

# High School 1 YEARS

Working Together for Lifelong Success



## Short Clips

### Family fitness

Spring has sprung! Take advantage of the warmer weather by starting a family fitness challenge. Have everyone set one-month goals (walking, push-ups), and post a chart for tracking your progress. When the month ends, celebrate your success with a picnic or a day at the pool, and then set another challenge!

### Keep up the routine

As the school year winds down, try to encourage your teen to stick to a routine. Continuing to have specific times to study and do homework will help him feel calm and in control as his schedule fills up with year-end projects and events. To stay motivated, he could try a change of scenery, such as studying outside or with friends at the library.

### New drivers

When your child gets her driver's license, consider having this "what if?" conversation. For example, what if she has a fender bender? (She should call you or come home right away.) What if she gets a ticket? (She might have to pay her own fine or lose car privileges.)

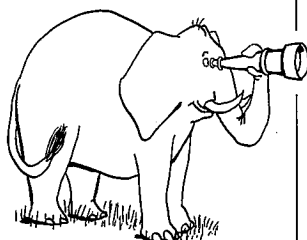
### Worth quoting

"I think the next best thing to solving a problem is finding some humor in it." *Frank Howard Clark*

### Just for fun

**Q:** What's the difference between an African elephant and an Indian elephant?

**A:** About 3,000 miles!



## Reality reading

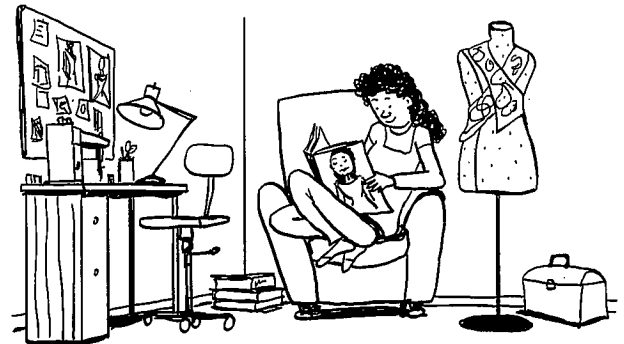
Does your teen like reality TV shows? With these ideas, you can show her another form of entertainment that is a lot more educational: reality reading, otherwise known as nonfiction!

### It's interesting!

She may hear "non-fiction" and think "boring." Point out that whatever she's passionate about, she can read about. There are books and articles on everything from fashion history to *Titanic* survival stories. She will see that nonfiction can teach her about the world—and make life more interesting.

### It's real!

Show your teen the real-world connections between nonfiction and her life. Say she loves animals and wants to be a vet. She could read a book like *The Rhino with Glue-On Shoes and Other Surprising, True Stories of Zoo Vets and Their Patients* by Lucy Spelman. If she wants to end



world hunger, she might read about sustainable agriculture—and learn how she could have an impact one day.

### It's everywhere!

Seeing what other teens are reading may inspire her to pick up a book she wouldn't have read otherwise. Suggest that your high schooler ask her friends if they've read any good nonfiction lately. She can also search the library's online catalog for books based on her interests ("spies," "foreign films"). Or she could find recommendations online at sites like [ala.org/yalsa/nonfiction-award](http://ala.org/yalsa/nonfiction-award). 👍

## Making the college decision

For college-bound students, now is the time for committing to a school. Here are ways for your senior to handle the responses he receives:

- **Acceptances.** Help him compare his choices based on financial aid, academic programs, location, and student life. Consider visiting campuses to get a close-up look (or to look again)—some even have special days for accepted students.
- **Rejections.** Tell him it's okay to feel disappointed, and give him time to get over it. *Idea:* Put your teen in touch with someone who didn't get into a first-choice college but wound up happy elsewhere.
- **Wait lists.** If your child really wants to attend, he should contact the school to stay on the wait list. To improve his chances, he can send updates on awards, published poetry, or grades. *Note:* He should accept another college's offer in the meantime. Also, financial aid may not be available if your child gets in late. 👍



# Job-seeking success

Part-time work provides teenagers with job experience and a constructive way to spend free time. Your teen can find a good fit by displaying these traits.

