

October 2006

High School 1 YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips

▶ Pushing on

People who persevere finish what they start. To encourage this trait in your teen, ask him to name a time he stuck with something despite obstacles. *Example:* finishing his science project after struggling with his experiment. Remembering that feeling the next time he struggles will help him persevere.

▶ Afternoon dating

Did you know that weekday afternoons are a danger zone for teen sex? That's because some teenagers engage in sexual activity after school while parents are at work. Encourage your teen to participate in organized afternoon activities, and check in with her every afternoon by phone or in person.

▶ Avoid chore wars

Getting teens to pitch in with chores can be challenging. Try putting a weekly sign-up sheet on the refrigerator. Each person has to take two chores and rotate the next week. High schoolers like to have a say in their lives—giving them a choice will inspire more cooperation.

▶ Worth quoting

"Change your thoughts and you change your world."
Norman Vincent Peale

▶ Just for fun

Q: What did one historian say to the other?

A: Let's talk about old times!



Talk to me...please?

Does your high schooler respond to a simple "How was your day?" with a blank stare?

Kids this age can be distant when parents want to stay in the loop. Try these ideas to keep the conversation flowing.

Lighten up. Since talking time is limited, parents may feel pressured to make everything they say "count." Giving guidance, getting information, and sharing values are all important—but chatting for the sake of connecting has its place too. Offer to go somewhere your teen chooses (the mall, a tennis match). Or ask him to help you put groceries away or wash the car.

Lighthearted conversation during activities paves the way for heavier talks later.

Share an example. If you think something is wrong (you overhear your high schooler discussing a problem, or he's acting sad), asking directly may not get you very far. Try this instead: Share a similar experience from your past (such as a friend ditching you for another group). Let your child know you're there to help in the tough times.

Create security. Teens are more open to talking when they know they're supported. Tell your child you love him, no strings attached. Point out his good traits (for example, creativity, sense of humor). Also, mention how much you enjoy



his company ("I never thought having a teenager could be so much fun!"). Knowing you're in his corner will make him more likely to share information with you. 👍

The "write" way

Reports and essays are a fact of life in high school. Help make them a good fact for your teen, with these pointers for sharpening each section she writes.

Introduction:

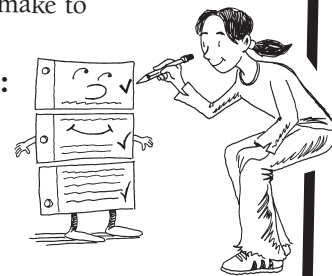
- Open with an attention-grabbing sentence.
- Clearly present your thesis (what the paper will be about).
- List the points you will make to develop your idea.

Supporting paragraphs:

- Start each paragraph with a topic sentence.
- Develop the topic with two or three supporting sentences.
- Use transitions occasionally ("in addition," "on the other hand") so paragraphs flow.

Conclusion:

- Restate your thesis.
- Summarize key information.
- Leave readers with a final thought. 👍



Study time

If two students spend 45 minutes studying, odds are they won't get the same amount done. One may charge through her to-do list, while the other barely makes a dent.

What accounts for the difference? Knowing the secrets of study success. Share these tips with your teen.

Know your "prime time"

All of us have a time of day when we function best. Plan studying for when you work well (after school, evenings, weekend mornings). Review your most challenging



subjects when you're in your peak-performance zone.

Know what to study

Make a checklist of what you want to cover. Number tasks from most to least important. Put the most difficult items and those with the closest deadlines at the top of the list.

Know when to move on

If you are getting frustrated, shift your focus to another task. Plan to return to your first project later, when you've had a break. That way, you can make the most of your time.

Note: Take time for reviewing your notes daily—it will be easier for you to learn the information before the next test comes along. 👍

Reasons to learn

You know that school needs to be first on your teen's priority list. But sometimes your teen doesn't seem to know that. How can you keep him motivated to learn?



■ See the world as a classroom.

Notice what your child enjoys. Suggest related books or activities. If he's an animal lover, he might read up on endangered species or volunteer at an animal shelter.

■ **"When will I ever use this?"** Point out connections between schoolwork and your high schooler's life. For example, knowing the laws of physics could help him improve his dirt-bike stunts.

■ **Be a "love-to-learn" family.** If your family explores new things, your child will probably branch out too. Together, try something different each month, such as seeing a play or visiting a nearby town. 👍

Parent to Parent I can do it!

My son Adam came home from music practice feeling down. Another orchestra member had challenged him for first chair in the violin section and won. "I guess I'm not that good after all," he said.

I encouraged him to think positively. I pointed out that he had the skills to earn first chair once and that he could do it again. Adam reluctantly agreed. So I suggested he stay focused on his goal—improving his playing and regaining first chair—and think of ways he could make that happen.

I was pleased when Adam listened. He decided to practice an extra 30 minutes a day. He also said that every time he thought, "I'll never get better," he would tell himself, "I'm improving every day." Putting in the work and thinking positively seemed to pump him right up. And, I'm proud to say, he just won his seat back! 👍



Q & A Savvy saving

Q I'd like my daughter to save money from her babysitting jobs. How can I get her started?

A Saving even a small amount regularly can help your teen develop good financial habits for the future. Let her know it's important to save because she may want to make a big purchase or have to cover unexpected expenses.



Suggest that your teenager set aside money (say, half) from each job to spend at the movies or buy something she wants. Then, she can put the rest in a savings account.

Once your child has begun saving, praise her efforts. If she fails to save and can't pay for something, don't jump in with extra cash. Feeling the pain of *not* saving may encourage her to put the money away the next time. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

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

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