

High School **1** YEARS

Working together for lifelong success



Short Stops

Winter work

Over winter break your child may be assigned reading or projects that are due when school reopens. Encourage her to create a schedule for doing the work and to get started right away. That way, she won't feel rushed and will have room for relaxation and fun with friends and family.

Grateful for gifts

If your teen receives holiday gifts, remind him that it's important to show appreciation. He should thank the giver promptly and graciously in person or by phone—even for a present he doesn't particularly like. ("Thanks, Aunt Marlene. I can always use a sweatshirt!") Then, have him follow up by writing a thank-you note.

Remember that!

When your child needs to memorize a list of information, "chunking"—or making smaller groupings—can help. She might break down a list of French vocabulary words into categories (food, nature), then review them and quiz herself. Or she could group dates together (major battles, dates treaties were signed).

Worth quoting

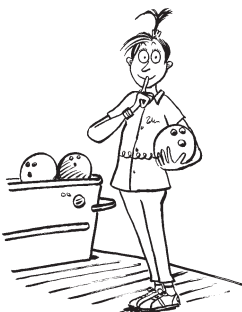
"The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it."

Chinese proverb

Just for fun

Q: Why should you be quiet in a bowling alley?

A: So you can hear a pin drop.

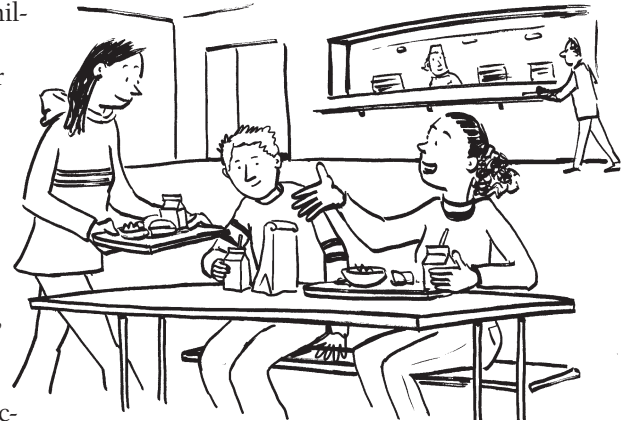


Power against bullying

Each day, about 160,000 children stay home from school because of bullying. No matter which part a child might play in the bullying problem, there are ways parents can try to help. Here are suggestions in case your teen:

is bullied... If your child frequently wants to skip school, seems sad, has belongings "disappear," or comes home crying or with bruises, she may be a victim. Ask her if she's been teased or threatened or if anyone is spreading rumors about her or purposely excluding her. Assure her that being bullied isn't her fault and that you're there to help. Together, document details (who, what, when, and where), and arrange a meeting with school officials to discuss solutions.

bullies others... If you find out that your teen is a bully, take it seriously. Get her side of the story, but ask for input from adults who see her during the day, such as her teachers and coaches. Meet with the school counselor to try to



discover the cause and to come up with a plan. Also, tell your child you won't tolerate bullying, and make sure she knows what will happen if she continues (she will be grounded from social events and may be suspended from school).

witnesses bullying... If your teenager sees bullying, encourage her to walk away with the bullied peer and report it to an adult (parent, teacher) immediately. Then, suggest that she reach out to the victim at other times. She might sit next to her at lunch or on the bus. Or she could invite the girl to come over after school or to go to a school event with her. 👍

Preventing cyberbullying

With a large part of teens' social lives taking place online, cyberbullying—through texting, instant messaging, and social media—is more of a problem than ever. Share these tips with your child:

- Make sure your teen understands that it's never okay to post or send threats, hurtful comments, or inappropriate messages or pictures—or for others to do that to him. In fact, it can be illegal.
- Tell him not to respond to cyberbullying. As with other types of bullying, responding only spurs the bully on. Instead, he should block the person on his online accounts and cell phone. Encourage him to tell you if there's a problem. You can report a bully to your Internet or phone service provider, who will investigate the incident. 👍



Everyday learning

Informal learning at home keeps teens' minds engaged and builds knowledge. Try these ways to encourage your child to learn outside the classroom.

Build it

Maybe there's something your high schooler can make for your house or for a family member. For example, if he enjoys building things, he might make a mail holder or a cubby for keys. Or he could build a dollhouse or a toy box for a younger cousin.



Write it

Suggest that your teen create a webpage or blog about a hobby or talent. He can use a free site such as www.drupal.org or www.wordpress.com. If he likes movies, he might launch a film blog with his own reviews, lists of favorite directors or films, and movie trailers.

Fix it

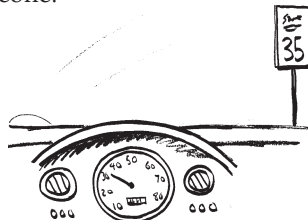
If your laptop or cell phone isn't working, ask for your teenager's help. He may be able to go online to figure out how to repair it. Or you might put him on the phone (or take him with you) to talk to customer service. Also, he can help with household repairs like unclogging a kitchen sink or replacing a broken window screen. 👍

Q & A The right speed

Q Drivers sometimes speed through our neighborhood. How can I encourage my child to obey the speed limit?



A Start by making sure your teenager understands that exceeding the speed limit can lead to traffic tickets or losing her license. Even worse, she could be involved in an accident that injures someone.



Remind your high schooler to keep tabs on the speedometer as she drives. And set an example by following the speed limit yourself. Also, consider making a driving contract that includes rules about speeding (see a sample at www.nsc.org/safety_road/TeenDriving/Documents/Parent_Teen_Agreement.pdf).

Finally, tell your teen that if she's caught speeding, she's responsible for the fine and any increased insurance premium. In addition, you might set consequences, such as taking away the car for a month or letting her use it only to drive to work. 👍

Teen talk

Teens don't always want to talk to their parents. So when your child *does* feel like chatting, take advantage of the moment and listen! Try these tips:



- As a rule, it's best if you do less talking and more listening. To encourage your child to keep sharing, ask questions that can't be answered with "yes" or "no." Examples: "What do you think?" "What would you have done?"
- Respond with what you think your teenager is saying ("It sounds like you're excited about the play but nervous about how you'll perform"). If that's not what she meant, she can clarify so you understand.
- Focus on her needs. For instance, express excitement along with her. If she needs guidance, offer to talk over possible solutions. If she's looking for comfort, a hug or a reassuring word may do the trick. 👍

Parent to Parent Getting to know you

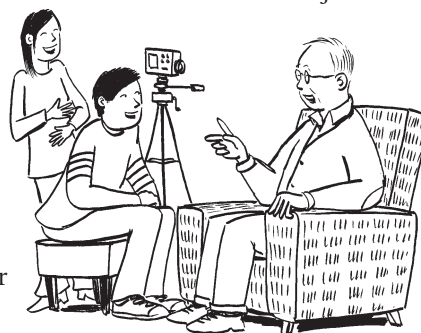
My parents live in another state, so we don't get together very often. I wanted a way for my kids to get to know them better. My neighbor shared an idea her family had used: her children interviewed their grandparents and videotaped it.

Both of my teens were excited about the idea. They wrote a list of questions and, when my parents came to visit over Thanksgiving, they

interviewed them. Alex and Beth took turns asking about their grandma and grandpa's lives, such as their favorite childhood memories, their hobbies, and their first jobs. Afterward, they edited

the video and made a CD for other family members.

Alex and Beth enjoyed working on this project together—and now they know a lot more about our family history. 👍



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
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