

# High School **YEARS**

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Make an exam plan

Now's the time for your high schooler to look at her exam schedule and plan study sessions. Have her write test dates on her calendar and consider her commitments in the weeks before. She might need to reschedule shifts at her job or postpone weekend plans to be sure she has time to study.

### Be a spring volunteer

The end of the school year brings lots of events—and parent volunteers may be needed. Search the school website or check with the PTA or PTO to find out how you can help. Maybe you could distribute fundraiser orders, set up and take down chairs for your teen's band concert, or hand out water at his cross-country meet.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Eating behind the wheel is one of the most common forms of distracted driving. And distracted drivers are more likely to get into accidents because their full attention is not on the road. Set an example for your new or soon-to-be driver by waiting until you're parked to pull a snack out of your bag—and make sure she does the same.

### Worth quoting

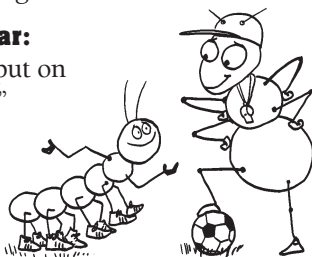
"Forever is composed of nows."  
Emily Dickinson

### Just for fun

**Coach:** "Why are you late for the game?"

### Caterpillar:

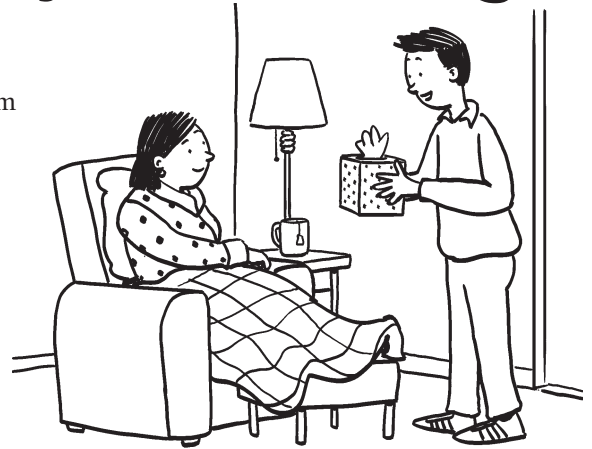
"I had to put on my shoes."



## Everyday ways to encourage empathy

Kevin and Jack came home from school and saw their mom on the couch, coughing and sniffing. Kevin headed to his room to text friends. Jack asked his mother if she needed anything.

Jack showed empathy—he understood how his mom felt and wanted to help her. Here's how to nurture empathy in your teen.



### Talk about emotions

Discuss how others might be feeling—good *or* bad. For example, if a neighbor has a new baby, point out how happy the family must feel. Or if your teen wants to skip Grandma's birthday party, ask, "How do you think Grandma would feel if you don't show up?" Once he imagines his grandmother's disappointment, he may decide to go after all.

### Make "I" statements

When conflicts occur, have your teen focus on the feelings behind them. If he and his sister argue, they could take turns using "I" statements to explain how they feel. ("I feel frustrated when you close the

tabs I had open on the computer.") Your children will learn to see things from someone else's point of view.

### Empathize with strangers

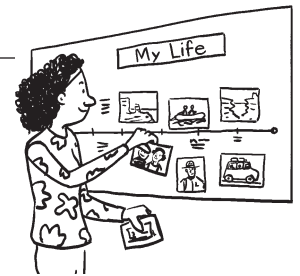
Current events can help your teenager practice putting himself in someone else's place. If tornadoes destroy homes elsewhere in the country, discuss how it would feel to lose your home in the blink of an eye. If he were in that situation, what would he want others to do? He might say that he'd appreciate donated clothes—and then decide to lead a clothing drive for the tornado survivors. 👍

## "I'm part of history"

Show your teenager that she's living through history that future students will study. She's sure to get excited about history with these activities.

■ **Create a time line.** Ask your child to make a time line of important events in her life ("My first word," "Our Grand Canyon trip"). Next, she could research historical events in her lifetime and add those to her time line. What was happening in her life when YouTube debuted in 2005?

■ **Watch for history being made.** Challenge family members to name current events that might go on a "This Day in History" calendar 100 years from now. Maybe your teen will name a record set in her favorite sport or the invention of a new type of vehicle. 👍



# Add flair to presentations

Encourage your high schooler to add new dimensions to her next class presentation. These ideas will help her learn more about her topic—and develop presentation skills to use in college or in her career.

**Use a primary source.** Your teenager could record herself interviewing someone with first-hand knowledge of her topic, then work sound bites or video clips into her presentation. For a civics project on local community



service projects, maybe she'll interview an employee at the United Way.

**Quiz the audience.** Suggest that your child make her presentation interactive by including slides with multiple-choice questions. Displaying them will be an interesting way to support her point. If her science project is about bacteria, a question might be, "How many bacteria are on the average toothbrush?" She can read each possible answer and have classmates raise their hands for the one they think is right.

**Bring it to life.** Encourage your teen to include a performance or demonstration. Ahead of time, she could ask

a classmate to help her act out a scene from a novel during her English class presentation. Or she might show how to make a cantilever if she gives an engineering presentation on bridges. 👍



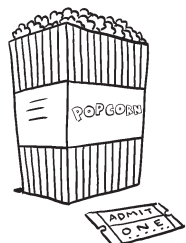
## Q & A TV and movies: What's okay?

**Q** My 15-year-old son says "all" his friends watch R-rated movies and TV-MA shows. How can I decide what's appropriate for him?

**A** Every family and every child is different. Tell your son that you consider his maturity level and your family's values when you decide what he can watch. For example, you may be okay with his seeing films or programs that contain mild language but not sexual situations.

When he wants to see a particular movie or show, read reviews together to

decide whether it's appropriate. After all, he'll soon make his own decisions about what to watch, so talking through choices with him now can help.



If you let him watch a more mature movie or show, consider watching it with him (or on your own if he'll see it with friends). Then, discuss it afterward to help him put it in perspective. 👍

## Stretch your boundaries

"Notice: You are now leaving your comfort zone." That's the feeling your teen may have when he tries something new. But taking a "good risk" can build confidence and broaden his horizons. Share these suggestions:

- Try a new fitness activity like racquetball, or take one of your current interests to the next level (plan a canoe trip, join an outdoor club).
- Run for office, such as student council representative, robotics club treasurer, or 4-H club president.
- Sign up for an elective that's unusual for you, perhaps poetry writing or astronomy.
- Get to know someone outside your group of friends. For example, invite a new student to eat lunch, or ask a classmate from the chess club to go roller skating. 👍



## Parent to Parent Hanging out with your teen

Like many teenagers, my daughter Brenda spends a lot of time in her room. When I noticed her playing hearts on her laptop, I mentioned that my brother and I loved playing the real-life card game as kids. I told her about our family's lively game nights, and she said they sounded fun.

That Friday night, we gathered around the table to play hearts. I think Brenda enjoyed

our game more than the computer version. Then my wife said that her childhood favorite was canasta. She couldn't remember all the rules, so Brenda looked them up online, and we decided to play the following week.

It's hard to believe that a simple deck of cards quickly led to a Friday night card game tradition in our household. Next up, gin rummy! 👍



### OUR PURPOSE

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

Resources for Educators,  
a division of CCH Incorporated  
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630  
800-394-5052 • rfeustomer@wolterskluwer.com  
www.rfeonline.com  
ISSN 1540-5605