

# High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Reaching out

When your high schooler gets stuck on homework, suggest that he turn to someone who has taken the class before. For example, his friend from the yearbook club or a neighbor down the street might have aced chemistry last year and could help him. Remind him that peers can be a great resource!

### College financial aid

If you have a college-bound senior, you'll want to start thinking about financial aid now. Try to file your taxes early—having completed tax forms makes it easier to fill out applications for aid. Likewise, turn in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form as soon as possible after the new year.

### Don't burn bridges

Has your teen grown apart from old friends? Encourage her to still be nice to them, to say hi when she sees them, and above all else, not to talk badly about them. She never knows when they might wind up in the same class, on the same team, or with new friends in common.

### Worth quoting

"Character is what emerges from all the little things you were too busy to do yesterday, but did anyway."

Mignon McLaughlin

### Just for fun

**Q:** Why are the presidents on Mount Rushmore so well rested?

**A:** They sleep like rocks!



## Effective consequences

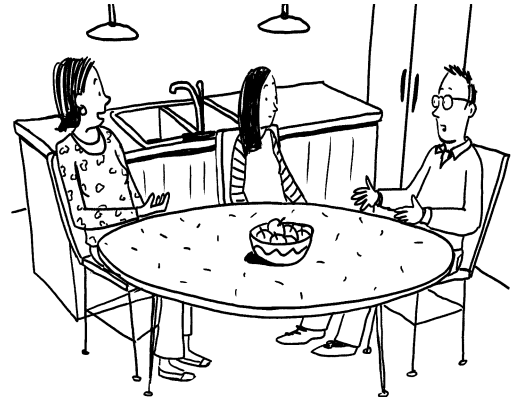
Discipline gets tricky in the teen years. Your child wants more independence, and you want her to stay safe and be responsible. How can you make all of that happen? One key is to set consequences that will encourage her to follow your rules.

### Make them relate

Try these guidelines: Tie consequences to your teenager's behavior, be sure they make sense, and apply them for a reasonable time period. For instance, you might set a rule that your teen can't attend parties if the host's parents aren't home. The consequence of breaking that rule could be to ground her for two weekends. If you grounded her for six months, the time period wouldn't make sense to her—and it would be hard for you to enforce.

### Make them meaningful

Think about the goals of your consequences. They're not simply to punish your high schooler, but to change her behavior so she acts the way you want the next time (and the time after that). To achieve that, you need to come up



with consequences that she won't want to repeat. Take away a cell phone from a teen who "can't live without it," or remove driving privileges from one who loves the car, for example.

### Make them stick

Your child may complain, get angry, or challenge your decision to impose consequences. This can definitely be hard on you as a parent. But resist the urge to keep explaining yourself—you'll just be giving in to her attempt to wear you down. Explain the situation calmly, and walk away. Then, be sure to enforce the consequence you've set so your teen knows you mean business. 👍

## Calculate calories

How long does it take to burn off a piece of pizza? Let your high schooler practice math and learn about nutrition with this real-world idea.

1. Suggest that he look online or in library books to determine the calories he burns on daily activities. *Examples:* running, swimming, watching TV, doing laundry.
2. Next, have him find the calories in his favorite foods. He can see nutrition information on restaurant websites or in online recipes or cookbooks.
3. Now he should calculate how many minutes of running or sitting would equal the calories in that pizza. He may not look at an extra slice the same way! 👍



# Workplace-ready skills

Businesses want employees who are ready to work with others to tackle challenges. Your teenager can practice these skills through his courses and extracurricular activities and at home. Here's how.

**Collaborate.** The best ideas often come from combining thoughts. Encourage your teen to listen carefully during group discussions and to build upon what he hears. When tossing around topics for a project, for instance, he might repeat Johnny's idea and add a new twist.



**Negotiate.** This is also a good time to practice negotiating. If your high schooler's drama club is debating fund-raising plans, he could help forge a compromise. ("What if we do a winter raffle and a spring car wash?") *Tip:* To help him get comfortable with negotiating, try steering him into this role when you're deciding on a family event.

**Communicate.** Having ideas is one thing, but sharing them is another. Here's a fun way to show the importance of speaking and writing clearly. Sit back-to-back, with a sheet of paper and markers for each of you. Have your child sketch a design, giving you directions so you can draw a duplicate. Play again, but this time he should pass you written directions. Compare your drawings afterward—how close are they? 🍷

## It's my cause

Volunteering for a cause can give your teen a stake in her community and a way to follow a passion. Use these questions to help her get involved.

### What does she talk about?

Does she mention classmates who are struggling with English? She might join a library conversation club that pairs English speakers with those learning the language. Encourage her to look at community bulletin boards or to ask her school counselor about opportunities.



## Parent to Parent

### Still in the loop

By the time my fourth child reached high school, I suffered from "school meeting burnout."

My daughter, Erica, told me about her freshman-year parent orientation, but I figured the information would be the same that I'd heard before. Then a friend mentioned a science program I didn't know about, and it turned out she had learned about it at the orientation I skipped. The next time there was a parent meeting, I decided to go, and I was surprised at how much had changed. New math classes that hadn't been available to my older children are being offered. And the academic eligibility rules for sports teams are different.

I enjoyed talking to parents I hadn't seen lately, and Erica was happy I met some of her friends' parents, too. I may not be able to make every meeting, but I know I'll try—even though I've been through this three times before! 🍷



### What are her strengths?

Together, list her skills. Then, she could check with nonprofits that have matching needs. For example, if she knows how to crochet, she might make children's blankets for a foster-care group.

*Note:* When you're a teen, it's always more fun to do something with a friend. Suggest that your child find a friend with similar interests to volunteer with her. 🍷

## Q & A Fact or fiction?

**Q** So many myths are spread online. How can I get my son to check what he reads on the Internet, especially before sharing it?

**A** You're right—your son needs to approach things online with caution. This will serve him well whether he's doing schoolwork or reading his Twitter feed.

First, he should think about the source. Is it a reputable website, or a Facebook posting with no backup? Then, he should consider whether the facts

can be confirmed on other reputable sites. If the information is hard to verify, that's a sign it may be untrue. Before forwarding something, he could check a site like [snopes.com](http://snopes.com), which sorts fact from fiction.

Remind him that fact-checking is crucial for school assignments. Encourage him to trace information to two or

three reliable sources and to keep a list of those sources for double-checking later and for his bibliography. 🍷



**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 CCH Incorporated  
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
540-636-4280 • [rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com](mailto:rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com)  
[www.rfeonline.com](http://www.rfeonline.com)  
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