

High School Parents[®]

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Chambersburg Area School District

still make the difference!



Show your teen how to create a study schedule for tests

Whether your teen is facing a chapter test in her science class or a college-admission test, she doesn't want to walk in unprepared. A study schedule will help her get ready so she can do her best.

Make sure your teen:

- **Sets priorities.** A good score on a college-admission test might mean the difference between getting in or not. A poor score in a tough class could mean she has to go to summer school. The test is important, so she has to find the time to study.
- **Blocks out time to study.** Your teen can't study during school, during practice or at work, for example. She still has to do her homework for other classes. Have

her look at the calendar and block out other times for study.

- **Reviews past tests.** Teachers often make copies of old tests available. Sample college-admission tests are also easy to find. Seeing what is expected can help your teen set a realistic study schedule.
- **Determines what needs to be learned.** It will take longer to study for a unit test if your teen hasn't done the daily homework.
- **Leaves time to review.** The night before the test is not the time to learn new material. It's the best time to review.

Source: Rona F. Flippo, *Preparing Students for Testing and Doing Better in School*, ISBN: 9781-4129-5374-0 (Corwin Press, a SAGE Company, www.corwinpress.com).

Encourage your teen to respect school, teachers



Unfortunately, teens today are not hailed as the most respectful generation.

Talk with your teen about how important respect and good manners are—at home and at school. Let your teen know that you expect him to show respect to his teachers. Encourage him to:

- **Pay attention in class.** The easiest way to show respect for a teacher is to listen attentively. By making eye contact and paying attention, your teen is showing his teacher that he respects and values the education he is receiving.
- **Use manners.** Your teen should follow requests with *please* and be sure to thank the teacher for extra help.
- **Be loyal.** Outside of classes, your teen shouldn't speak badly of his teachers—even if other kids are. Your teen can show his respect by following the rule "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all."

Source: Gool Bugwadia, "Teens: How to show respect & admiration for teachers," Helium, www.helium.com/items/1137082-respect-teachers-admiration-for-teachers-teachers-how-to-show-respect.

Promote safety by talking with your teen, working with school



Your high schooler is almost an adult—a fact she reminds you of at least once a week. But you still worry about her safety, both while she's at school and while she travels to and from school.

To help assure a safe school experience for your teen while still supporting her independence:

- **Talk with your teen regularly.** Listen to what she has to say—without making judgments or interrupting her. Ask if she is concerned about her safety at school.
- **Be a role model.** Show your teen how to solve problems without resorting to violence. Discuss how you expect her to be able to do the same at home and at school.

- **Work with the school.** Tell your teen that you support school policies and rules, especially those that help make the school a safe place for all students to learn. Keep in touch with teachers and staff.

Source: "A Dozen Things Parents Can Do to Stop School Violence," National Crime Prevention Council, www.ncpc.org/resources/files/pdf/school-safety/12parents.pdf.

"Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."

—Abigail Adams

Get your high schooler reading with a selection of nonfiction



Does your teen dislike reading? Well, maybe he's just reading the wrong books. Teens who dislike fiction books can often enjoy nonfiction books—provided you don't mention that they're learning just like they are when they read a textbook for school.

The Young Adult Library Services Association compiles a yearly list of nonfiction books. Here are just a few of their recent recommendations:

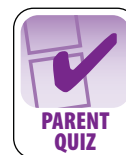
- **Skateboarding: Legendary Tricks** by Steve Badillo and Doug Werner (Tracks Publishing).
- **All the Questions About Hair, Makeup, Skin & More** by the editors of Cosmogirl (Hearst Books).
- **Falling Hard: 100 Love Poems by Teenagers**, edited by Betsy Franco (Candlewick Press).

- **Gadget Nation: A Journey Through the Eccentric World of Invention** by Steve Greenberg (Sterling).
- **Creepy Cute Crochet: Zombies, Ninjas, Robots, and More!** by Christen Haden (Quirk).
- **Take Me to Your Leader: Weird, Strange, and Totally Useless Information** by Ian Harrison (DK).

