

High School Parents[®]

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Chambersburg Area School District

still make the difference!



Remind your teen that school isn't out for the summer yet!

Although summer break is fast approaching, it's not here just yet. Class is still in session—and your teen still needs to show up to school ready-to-learn, every day. To make sure your teen stays engaged during the last weeks of school:

- **Keep her bedtime steady.** The sun may be out later, but that doesn't mean your teen should be. Sticking to the same bedtime routine she's had all year will ensure she wakes up feeling well-rested.
- **Keep her fed.** Breakfast is still the most important meal of the day—that morning meal gets your teen's brain going. Have quick breakfast items on hand, like fruit, yogurt, trail mix or whole-grain bagels.
- **Keep informed.** Talk to your teen about school so she knows you still think it's important. Be sure that she reads assignments and completes homework.
- **Keep her moving.** Encourage regular exercise—studies have shown it relieves stress, improves memory and helps teens feel happier.
- **Keep her supplied.** She needs to show up to class ready to work. A student who doesn't have a pencil or paper isn't prepared. See if she needs to restock these important supplies.
- **Keep her interested.** Remind your teen to focus on what she's learning, not just on passing the class. If she doesn't understand something, tell her to ask questions. Teachers love to help—it's why they are teachers. As a bonus, she'll actually learn what she needs to know.

Find time to talk with your high schooler



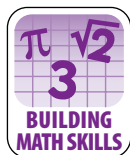
The last months of the school year are always hectic for students. Between end-of-the-year exams, end-of-the-

season games and beginning-of-the-summer events, you might feel like you live with a tornado rather than a teenager. And forget about getting a spot on his busy schedule for a fun parent-child outing—he's already booked through July.

Instead, look for opportunities to see your teen during his daily activities. Spend time with your teen:

- **When he's eating.** Even the busiest teens have to break for food eventually! Chat while you share a meal.
- **When he's studying.** Don't interrupt your teen's study time to talk about his day—but do offer to hold up flash cards or quiz him on his notes. He'll appreciate your support.
- **When you're in the car.** Turn off the radio and ask your teen how things are going. He may be more likely to open up when your eyes are on the road instead of on him.

Encourage your teen to plan ahead for math finals



Math is a challenging subject—and one that many teens would rather avoid. This means that “studying for math” is often the first item to be skipped on a teen’s to-do list.

Remind your teen that pretending that math final doesn’t exist won’t help him on the day of the test. Instead, encourage him to:

- **Begin with a good attitude.** Ask your teen to say a positive phrase out loud, like “I can do this.”
- **Do a little at a time.** Doing a few problems each day is easier than doing dozens the night before the test. Start studying at least a week in advance.
- **Know what he needs to study.** Rework homework assignments—if he only had to answer the even-numbered problems one night, he can answer the odd-numbered ones now. Review old

tests and quizzes. Is there a certain type of problem he usually misses?

- **Start solving the problems.** He should check his work if he gets stumped. Sometimes the issue is a just mistake in simple addition or subtraction. If the problem is more serious, he should reread the textbook or call a friend in the class. If he still can’t figure it out, starting to study early gives him enough time to ask his teacher for extra help.

Source: Eric Jensen, *Student Study Secrets*, ISBN: 0-7641-2007-7 (Barron’s Educational Series, <http://barronseduc.com>).

“The best inheritance a parent can give his children is a few minutes of his time each day.”

—Orlando A. Battista

Help your high schooler learn how to accept disappointment



Life, sadly, does not always give us what we want. That’s as true for teens as it is for adults. The boy she hoped would ask her to the dance asked someone else. The spot on the team went to another player.

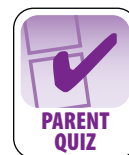
Learning to accept and cope with disappointment is a big step on the road to responsibility. Here are ways you can help your teen learn to handle life’s inevitable disappointments:

- **Help your teen learn to talk** about disappointment. Often, teens tend either to overreact or to clam up entirely. Help your teen express disappointment with words.

