

# High School YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Tutoring tips

Successful students know when to ask for help. If your high schooler is struggling with a subject, suggest that he talk to his teacher. She might work with him after school or recommend a classmate to help. He can also call libraries and community centers to find out about free tutoring.

### Embarrassed teens

It's natural for teenagers to sometimes feel embarrassed by their parents. For example, your child may ask you not to walk next to her at the mall. Instead of pushing the issue, give her space. Realizing that she will outgrow this behavior could help you not take it personally.

### Scavenger fun

Turn off the TV, power down the computers, and enjoy a flashlight scavenger hunt tonight. Hide items (red socks, tube of toothpaste) around the house, and give everyone a list of the "treasures." Then, shut off the lights, and use flashlights to search. The person who finds the most items sets up the next round.

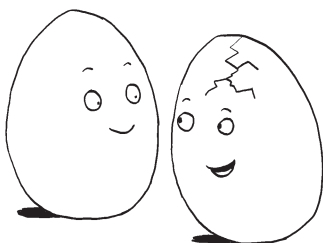
### Worth quoting

"What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness." *John Steinbeck*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What did one egg say to another?

**A:** You crack me up!



## Staying involved

Your teen is probably growing more independent every day. But she still needs you to be involved in her school life. In fact, students learn more when their parents take an interest in their education. Try these tips.

### Show interest at home

Ask regularly about what your high schooler is learning. You may get more out of her if you wait until she mentions a class or an assignment. Also, offer to help her prep for tests or brainstorm topics for a science project. Another idea is to visit museums, historic sites, and other places related to what she's studying.

### Go to school

Try to take part in evening and weekend activities. Read emails from the school, and check the website for dates and times. You and your child might attend an information session on bullying or financial aid. Watch school plays



and sporting events—even if your teen isn't in the cast or on the team, you're still showing support for her school.

### Connect with counselors

Introduce yourself to your child's counselor, then reach out when you have questions or need advice. She has a wealth of information that can help you help your teen. For instance, she's a valuable resource when it comes to course selection, college and career planning, and online safety. 👍

## Dealing with peer pressure

If your teenager's friend pressured him to do drugs or skip class, how would he react? Consider this advice:

- Together, practice ways to respond to pressure. Explain that it's best to keep it short and to the point, leaving less room for argument. *Examples:* "Drugs aren't my thing. Come on, let's get food instead" or "There's no way I'm skipping. I worked hard on my paper, and it's due today."

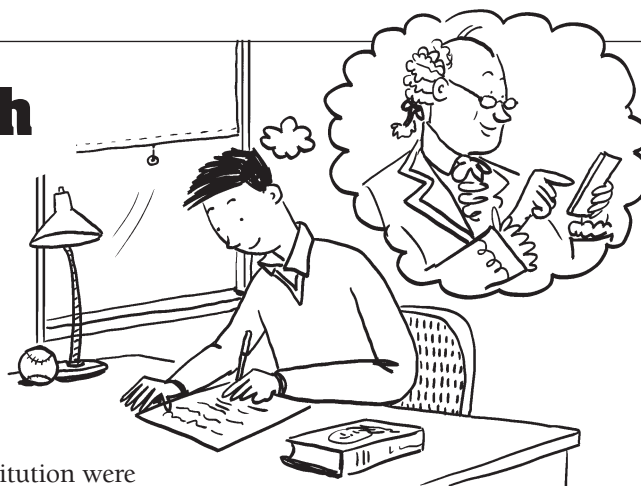
- Be an "out" for your high schooler. Tell him that he can always call or text you for a ride if he feels like he's in over his head—no questions asked. 👍



# Boost skills with “micro writing”

Although your teenager may not realize it, he thinks about word choice, audience, and tone every time he writes a text message or social media post. Here’s how this “micro writing” can help him practice writing skills he needs in school.

**Word choice.** If the writers of the Constitution were on Twitter, how might they have tweeted the preamble? Challenge your high schooler to translate a paragraph from a historical document or a favorite novel into a 280-character



message. He’ll need to choose just the right words to convey his message.

**Audience.** “Hey dude, what’s up?” may be an appropriate opening for an email to your child’s best friend. But ask how he would convey the same sentiment to his grandfather (“Dear Grandpa, how is your day going?”).

**Tone.** Adding an emoji (☺, ☹) can affect the tone of a message. Take turns choosing an emoji and using words instead to convey the same tone. *Example:* ☹ = “I’m so sorry to hear about that.” 👍



## Q & A Encourage mindfulness

**Q** My daughter has a tendency to dwell on the past and worry about the future. How can I help her focus more on the present?

**A** One way for your daughter to feel happier is to learn *mindfulness*, which will help her live “in the moment.”



For example, encourage her to enjoy a cup of tea or a snack with you after school. Close your eyes, and savor and talk about the tastes and smells.

When she exercises, suggest that she pay attention to her breathing. Also, she could focus on the feeling of the wind in her hair as she rides her bike, or on the sound of her feet hitting the pavement during a run.

While no one can avoid stress altogether, your daughter will take her mind off things by using her senses to notice and appreciate the world around her as it is right now. 👍

## Parent to Parent Budgeting for the holidays

Last year, my husband and I relied on credit cards for holiday shopping, something we regretted when January rolled around. This year, we’re cutting back on spending. We decided to be honest with our son, Cody, about our budget—and to approach the situation as a financial responsibility lesson.

We told him how much we have to spend, and we encouraged him to share ideas for making the most of the money. Since we’re hosting a holiday meal, he suggested that we turn it into a potluck. He also thought we could make gifts for some people on our list. For example, we might bake cookies for teachers and neighbors.

I’m confident now that we can have a nice holiday without spending a lot—and I’m happy that Cody is starting to understand that money is limited. 👍



## What are the odds?

You have a deck of playing cards, without jokers. What’s the probability of drawing a heart on your first try?

Have fun calculating probability with your teenager—and testing the actual outcome. Try these steps.

1. Find the number of favorable outcomes (in this case, the number of hearts). *Answer:* 13.
2. Find the total number of possible outcomes (the total number of cards). *Answer:* 52.
3. Make a fraction: favorable outcomes divided by total possible outcomes.

*Answer:*  $\frac{13}{52}$ , or  $\frac{1}{4}$ . So she has a 1 in 4 chance of drawing a heart the first time.

**4.** Now try it! If she draws a card 12 separate times (returning the card to the deck and shuffling each time), how often should she get a heart? *Answer:* ( $\frac{1}{4} \times 12 = 3$ ).

She may or may not really draw a heart 3 times. In fact, it’s possible (but unlikely) that she’ll get zero or 12 hearts. You can explain that’s the nature of probability. In reality, she’d need to repeat the experiment dozens of times to notice that she draws a heart about a quarter of the time. 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

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

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