**Be persistent.** Following up will help your child stand out in a crowded job market. When he fills out applications, he should introduce himself to managers and point out qualifications (“I fish with my dad and know about outdoor equipment”). Then, he can email, call,



or stop by in person to ask for an interview or check on the timeline for hiring. After an interview, be sure that he emails promptly to thank the person for her time and to stress his interest in the position.

**Be professional.** Presenting himself professionally will give your teen an edge. Suggest that he have others proofread his resume to make sure it is clear, concise, and error-free. When he visits businesses, whether to inquire about work, drop off a resume, or have an interview, he should dress nicely and be polite to everyone. Employees at all levels may give input on who gets hired. 👍

## Q & A Tweets for learning



**Q** My daughter loves Twitter, but it seems like a waste of time to me. Is there a way she could use it for learning?

**A** Many kids love Twitter because they can “follow” both friends and famous people, and their friends can “follow” them. Since writers, researchers, professors, and others use the site, it can also give your student access to an incredible network of experts for her schoolwork or personal knowledge.

Suggest that your daughter search for experts to follow, such as a favorite novelist



or authorities on a topic she’s studying in school. By following them, she will be able to see anything they post. If she posts a comment or question, they may even “tweet” back.

Your teen can also follow news outlets to learn about breaking news quickly. Or she can follow organizations that post on topics she cares about, from outer space to climate change. 👍

## Prom concerns

Attending junior or senior prom can provide you and your child with special memories. But it can also bring headaches. Prepare for the big night with these tips.

### Expenses

The bill for prom night can include formal wear, tickets, dinner, limos, flowers, hairstyling, manicures, and pedicures. Talk about whether you will cover any expenses and which ones. Also, help your teen look for affordable alternatives like buying a dress from a consignment shop or having the girls do each other’s nails.

### Safety

Set up a time for your teen to check in, and tell her you will pick her up anytime—no questions asked—if she feels unsafe. Make sure she knows absolutely not to drive with anyone who has been drinking. Also, call parents in her group to discuss after-prom parties, including how teens will be supervised and how alcohol will be kept out. 👍



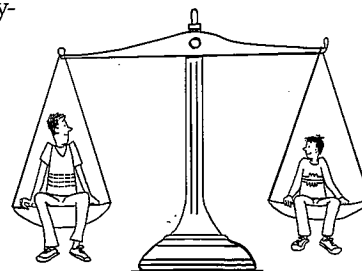
## Parent to Parent What’s fair?

My two teenage sons were constantly saying, “That’s not fair!” It seemed one always felt the other had something he didn’t, from easier chores to better privileges. I felt guilty and frustrated trying to keep them happy.

Then I read in a parenting magazine that being fair doesn’t mean you treat children equally—it means you do what’s right for each child. Siblings have different

personalities and circumstances, so the way parents handle them will differ, too.

I shared the article with my sons and pointed out examples, such as one having more computer time when a project was due and the other getting extra spending money to use on a field trip. Now, when one of them says something isn’t fair, I remind them of that talk. Hopefully, it is sinking in. 👍