- **Don’t try to fix it.** You won’t help your teen learn coping skills. Be sympathetic, of course. “I’m so sorry that happened.” Be supportive. “I think you’re a wonderful soccer player.” But don’t call the coach and insist your teen get on the team.
- **Be a good role model.** It’s hard as a parent to share your personal disappointments. But it’s one of the best ways to show your teen how you have learned to cope. “I am so sad I didn’t get that job,” you might say. “I’m going to keep trying.”

Source: Rosemarie Clark, *The School-Savvy Parent*: 365 *Insider Tips to Help You Help Your Child*, ISBN: 1-575-42072-4 (Free Spirit Publishing, www.freespirit.com).

What should you do if your teen is smoking?



You have noticed that your teen’s friend smells of tobacco smoke. You even suspect your teen may be smoking.

What should you do? It’s important that parents don’t ignore the signs that their teen may be a smoker.

Are you doing what you can to help your teen quit? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below to find out:

- ___ **1. Do you make sure** your teen understands what smoking does to his health—now and in the future?
- ___ **2. Do you appeal to vanity**, reminding your teen that smoking causes bad breath and yellow teeth?
- ___ **3. Do you set a good example?** If you smoke, talk about why you wish you didn’t.
- ___ **4. Have you talked** with the coach if your teen is an athlete? Smoking saps an athlete’s endurance.
- ___ **5. Have you told your teen** you will help him make a plan to quit?

How well are doing?

Each *yes* means you are taking action now to help your teen quit smoking. For *no* answers, try those ideas in the quiz.

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Talk with your high schooler about the importance of honesty



A recent survey of over 29,000 high school students showed a disturbing trend. More teens than ever are

admitting to lying, cheating and stealing—and seeing absolutely nothing wrong with these things. The study found that:

- **30 percent of students** admitted to stealing from a store within the past year.
- **One in five students** confessed to stealing something from a parent, other relative or friend in the past year.
- **A whopping 83 percent** of students said they lied to a parent about something significant.
- **64 percent cheated** on a test during the past year.
- **More than one in three** admitted to using the Internet to plagiarize an assignment.

These numbers seem frightening enough—but 26 percent of students surveyed even admitted to lying when responding to the survey! And the scary statistics continue:

- **77 percent** said that “When it comes to doing what is right, I am better than most people I know.”
- **A staggering 93 percent** said they were satisfied with their personal ethics and character!

It is critical that teens learn honesty at home. Share these statistics with your teen. Discuss why lying, cheating and stealing are wrong. Make sure your teen knows that without honesty, there can never be real trust. Then practice what you preach—don’t talk about honesty and then brag about cheating on your taxes.

Source: “Josephson Institute’s Report Card on American Youth: There’s a Hole in Our Moral Ozone and It’s Getting Bigger,” The Josephson Institute, <http://charactercounts.org/programs/reportcard/index.html>.

Keep learning alive for your teen over the summer months



Without any scholastic activity during the summer, your teen won’t retain much of what he learned this school year.

So how can your teen avoid this memory loss and start next year ready to learn? Have your teen:

- **Start a book club.** Members choose which books and how often to meet. Discussing a story with friends—and noticing how it relates to his own life—might spur a love of reading in your teen that carries over into the fall.
- **Learn a new skill.** Your teen can take a cooking class. Or borrow a cookbook from the library and

take over your kitchen. He’ll have fun and (hopefully) enjoy the fruits of his labor.

- **Build vocabulary with a game.** Each week, pick a vocabulary word—like *obfuscate* (to blur or make confusing), *quaff* (to drink down quickly) or *protean* (changeable). Then each person playing the game must slip that word into a conversation during the week. But keep secret the fact that it’s a game—and at the end of the week share stories with other players about weird looks received.

Source: Grace Fleming, “Summer Brain Games For Your Study Group,” About.com: Homework/Study Tips, <http://homeworktips.about.com/od/preparingforcollege/a/summergames.htm>.

