

# High School **YEARS**

**Working Together for Lifelong Success**



## Short Clips

### Bite-sized learning

Students learn better if they focus on small amounts of information. Why? Working memory can hold only so much at once. Encourage your high schooler to break material into chunks, such as memorizing periodic table elements a few at a time. Then, he should review the previous group when he starts a new one.

### Holidays in harmony

If you're separated or divorced, your teenager may be spending part of her holiday season in her other parent's home. When making arrangements, try to work together and come up with plans that suit both families. Your child will enjoy her time more with each of you if everyone gets along.

### How courts work

Your teen can see how the judicial system works by watching a trial. You might attend one together at a nearby courthouse. For more hands-on experience, he could join a local peer jury program. After training, he would sit on a teen jury that hears cases of other teens (for nonviolent offenses) and assigns community service hours or other sentences.

### Worth quoting

"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present." *Bil Keane*

### Just for fun

**Q:** When does a polar bear say "moo"?

**A:** When it's learning a new language!



## Resilience empowers me

Derrick learns his dad has lost his job and his family may have to move. It's hard, but he finds a way to cope. Mark finds out he didn't get an internship he really wanted. He stays upset and can't seem to move on.

Derrick demonstrates resilience, which helps him overcome tough times. Use these strategies to help your teen be resilient, too.

### Talk it out

Bottling up emotions keeps your child from dealing with his feelings. He's more likely to stay stuck instead of moving past what's bothering him. Encourage him to reach out to people he trusts, whether it's you, a teacher, a coach, a clergy member, or an uncle. Getting the feelings out may be enough to help him feel better. By talking it through, he might realize there's a solution or that things aren't as bad as they seemed.

### Take action

When challenging situations come his way, it might be harder for your teen to get things done—making his life feel more out of control. Suggest he check



just one thing off his to-do list (complete a missing assignment, apply for a part-time position). It will give him a sense of accomplishment and could help him get on a roll. That way, things won't feel so overwhelming.

### Focus outward

Getting his mind off himself and onto helping others may make his own problems seem smaller. Have him look around for people he might help. He could assist a younger neighbor with a school project or sort donations for a local nonprofit group, for instance. 👍

## Let's communicate

Being a good communicator will help your teenager both in and out of school. She can practice with these everyday ideas:

- Call and make her own doctor, dentist, or hair appointments. She will learn to be brief, get to the point, and speak clearly—all skills good communicators use.
- Introduce herself when meeting someone like a friend's parent or a distant cousin at a family reunion. Encourage her to make eye contact, smile, and make a nice comment or ask a question ("My mom says you write your own music. What kind do you write?").
- Work out disagreements with friends or siblings. Have her focus on listening to the other person's point of view and repeat back what she thinks he said. 👍



# Explore STEM fields

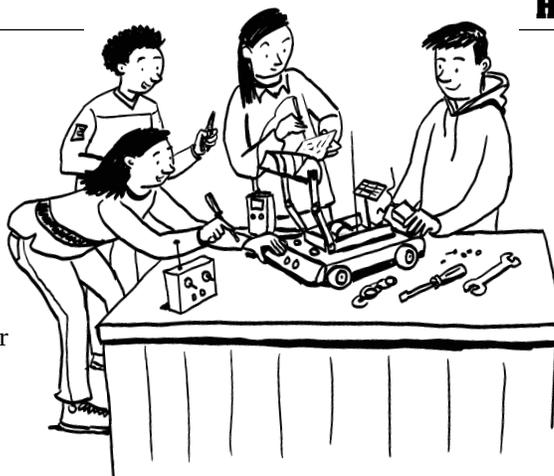
Does your child want a career in a fast-growing field? Jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) are on the rise. Here are ways for her to explore these areas and see if they might be a good fit.

## Courses

Taking STEM classes will help make it clear whether she enjoys the subjects. Plus, she'll get to know teachers who can pinpoint college programs, contests, and scholarships. Have your teen check the course catalog and talk to her school counselor for possibilities like computer science, statistics, calculus, biology, chemistry, environmental science, and physics.

## Clubs

If her high school has a STEM club, encourage her to join it. She will meet like-minded peers and do hands-on activities.



Some clubs even enter team-based competitions in robotics, video-game design, or rocket building, for example. *Hint:* If her school doesn't have a STEM club, she could start one to gain both leadership and STEM experience.

## Projects

Doing STEM activities on her own will help your high schooler investigate the fields, too. Suggest she turn to teachers and the Internet for ideas, from testing friction to making her own wind turbine. She might even pick an in-depth project to use for the science fair. 👍

# Scenarios for new drivers

So your teenager has his driver's license. Before he sits behind the wheel on his own, go over "what ifs" like these.

*What if he gets a text while he's driving?*

Tell him not to read or respond—even if he thinks it might be from you. Since hearing an alert might tempt him to look, have him silence his phone or use an app that disables texting while driving. He could also put his phone out of reach (say, in the glove compartment or trunk).



*What if he has a fender bender?*

He should pull over to the right shoulder or into a parking lot, put his hazard lights on, and call 911. Police may or may not be sent, but either way, he will need to exchange insurance information with the other driver. Also, tell him to take photos and get names and phone numbers of witnesses. Finally, he should call you and the insurance company. 👍

## OUR PURPOSE

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

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## Parent to Parent

### Priceless presents

Last fall, my 17-year-old son found a bag of old VHS tapes in a closet. He asked what they were, and I explained they were videos of family events like his third-grade play and his grandparents' 50th anniversary party. I said we couldn't watch them since we didn't have a VCR anymore. But Josh said he could probably find a way to transfer them to DVD.

He looked into it and discovered how to put them onto our computer and burn them to DVDs. He just borrowed a neighbor's old VCR and got an adapter. He had fun figuring it out, and once he got going, he even decided to make copies for relatives as gifts this holiday season.

The two of us enjoyed watching the videos together later, and family members appreciated his thoughtfulness. Best of all, Josh learned he can do something if he puts his mind to it—and he gained a few skills along the way. 👍



## Q&A

### Ways to reduce test anxiety

**Q** My daughter gets very nervous about taking tests. How can I help her get past the anxiety?

**A** Let her know that a little nervousness is perfectly normal. But she doesn't want it to keep her from thinking clearly while she takes tests.

Your daughter may be putting pressure on herself that is causing anxiety. Encourage her to replace thoughts like "I have to do well on this!"

with ones that take the pressure off ("All that matters is that I do my best").

Also, having a plan will make your child feel calmer. For instance, starting her studying ahead of time will boost her confidence that she knows the material.

And avoiding caffeine leading up to a test can keep her from being jittery. Let her know, too, that getting enough sleep the night before will make her more rested and alert. 👍

