

April 2007

High School 1 YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips

► Popular books

Does your teen have trouble finding books she likes? Ask the librarian which titles are flying off the shelves in the young adult section. Also, find out what books your friends' high schoolers are reading. Bringing home a recommended book just might do the trick.

► Math success

When your high schooler does math homework, encourage him to write out the steps for each problem. That will make it easier for him to spot any mistakes. Many teachers require students to show their work on test problems, anyway. And some will give partial credit for the correct parts even if the answer is wrong.

► DID YOU KNOW?

A recent study shows most teens are using the popular social-networking site *MySpace.com* responsibly. More than 90 percent do not use their full names, and about 40 percent keep their profiles private. For your child's safety, encourage her not to reveal her identity on the Web.

► Worth quoting

"Arriving at one point is the starting point to another."
John Dewey

► Just for fun

Teacher: What did Paul Revere say at the end of his famous ride?

Student:
"Whoa!"



Peer pressure: Standing strong

Your teen attends a party. Someone offers him drugs. Will he cave in to the pressure of fitting in—or stand firm and resist?

Teenagers need a strong foundation to hold out against peer pressure. You can help build it one step at a time with these strategies.

Lay the groundwork.

Talk to your teen before you see signs of a problem. Let him know how you feel about risky activities like drug use, drinking, and teen sex. Passing on your values will give him a moral guide to follow.

Explore his views. Help your high schooler think through his beliefs about what's right and wrong. If pushed to do something, he can ask himself, "Does this fit with who I want to be?"

Think ahead. When your teenager is going out, talk about his plans to handle peer pressure. For instance, he might take along friends who will resist smoking. Or he can avoid parties with kids known to bend the rules.

Back him up. Let your teen know you will be there for him. *Example:* Tell him he can call you for a ride



home—no questions asked—if he finds himself in a tricky situation. When your child knows he can count on you, he's more likely to come to you with a problem. 👍

Practice saying no

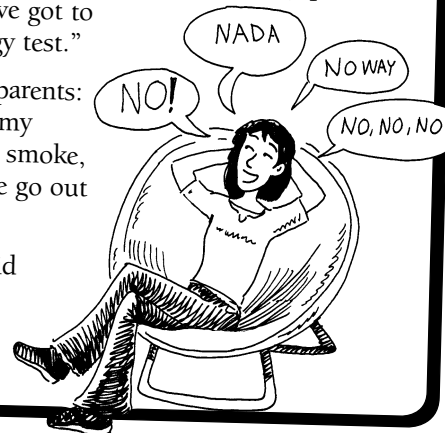
One of the best ways to arm teens against peer pressure is to help them learn to say no. You can role-play at home with these ideas:

■ Try humor: "I like my brain the way it is!" or "Why don't we ground ourselves first? That'll save our parents the trouble!"

■ Use your schedule: "No way. I have early practice tomorrow" or "I've got to study for a biology test."

■ Mention your parents: "No, thanks—if my mom smelled the smoke, she'd never let me go out again!"

■ Be blunt: "I said no. If you can't handle that, I'm leaving." 👍



Speaking of foreign languages...

Whether it's French, Spanish, or German, studying a foreign language isn't like learning other subjects. Students have to master new vocabulary, grammar, and sounds. Use these tips to help your teen along.

Drill for vocabulary

Have your child make flash cards, with the foreign word on one side and the English meaning on the other. Quiz her by saying the English version so she gets practice pronouncing the foreign words.

Learn to listen

Remind your high schooler that listening is an important skill in learning a language. Suggest that she



work with a buddy. One of them can read a question aloud while the other listens. They both write their answers down, and then they switch.

Tape it

To practice speaking, encourage your teen to tape herself reading vocabulary words or text. Listening to the tape will show your child where she needs to improve.

Note: You can inspire your teen to work hard by pointing out interesting career possibilities for people who know a foreign language: teaching, translating, journalism, international business, and foreign service. 👍

Gearing up for summer jobs

Summer is just around the corner, and so is your teen's chance to make money and gain skills. Ask these questions now to help him land the right job:

▲ Does he want to earn top dollar, explore a career, or master a skill? Depending on the answer, he might try to work at a restaurant, seek an internship, or apply for an office job.

▲ What can he offer? Have him list his qualities (reliable, courteous), abilities (computer or research skills), and experiences (past jobs or community service). This will help him point out his strengths during interviews.

▲ Who can help? Encourage your teen to talk to relatives, friends, neighbors, guidance counselors, teachers, and coaches. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to find a job. 👍



Q & A Stop nagging

Q I feel like all I do is nag my teenager, but she never seems to do what I ask. Any suggestions?

A Try sitting down with your teen and agreeing on what you want her to do. Let her know what the consequences will be if she doesn't follow through.

Say you want your child to take out the garbage and bring in the empty cans on trash day. You might leave it up to her what time she does this. But if she forgets, she loses her computer privileges for the night.

Once you've set up a plan, try not to ask, remind, or nag your teen. By being patient and waiting for her to do her part, you'll show that you have confidence in her. 👍



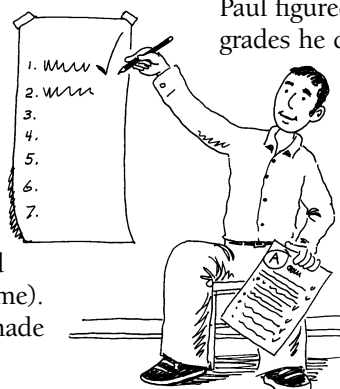
Parent to Parent Staying motivated

I remember last year when my son Paul complained that he was burned out from school. Now that we're heading into spring again, I'm reminding him of what he did to buckle down and succeed.

First, he began writing down things he accomplished each week (got an A on a math quiz, finished his history project on time). Reading the list to me made

Paul feel good, and it also gave me a chance to praise him.

Another thing that helped was when Paul figured out his best-case GPA—the grades he could get if he worked his hardest. That gave him something to shoot for as he faced homework and tests. I'm happy to say he achieved his best-case grades last spring, and we're hoping he'll do the same again this year. 👍



OUR PURPOSE

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

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