Q: My daughter and I used to be very close. But in the last few months, I feel like she has become a stranger. She rolls her eyes when I ask her about school or anything else. I want to remain involved in her life, but she barely talks to me. What should I do?

Questions & Answers

A: You are smart to want to stay involved in your daughter’s life. Experts agree that parent involvement has a positive affect on school success. But there is no need to panic.

Your daughter is just going through a normal phase. And she’s been through a similar phase before. Remember when she was a toddler? Then she shouted “No” and threw tantrums. Now she rolls her eyes.

It’s the same basic behavior. And the things you did when your child was a toddler will, with some adjusting, work now as well:

- **Don’t take it personally.** She’s trying to carve out a new, independent life. And while she still knows that she needs you, she’s not about to admit it. So ignore as much as you can. Stay calm. Don’t answer anger with anger.
- **Set limits.** Don’t allow your child to be disrespectful. Family rules still apply—she can’t insult you, she can’t yell at you, and she has to be polite. If she can’t do that, tell her you aren’t going to listen to what she has to say.
- **Let her know** that you will always be on her side. This truly is a phase. If you were close before, you’ll be close again. For now, let her find her own way—because sooner or later, that way will bring her back.

—Kristen Amudson,
The Parent Institute

It Matters: Summer Learning

Find ways to keep your teen reading all summer long



While your teen may not need to read for school over the summer months, she should still read to keep learning.

Here are some ways you can keep your teen reading:

- **Focus on reading for pleasure.** The most important lesson your teen may learn over the summer is that there are things she likes to read. Whether it's a magazine story about her favorite star or even the Sunday comics, be sure she keeps reading.
- **Make sure she can choose** her own books. During the school year, she has to read the books that are assigned. During the summer, she can "assign herself." Take her to the library. Browse through books to see what catches her eye and her interest.
- **Connect on a different level.** Reading is a good way to let your teen know you are aware she is maturing. Look for an article on a more mature subject and discuss it with her. Or pass along a book you have enjoyed.
- **Read some books** written for teens. You may learn more about the things that are on your teen's mind. These books can often open the door to interesting conversations.
- **Be a good example.** As with so many things, your example is a powerful teacher. So let your teen see you reading for pleasure.

Source: Reading is Fundamental, "How Parents Can Encourage Teens to Read," www.adlit.org/article/23399.

Summer jobs can teach your teenager important lessons

Whether it's lifeguarding at a local pool or flipping burgers, summer jobs can give teens a lot besides a paycheck. They can also teach important lessons.

One of the most important is responsibility. If your teen doesn't show up to sit in the lifeguard chair, kids may not be able to swim.

A summer job can also give your teen a taste of a career. Is she thinking about business? Let her see what it's like to worry about meeting payroll. Does she want to be an actor? A bit part can give her a glimpse of life backstage.

Sometimes, of course, these experiences teach teens that their original career ideas need a little revising. But it's far better to learn she doesn't want to be a vet now than after she has taken two or three years of college classes.



Remember that a "job" doesn't have to involve a paycheck. Some of the best summer experiences come with no salary. But they give teens real responsibility and a chance to work for a cause or issue they believe in.

Source: "Life Outside the Classroom," The College Board, www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/113.html

Be firm, fair & consistent with your teenager's summer curfew



He's had a curfew all school year. But now that school is nearly over, he's coming home later and later.

The summer months can be a time when your teen really tests your limits. If curfew is becoming an issue in your home, here are some steps to take:

- **Check with other parents.** It may be that your curfew is completely out of line with what his friends' rules are. So call other parents to see. You may still decide to stick

with your curfew time, but you may also agree to make some adjustments.

- **Listen.** Try to figure out what your teen is doing when he's staying out late. If you suspect he's hanging with a fast crowd, you may need to be more careful about enforcing the rules.
- **Enforce your rules.** Whatever curfew you decide, stick with it. Your teen should know that when you make a rule, you will hold him to it. And if he breaks it, he will face consequences.