

High School YEARS

Working together for lifelong success

Short Clips



Graduation gifts

Help your high schooler choose budget-friendly graduation gifts for friends. She could put together photo collages of times they've shared. A student who's going to college or moving away might appreciate blank CDs, a travel mug for hot drinks, a book light, or a sewing repair kit.

Social networking for parents

More and more parents are joining social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace. Consider creating a profile on the site your teen uses. If she'll add you to her "friends" list, you will have a new way to communicate with her. Even if she doesn't, you will understand more about her online world—and you might connect with some of *your* old friends.

Early-bird applicants

Is your child planning on going to college this fall? Encourage him to start working on applications over the summer. Some college applications are posted online as early as July. Filling out forms and writing college essays will be easier when he's not busy with school.

Worth quoting

"You can never cross the ocean unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

Christopher Columbus

Just for fun

Q: Why are there so many Smiths in the phone book?

A: They all have phones.



Busy minds

If your teen keeps her mind active during summer break, she'll find it easier to learn when she returns to school. Here are several ideas.

Start a blog

Your child can write a blog to tell friends and relatives what she's doing this summer. She'll practice writing skills, expand her vocabulary, and use critical thinking as she decides what to include. Suggest that she focus on one topic, such as her summer job or volunteer activities. Or she might write poetry or keep a "diary" for her pet—with dialogue in her dog's voice. *Tip:* Many blogging sites, such as www.blogger.com, www.livejournal.com, and <http://wordpress.com>, are free.

Enter a contest

Encourage your teen to keep an eye on the newspaper for local competitions that spark her interest. She could participate in a chess tournament, enter a photography contest, or do a craft project for a county fair. Help her prepare by going over the rules and deadlines together and discussing ideas.

Plan a trip

Ask your child to help you make plans for an outing. If you're going to an art museum, for instance, she could read a book about a featured artist. Then, during your visit, she can tell you what she has learned. Or if you're taking a trip, have her use her math skills to calculate the distance and cost of gas. She could also help you find a campground or motel and research excursions your family might enjoy. 👍



Final checklist

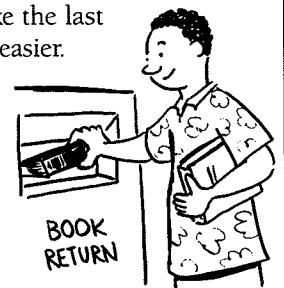
The last day of school is approaching fast. Give your child this checklist to help her take care of end-of-year details:

Take bags to empty your locker. Doing a little each day for the final week will make the last day of school easier.

Return textbooks to teachers and library books to the media center.

Wash and return sports uniforms, and turn in equipment.

Write a thank-you note to a guidance counselor who helped you or a drama teacher who stayed after rehearsal to go over your lines with you. 👍



Work lessons

A summer job can really pay off. In addition to earning money, your teen will build a work ethic and an understanding of the importance of a job well done. Share these tips with your teen for finding and keeping a job.

■ **Search thoroughly.** Many people land jobs through someone they know. Your teenager should think about his strengths and interests, and then talk to teachers, coaches, and neighbors to see if they know of any jobs. He can also check newspaper and online listings, look for help-wanted



job for future school breaks, this is a good time to ask. 👍

signs in windows, and walk into stores or restaurants to ask about openings.

■ **Work hard.** Whatever job your teen gets, remind him to take his responsibilities seriously. He can make a good impression by arriving on time. He should write his schedule on a calendar at home or put it in the scheduler on his cell phone. Also, encourage him to dive in and do what needs to be done—without waiting to be asked or told.

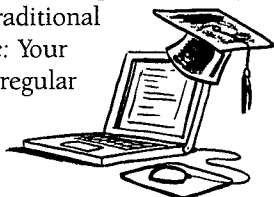
Note: If your child plans to stop work when school begins, he should give his employer at least two weeks' notice. If he'd like to keep the

College on the Web

Online classes are a good alternative for some students. These questions and answers can help your child decide if they're right for her.

1. Who can learn online?

Online learners should be self-motivated and organized. Unless the school offers video lectures, your teen must be able to learn mostly by reading. A student who learns best by listening and receiving hands-on guidance might do better in a traditional classroom. *Note:* Your child will need regular access to a computer and the Internet.



2. Why try this option?

Your child can learn on her own time. This is especially helpful if she's working. Distance learning is also one way to take classes before transferring to a four-year college. And although the classes may cost the same, she won't have transportation and room and board costs.

3. How do you find a program?

Your teen's guidance counselor can recommend schools, or she can look online at www.bestcollegesonline.com or www.elearners.com. 👍

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 Spreading rumors

One day I overheard my daughter Lily gossiping about a classmate. When I talked to her about it, she said everyone does it. I told her that didn't make it okay. I explained that gossiping and rumors are hurtful and mean.

Then, I asked Lily to put herself in her classmate's place and imagine how she would feel. She admitted that she'd be embarrassed and her feelings would be hurt. So we talked about ways she could respond the next time someone told her a rumor—for example, she might ignore the person and walk away.

The other night when Lily was talking on the phone, I heard her say, "Don't you have anything more interesting to talk about?" She told me her friend said something nasty about one of her classmates—and that refusing to discuss it made her feel good. 👍



Q & A Dating advice

Q Our son is spending a lot of time with his girlfriend. How can we make sure they're safe?

A Consider setting guidelines, such as letting him go out with his girlfriend once during the week and once on the weekend. Be sure you know where they are going, and give your son a curfew for coming home.

Help keep their dating safe by encouraging them to "group date" and to go to public places like the bowling alley or out for pizza. Suggest that they share things they like to do, such as inline skating

or playing video games. Also, have your son invite his girlfriend over when you're home—that way you can get to know her and keep an eye on them.

Finally, talk with your son about the responsibility that comes with dating, including treating each other with respect. Discuss the serious risks, such as pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Be sure to let him know he can talk to you anytime he has questions or concerns. 👍