Not sure how to find these books? Check with a librarian. Even if your library doesn't have a copy of a certain book, the librarian may be able to borrow one from another library for your teen. And if your teen enjoys one book on a certain topic, there are bound to be others to keep him reading (and learning).

Source: "2009 Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Readers," Young Adult Library Services Association, www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/quickpicks/09qp.cfm.

Do you know how to communicate without snooping?



It can be hard to stay in touch with your teenager. He wants independence. You want to know what's going on in his life.

Keep the lines of communication open—without getting a search warrant. Are you staying in touch without snooping? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below to find out:

- ___ **1. Do you encourage** your teen's friends to spend time at your house?
- ___ **2. Do you offer to drive** your teen and friends to school events? This is a great way to hear what's going on.
- ___ **3. Do you schedule** one-on-one time with your teen? Sometimes, this is all it takes for a teen to open up.
- ___ **4. Do you check** your teen's page on social networking sites? Your teen is sharing this information with the public—which means he must also share it with you.
- ___ **5. Do you sometimes** just hang out with your teen? Watching TV together can lead to great talks.

How well are you doing?

Each *yes* means you're communicating without snooping. For each *no* answer, try that idea in the quiz.

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Avoid scare tactics when you discipline your high schooler



When lecturing your teen for the hundredth time about wearing her seat belt—and getting the “Okay, Mom” response,

followed by the eye roll—it’s tempting to start screaming, “You must wear your seatbelt! If you don’t, and there’s an accident, you will be thrown out of the car and break your neck!”

That reaction makes sense. However, it’s important to remember that your teen doesn’t always think the same way that you do—and that’s why scare tactics don’t work.

Teens understand that bad things could happen when they do something wrong—but they think those bad things will only happen to *other* people. Teens are better at processing concrete information—what’s going on in the here and now—than

they are at thinking about abstract situations. That’s why a direct statement (“If you’re not wearing your seatbelt, I’m taking away your driving privileges.”) is more effective than a scare tactic.

Scare tactics can also cause your teen to lose respect for your advice. If you respond with a “scary story” every time your teen tries to talk to you about a serious issue, she is likely to stop discussing them with you.

It’s more important to know your teen’s concerns and issues than it is to scare her away from doing things. So give your teen reasonable explanations for why you feel the way you do on serious issues.

Source: Denise Witmer, “3 Reasons Why Parents Shouldn’t Use Scare Tactics,” About.com: Teens, http://parentingteens.about.com/od/disciplin1/a/scare_tactics.htm.

Teach your high schooler how to handle difficult work situations



Your high schooler comes home and explodes, “I hate my job!” She continues on to say that it’s boring work, her boss

always makes her work late and the work-related stress is starting to affect her schoolwork.

You agree that it’s time for her to leave this job. But stop your teen before she calls her boss and yells, “I quit!” Talk about the importance of quitting gracefully and respectfully.

With your teen, discuss:

- **Her plans.** Will she focus only on school for a while? Or does she need to find another job immediately? She might want to stay at her current job until she has another one lined up.

- **The two-week notice.** Most jobs require employees to give two weeks’ notice that they are leaving the company. This gives the company time to find a replacement.
- **How to talk to her boss.** Your teen should explain her reasons for wanting to leave in a professional manner—saying “You’re a terrible boss,” is not a good option. Instead, your teen should say something like, “I feel I have outgrown the position and am looking for more challenging employment” or, “I am struggling to keep up with my schoolwork, so I need to focus on my grades.”

Source: “Quitting Gracefully,” Got A Job: Part-time jobs, teen jobs and summer jobs for teens and adults, www.gotajob.com/brain-food/article/quitting-gracefully/.

Q: My son is a nonconformist. His clothes, his hairstyle, even the music he listens to are all very different from most of the students in his school. So he doesn’t have a lot of friends. He has strong opinions, many of which I do not share. He constantly questions me and his teachers. Still, he’s polite and he works hard. How can I help him through his high school years?

Questions & Answers

A: Adolescence is tough enough. But when a teen intentionally sets himself apart, the challenges can become magnified.

