

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### A social media "vacation"

The end of the school year is full of real-life obligations and events. Suggest that your teen cut back on social media until summer break so he's not distracted from what he needs to do. How? He might delete apps from his phone or turn off notifications.

### On the map

Which oceans border Europe? Is Hawaii north or south of the equator? To increase your teenager's geography knowledge, suggest that she print out blank maps (try [eduplace.com/ss/maps](http://eduplace.com/ss/maps)). You can challenge her to fill in details like countries and their capitals, lakes, and mountain ranges. Where would she like to travel someday?

### Risks of secondhand smoke

Remind your teen to stay away from cigarettes and smokers. That's because the 7,000 chemicals in secondhand smoke can affect his health now and later. They may worsen asthma attacks or respiratory and ear infections. And down the road, secondhand smoke can cause lung cancer, heart disease, and stroke.

### Worth quoting

"The time is always right to do what is right." *Martin Luther King Jr.*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What do you get when you cross a stream and a brook?

**A:** Wet feet.



## Financial literacy 101

Learning about personal finance now will give your high schooler a solid foundation for managing her money in the future. She can try these strategies.

### Budgeting

Suggest that your teen keep a "money diary" for one month. In a notebook, she can track money that comes in (paycheck, allowance, gifts) and write down where it goes (snacks, gas). She might be surprised by how quickly expenses add up. Can she think of ways to save money? *Examples:* Pack snacks rather than buying them, walk instead of driving.

### Banking

Encourage your child to open a bank account so she gets used to handling money. First, have her research banks online to find the best option for her. Do they offer student accounts? What's the minimum amount needed to open an



account? Are there any fees? Then, take her to open her account.

### Credit

Using a credit card—and paying off the balance each month—builds credit. But charging more than you can pay in a month is costly. Ask your teen to pretend she's charging a big-ticket item (say, a \$200 bike) to a card with a 20% annual interest rate. If she paid the monthly minimum (perhaps \$15), how much would she spend? (*Answer:* About \$228, or almost 15% extra.) You can explain that cards even charge interest on interest! 👍

## Learning with podcasts

Your teen can discover a lot about the world by listening to podcasts. And making his own will build skills like research and public speaking. Here's how:

■ Ask your child to download podcasts you can listen to together. A wide range of free ones are available on everything from food to gaming to pop culture. He'll see that some feature a host interviewing guests, while others tell a story in separate episodes.

■ Have your high schooler pick a subject or cause he's passionate about, such as a certain era of music or the environment. He could write a podcast script, then practice it and record himself when he's ready. Finally, hold a "premiere" night so the family can listen to the first episode of your teenager's podcast. 👍



## Driving: Know what to do

Help keep your new driver safe by making sure he's prepared for a variety of situations behind the wheel. Review these common scenarios with him.

**Fender bender.** Your high schooler can avoid many accidents by obeying laws, driving carefully, and staying alert. If an accident does happen, he should call the police and then you. Also, have him keep his insurance card in his wallet so he can exchange information with the other driver.



**Flat tire.** Be sure your teenager knows how to change a tire. Then, explain that if he suspects a flat (his ride will feel very bumpy), the first step is to pull over into a safe spot. He can change it if he's completely away from traffic—otherwise he'll need to call you or roadside assistance.

**Bad weather.** Give your child experience driving in different weather, with you along to guide him. For example, if it's raining, remind him to turn on his lights and slow down. If the road is slippery, he could downshift (even in an automatic). Tell him that if the car hydroplanes (loses contact with the road) in heavy rain or skids in snow, he should take his foot off the gas, *and* the brake—and gently steer in the direction the car is going. 👍

Q & A

### Spring poetry

**Q** Since April is National Poetry Month, I thought I could use it to encourage my daughter to read more. Any ideas?



**A** Many libraries and bookstores hold poetry readings this month—and throughout the year. Put one or two on your calendar, and plan to attend with your daughter. Add “Poem in Your Pocket Day” (April 30) to your calendar, too. Encourage the whole family to take part by carrying poems to share with friends and relatives.

Also, let your teenager see that kids her age can be poets. She might pick up her school's literary magazine or browse websites that publish teen poetry. And suggest that she celebrate poetry every day of the year by signing up to receive a daily poem via email at [poets.org/poets.org/sign-poem-day](http://poets.org/poets.org/sign-poem-day). She can post her favorites on the refrigerator or add one to her email signature. 👍

### OUR PURPOSE

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

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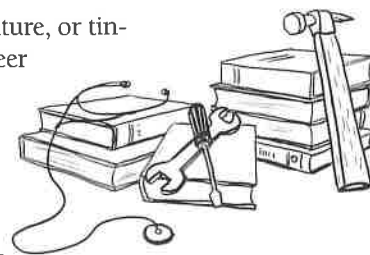
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## Consider a skilled trade

Does your teen love landscaping, building furniture, or tinkering with electronics? If she'd like to make a career out of her interest, a skilled trade might be a good option after high school. Share these steps for getting started in the field of her choice.

1. Talk to the school counselor about the education and training needed. Ask about vocational school, community college, or paid apprenticeships.
2. Look for related high school courses, such as woodworking or auto mechanics. Find out if dual enrollment is available for vocational classes at a community college while still in high school.
3. Get experience through a part-time job or volunteer position. Perhaps a local landscaping company is hiring an assistant or the hospital needs volunteers. 👍



Parent to Parent

## Catch up on work

My son Matthew recently warned me not to expect much from his next report card. He said he already had a few zeroes from missing assignments in biology, and he admitted he had fallen behind in history with a test coming up.

I let him know that ignoring the problem wouldn't make it go away and encouraged him to

talk to his teachers. Luckily, his biology teacher recommended an after-school program where student volunteers provide homework help in any subject.

This helped Matt realize that it's not too late to pull up his grades. Now, he stays after school twice a week, and he's catching up. He even said he's finding it motivating to do homework and study alongside other kids. 👍