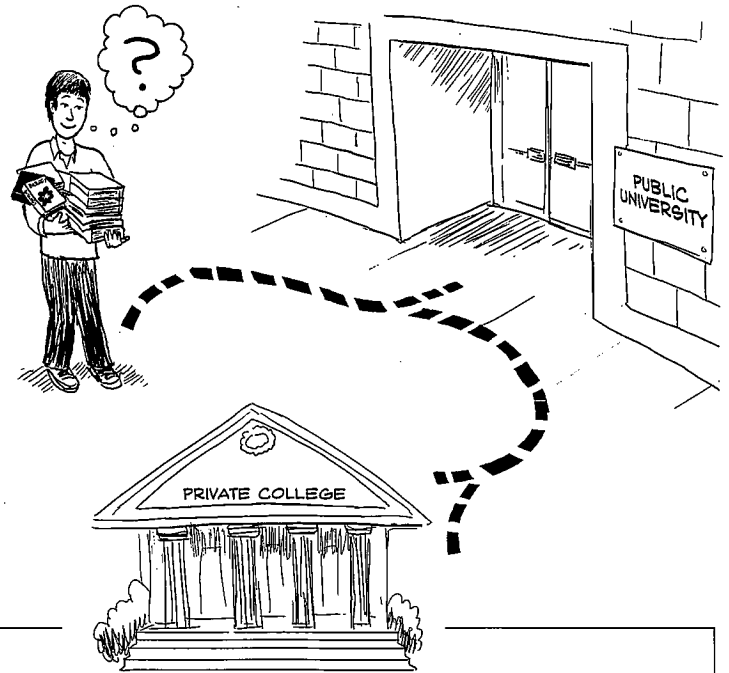


**OUR PURPOSE**

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

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# \$\$\$ for College



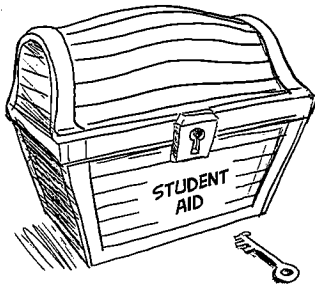
When it comes to paying for college, sometimes the road less traveled is one that will lead to unexpected money. Applying for federal student aid is a critical first step for all students, but beyond that, there are many ways to bring the cost down.

Here are suggestions for finding money for college and the best value for your dollars.

## EXPLORE OPTIONS

Is your teen interested in a small school or a large one? Something close to home or far away? A private college or a state university? Each kind of school comes with its own set of financial challenges and opportunities.

Encourage your child to apply to colleges that are good matches, and then compare the final costs after aid is awarded.



### In-state vs. out-of-state

First, look at choices in your home state. Smaller or less popular campuses might have a lower price tag than the flagship school. If your teenager is a good student, he could be awarded significant aid or a substantial discount as an incentive to stay in state.

Then, investigate out-of-state colleges:

- Compare tuition. If you live in a state with high tuition, you might be able to match it with out-of-state tuition at a lower-cost state system.
- Think about geography. Schools trying to increase their out-of-state diversity might award aid to students from underrepresented states. A southwestern college, for example, might want more New Englanders.

• Ask about reciprocity. Some state university systems have agreements with neighboring states to grant in-state tuition. *Example:* The Midwest Student Exchange Program ([www.mhec.org](http://www.mhec.org)) offers discounts to students in 12 states.

• Students with good grades may qualify for an honors program — and a scholarship — at an out-of-state public university. Is there an area of the country where your child has always dreamed of living?

You can encourage him to apply to schools there.

*Note:* Remember to count transportation costs (gas, airfare) when thinking about schools that are farther away.

### Public vs. private

You may be surprised to learn that private schools don't always end up costing more than public ones. Higher-priced schools may have more scholarship money available, so if your child gets a grant, your out-of-pocket tuition might not be more.

### On-campus vs. off-campus

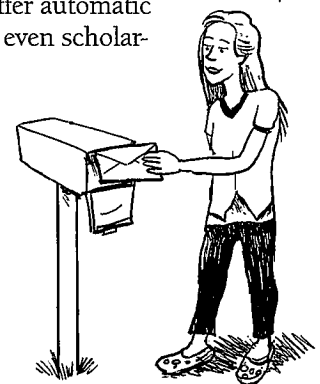
Living in a dorm can be a great way to experience college life, but the cost for room and board may be high.

Students might consider working at the dorm's front desk or apply to be a resident advisor to defray costs. As an alternative, some kids choose to share expenses with roommates in a nearby apartment. Another option is to live at home and commute — just be sure to add in the costs associated with the drive (insurance, gas, maintenance).