You are clearly working hard to keep the lines of communication open with your son. That’s important. Don’t feel that you need to argue with him on every point. Sometimes, you can shrug off his comment by saying, “Well, that’s certainly an interesting point of view.”

You also are doing a good job by trying to pick your battles. Hair and clothing are hardly ever worth a fight.

Be sure you also:

- **Continue to look** for his positive qualities. Praise him in private—and in public. He needs to know that you truly are proud of the things he does.
- **Help him find** outlets for his talents. These successes will continue to give him confidence in his abilities. His talents may eventually turn into a lifetime career.

He may never completely fit in while he’s in high school. But by helping him develop a solid sense of who he is, he can be successful and happy in college and in a career.

—Kristen Amundson,
The Parent Institute

It Matters: Attendance

Does missing just one day of school have an impact?



“Missing school one day won’t make a big difference,” your teen says as she pulls the covers over her head.

But it will. She will miss class discussions and the teacher’s lectures. The work she misses may never truly be made up.

Sure she can do the reading in her history class. But she can’t replace the class conversation that followed. She may be able to do the math problems, but she won’t see the alternate way the teacher showed for finding an answer.

As attendance declines, so do graduation rates.

As a result, she’ll be behind when she comes back to class. And the farther behind she gets, the more likely she is to get into academic trouble.

The Chicago Public Schools followed students who missed about one week of school each marking period. (That results from missing just one day every two weeks.) The students who missed just those few days of class were significantly less likely to graduate on time—and they were more likely to drop out altogether.

When your teen says that missing school won’t matter, just say, “Yes, it will. So get up now.”

Source: Elaine M. Allensworth and John Q. Easton, “What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools,” Consortium on Chicago School Research, http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=116.

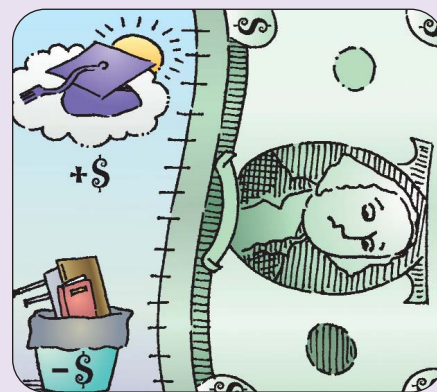
Talk to your high schooler about the high cost of dropping out

Not long ago, a student who dropped out of high school could still live a comfortable life. In 1967, nearly half of high school dropouts earned enough money to be considered part of the middle class.

But today? The numbers have changed. Most high school dropouts find themselves at the very bottom of the income scale.

The economy has changed. Many of the jobs that allowed people without an education to earn a good living are gone. Today, high school dropouts can get only low-wage jobs with no opportunity for advancement.

Poor attendance is often one of the first signs that a student is preparing to drop out of school. If



your teen’s attendance is less than perfect, deal with the issue. Get your teen back into the habit of going to school regularly. By keeping him in school today, you’ll help him earn a living in the future.

Source: Jason Amos, *Dropouts, Diplomas, and Dollars: US High Schools and the Nation’s Economy*, Alliance for Excellent Education, <http://all4ed.org/files/Econ2008.pdf>.

Show your teen the importance of getting to all classes on time



The bell just rang. Students in room 104 are at their desks and ready for class to begin—except for your teen. He’s still in the hall talking with his friends. But when you read his report card and ask why he has been late to class several times, he shrugs his shoulders.

Here’s why he—and you—should care about tardiness:

- **Tardiness takes everyone’s time.** A student who arrives late disrupts the teacher’s plan. It shows disrespect for the teacher and for every student in the class.

- **It could affect his grade.** Many schools add up the number of times a student is tardy and translate those into unexcused absences. (For example, three tardies could equal one absence.) Your child may be counted as absent even if he eventually showed up for class.
- **It’s a bad habit.** Adults who can’t get to work on time may be fired. Your teen should learn habits that will prepare him for life.

Source: Thomas Ott, “Cleveland Schools Working on Plan to Curb Rampant Tardiness,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, http://blog.cleveland.com/metro/2008/11/cleveland_schools_working_on_p.html.