

November 2006

# High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

## Short Clips

### A good ending

When you've had a rough day with your teen, attempt a rebound before bed. End the day on a peaceful note by letting her know you love her and will start fresh tomorrow. She'll appreciate the support—and learn a valuable lesson about not holding grudges.

### Get the whole story

Is your high schooler attracted to the news tickers that display headlines at the bottom of the television screen? Encourage him to check out the whole story by reading the daily newspaper. He will learn important details, practice reading skills, and keep up with current events.

### Cook up tolerance

Put tolerance on the table by choosing an ethnic recipe and involving your teen in shopping for the ingredients and cooking. While eating the meal, talk about the culture represented. How is it like ours? How is it different? The conversation will help your child see how people are all alike.

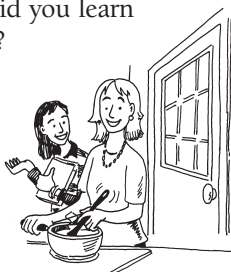
### Worth quoting

"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."  
*Joseph Addison*

### Just for fun

**Parent:** What did you learn in school today?

**Student:** Not enough—I have to go back tomorrow!



## Keep reading front and center

Which students do better in school and on SATs? Readers! They have better vocabularies, stronger reading comprehension skills, and the ability to soak up information from books.

Help make reading a part of your high schooler's life with these teen-friendly strategies.

### Take it online

Involve the Internet, and you're more likely to get your child hooked. Point her to [www.teenreads.com](http://www.teenreads.com) for book reviews, author interviews, and tips on what other teens are reading. Try bookstore sites, such as [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com), for recommendations. Also, teens can join online book clubs there and chat about characters and plot.

### Hit home

Make your home a reading hub by filling it with habit-forming material such as special-interest magazines, mysteries, and almanacs. Be sure to stock your own bookshelf, too. Your child may



pick up your books, thinking they are more "adult."

### Get talking

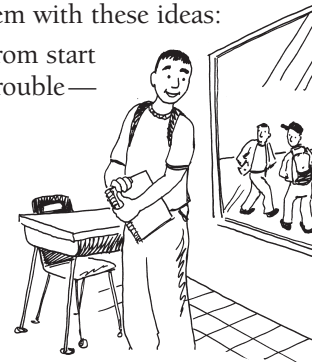
Introduce your high schooler to an engaging story by listening to it on tape. Play the book each time you're in the car together, and then discuss it. Try a book that's part of a series, such as *The Princess Diaries* books by Meg Cabot, so your teen will want to read the others.

*Note:* Have your child use the Web to find books similar to her favorites. At [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), she can type in the book name and add the word "readalikes." *Example:* "Chronicles of Narnia readalikes." 👍

## Attendance counts

As teens begin driving, and peer pressure increases, it can be tempting for some high schoolers to skip school. Head off the problem with these ideas:

- Let your teen know you expect him to be at school from start to finish. Explain that skipping class can get him into trouble—academically and legally.
- Know what classes your child is taking and who his teachers are. Ask specific questions about his day: "What did you do in chemistry lab?" "How did your Spanish presentation go?"
- Keep your ears open. If your teenager doesn't regularly mention happenings or friends at school, he might not be attending all his classes.



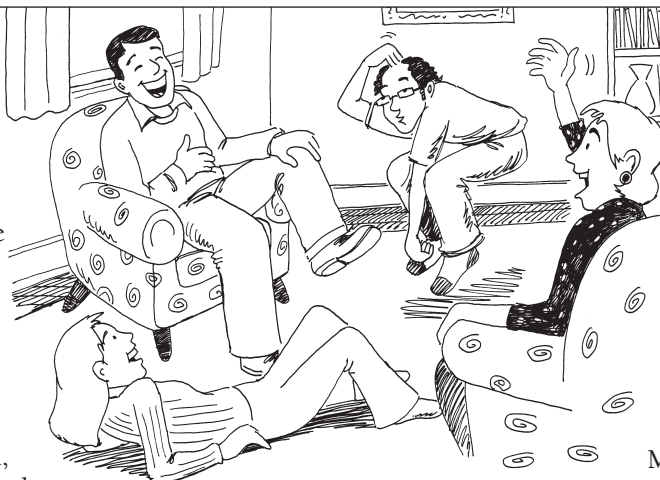
*Note:* Ask the school to call you if your teen has an unexcused absence. 👍

## Family game night

Does your teen think he can't have fun without an iPod or a video game? Try turning him on to an older form of entertainment—family games. The “together” time will provide laughs and long-lasting bonds. Try these.

**The classics.** Top family picks include Monopoly, Life, Twister, Yahtzee, Clue, Backgammon, and Scrabble. Borrow games you don't have from friends.

**Newer titles.** Your teen will love Balderdash, a laugh-aloud game where you try to stump each other with fake definitions of real words. Other good choices: Scattergories, Pictionary, and Trivial Pursuit.



**Beyond board games.** Stretch your child's imagination with an old-fashioned game of charades. Or grab a deck of cards and play hearts or gin rummy. You can even make up games around your family's interests. *Example:*

Movie lovers could play the “movie game.” Take

turns naming films that begin with the last letter of the one just named (*Friday Night Lights*, *Seabiscuit*, *Titanic*).

*Idea:* Set aside one Sunday night a month as family game night. You'll create a tradition that your child just might end up passing on to his kids! 👍

## Danger ahead

When it comes to meth, there's one thing you want your teen to know: Stay away from it. Help her do just that by sharing this information.



● **Street names:** meth, crystal, speed, chalk, glass, ice, crank. (The chemical name is methamphetamine.)

● **What it is:** an extremely addictive drug that stimulates the central nervous system. Users experience a high that lasts minutes to hours, and then they can crash into depression.

● **How it's taken:** powder, pills, or chunks that can be inhaled, smoked, swallowed, or injected.

● **Symptoms of use:** sleeplessness, noise sensitivity, nervous behavior, aggression, lack of appetite, convulsions, depression, fatigue, irritability.

● **Dangers:** increased or irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, risk of stroke or heart failure, anorexia, brain-cell damage.

If you suspect your teen is using meth or any other drug, contact a health professional immediately. 👍

### 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 Aspen Publishers, Inc.  
3035 Valley Avenue, Suite 103, Winchester, VA 22601  
540-723-0322 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5605

## Q & A Maximize conference time

**Q** At my child's high school, parent conferences are scheduled with one teacher, who goes over all my son's classes in 15 minutes. How can I make the most of this limited time?

**A** The best way to take advantage of the few minutes you'll have is to be prepared. Write down overall questions about your teen and any specific issues you might have for each class. You might ask if your child participates in discussions, where he needs to improve, and what you could do to help him at home. Start with your most important questions in case time runs out.

Remember that these short conferences are intended to give an overview of your high schooler's progress. If you have serious concerns, schedule follow-up meetings with one or more teachers while you're there. 👍



## Parent to Parent Asking for help

My sophomore has learning disabilities, but that's not what was getting in the way of her success. It was her attitude. Maggie didn't want to appear different, so she struggled rather than using accommodations in her Individualized Education Program (sitting up front, using extra time on tests, getting copies of classmates' notes).

So I set up a meeting with Maggie, her guidance counselor, and

me. Together, we came up with ways for my daughter to feel more comfortable.

For example, the counselor asked teachers to make the help less obvious by scheduling extra test time after school. Also, he suggested that Maggie confide in a friend who could supply notes in each class. Now

I'm hoping she'll be more successful, which will give her the confidence to speak up for herself in the future. 👍