### Two-year vs. four-year

Community colleges offer a great way to complete two years of education for less money. Many four-year state schools offer automatic admission and even scholarships to community college graduates who transfer in.

Your teen will have a better shot of getting into school — and save dramatically on half of her education.



*Tip:* You and your child can find out about individual colleges by talking to her guidance counselor, reading college directories at a library, or looking online at [www.collegeview.com/college-search/index.jsp](http://www.collegeview.com/college-search/index.jsp) or [www.edref.com](http://www.edref.com).

**FIND FUNDS**



need separate applications. For links to state agencies, visit [http://wdcrocolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org\\_list.cfm?category\\_ID=SHE](http://wdcrocolp01.ed.gov/Programs/EROD/org_list.cfm?category_ID=SHE).

**Merit-based awards**

It's never too early to start thinking about winning awards based on grades. Encourage your teenager to do

his best from freshman year on. Upon admission, schools may award money based on his grades.

**Career-based awards**

What does your child want to be when she grows up? Having an answer can get her the money she needs for college.

Perhaps she wants to be a teacher. She could apply for a federal TEACH grant or look into the Teach for America program. In return for tuition help, she'll teach in a high-need area. For details, see [www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/TEACH.jsp](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/TEACH.jsp) or [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org).

Maybe your teen's interested in a math or science career. She can work toward a federal SMART grant, which awards money to college juniors and seniors majoring in subjects such as math, science, engineering, technology, or one of several foreign languages ([www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/SmartGrants.jsp](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/SmartGrants.jsp)).

**Other awards**

Is your child left-handed or a skateboarder? Does he know how to call ducks or like to illustrate science fiction? There may be a scholarship just for him.

Many specialized scholarships are given away each year. They may be

tied to crafts (National Make It with Wool Competition), hobbies (National Marbles Tournament Scholarship), academic interests (Collegiate Inventors Competition), or community service (The Heart of America Foundation's Christopher Reeve Award). Have your teen check in the guidance office or online.

**Look here!**

If your child needs money for college, steer him to multiple sources. The more leads he follows, the better his chance of finding financial assistance. Here are several ideas:

- Sign up with a free online service such as [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) or [http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch\\_ss/welcome.jsp](http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp). These sites help match your teen to scholarships. You can find links to more online scholarship directories and information about unusual scholarships at [www.finaid.org/scholarships](http://www.finaid.org/scholarships). *Note:* Beware of scholarship scams. You should not have to pay a service to locate scholarship information for you.
- Browse the financial-aid sections of Web sites of colleges you're interested in. Many schools require only one application for a long list of scholarships.
- Check with employers, unions, religious groups, sports leagues, community centers, nonprofit organizations, business groups, and local companies.
- Stop by your guidance counselor's office frequently. New scholarship opportunities come out all year long.
- Use word of mouth. Ask older friends and neighbors where they had luck finding money for college.
- Look in newspapers for scholarship announcements and deadlines.



**Grants and scholarships**

The variety of grants and scholarships available is almost endless. The best advice is to apply, apply, apply—your child has the chance to win only what she goes after. And when it comes to college funds, every penny counts. Although a

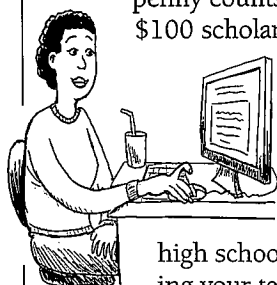
\$100 scholarship may not sound like much, small awards can add up. Some programs are open to all

high school students, giving your teen four years to build up funds.

**Need-based awards**

Regardless of income, all families should file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to see if they're eligible for any federal grants, loans, or work-study assistance. Colleges and states use the FAFSA to determine financial awards, too. Visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) for details, deadlines, and online applications.

Check individual colleges and states for their aid deadlines—they may be earlier than the federal one—and to see if they have aid programs that



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