3 Take your child out to practice driving in different situations (wet roads, snow, fog, heavy highway traffic) so he'll be more prepared for these conditions.

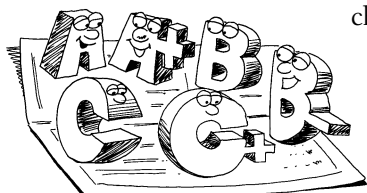
4 Go over what to do in an emergency and who to call for help. Show your teen how to change a tire, and discuss how to handle a blowout and deal with a fender bender. 👍

Report card roundup

The big day is here: report cards are out. Now what? It's not always easy to know what to say, whether grades are better or worse than expected. Consider these tips:

- Discuss the report card with your teen. Is she pleased with her progress? Where could she have done better?

- Praise your child. Even if she only slightly improved a grade or simply turned



in more homework, let her know you notice the effort.

- Put "bad" grades in perspective. Reassure your high schooler that a low grade doesn't make her a failure. Rather than punishing her, brainstorm ways to raise her marks. *Hint:* Help her review past work and look for weak areas, such as low quiz scores or incomplete projects.

- Ask your teen what she did right. Encourage her to continue those "winning" habits in the future. 👍

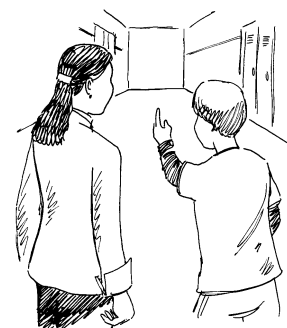
Parent to Parent Bullying and bystanders

My son Nick came home very upset last week. He had seen another boy being called names and treated meanly by a classmate.

At the guidance counselor's suggestion, I encouraged Nick to let an adult know if he sees bullying. That way, he won't put himself in harm's way, but he also won't be standing by and doing nothing. I also told Nick he needs to be willing to tell the truth if administrators investigate.

I got another good piece of advice from my neighbor. She suggested that Nick try to befriend the person being bullied. For example, he could walk with him to class or sit with him at lunch.

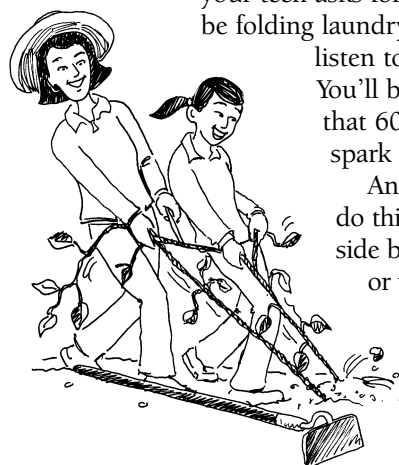
My son and I both feel better knowing there are things he can do to help if he witnesses bullying again. 👍



Q & A Together time

Q My daughter Alicia doesn't want to do anything with me anymore. How can I find ways for us to be together?

A Your daughter may be more interested in spending time with you if you do something she really likes. Listen for ideas of what she considers fun, whether it's going to a basketball game or taking a hike.



Also, try to stop what you're doing if your teen asks for your time. You may be folding laundry when she calls you to listen to a funny commercial. You'll be surprised at how that 60-second break can spark a great conversation.

Another simple idea is to do things around the house side by side. Making dinner or weeding the garden will be more fun if you and Alicia do it together. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

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

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