

PORT BARRE HIGH SCHOOL

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Founded 1914



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Vision: Port Barre High School shall provide a positive environment where students and staff will be accountable for recognizing and achieving their fullest potential and providing a positive contribution to society.

Helping Students Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

St. Landry Parish School Board - Title I



HIGH SCHOOL

September 2019

Review strategies that will help your teen study smart this year

Studying is a big part of learning in high school. But does your teen know how to study effectively? Not all students do. And those that don't may spend more time than they need to on their schoolwork. They may also get frustrated and stop trying.

As a new school year begins, review effective study strategies with your teen. Encourage her to:

- **Take notes in class.** Even if your teen is given a class outline or handout, writing down what the teacher says will help her understand what's important. Reviewing her notes every day will also help her remember what she's learning.
- **Break study sessions up.** Research shows that frequent short study sessions spaced out over time are more effective than one long session.
- **Separate similar subjects.** If your teen has been studying math formulas, have her study history or English before turning her attention to science formulas.
- **Eliminate distractions.** Make sure your teen takes care of hunger and thirst, and turns off the TV and her phone before sitting down to study.
- **Avoid getting sidetracked.** If your teen finds her mind wandering, she can keep a pad on her desk and jot down reminders or random ideas, and then get right back to studying.



Nurture new critical thinking abilities

In the high school years, teens are learning to think in a more complex way. This is often reflected in their interests, outlook and even their behavior.

Your teen is developing:

- **Advanced reasoning skills.** Your student is able to think about hypothetical situations and multiple possibilities.
 - **Abstract thinking skills.** He can think about intangible concepts, such as *justice*.
 - **The ability to think** about thinking. This allows your teen to consider how he is processing what he is learning and feeling.
- To support his emerging skills:
- **Discuss your teen's views** on the world—and your own. Ask about his political ideas and spiritual beliefs. Withhold judgment.
 - **Listen to his concerns.** If he says you wouldn't understand, suggest that he turn to a trusted family friend for advice.
 - **Encourage your teen** to get involved with issues he feels strongly about.

Teach your teen to handle mistakes responsibly

Being a responsible student doesn't mean your teen has to be perfect. Responsible students make mistakes all the time. But they don't just shrug them off. Let your teen know you expect her to:

- **Admit** mistakes.
- **Make** corrections and amends, if needed.
- **Learn** from mistakes so she can avoid making them again.



To motivate your student, show that you value school

Teens care more about school when they know their parents care about it. To show your teen that his education matters to you:

- **Meet his teachers.** Plan to attend back-to-school events.
- **Ask him about school.** Discuss classes, teachers and things he's learning. Do this every day, all year long.
- **Support him** on special occasions at school. Attend his games, concerts or speeches whenever you can.

Turn your teen on to STEM

Taking challenging math, technology, engineering and science (STEM) classes in high school gives teens more options in college and the workplace. To get your teen excited about STEM:

- **Show her how** it relates to her interests. If she loves mobile apps, she might enjoy learning to develop her own.
- **Help her discover** in-demand STEM careers. Visit www.napequity.org/stemcareers.



Source: C.S. Rozek and others, "Utility-value intervention with parents increases students' STEM preparation and career pursuit," *PNAS*, National Academy of Sciences.



Q&A How can I tell if my teen is trying to do too much?

Q: My son has a tough schedule this year. He's taking advanced classes. He also plays two sports, holds down a part-time job and volunteers every week. He says he needs these activities to get into college. How should I handle this?

A: Your son is making choices and learning how to set priorities. These are necessary steps for his independence. But you can help him think through his decisions by asking him two important questions:

1. Do you have any downtime? All teens need a little unscheduled time each week to relax, to hang out with family and friends and to daydream.

2. Do you enjoy your activities? Colleges aren't looking for students who plod through activities they don't like just to pad their applications. They are more interested in seeing growth and a connection between your teen's activities and his passions.



If your teen's grades start to slip, get more involved. Help him rethink what he is doing and make some changes. Remind him that schoolwork is his first priority. Suggest that he drop activities he doesn't really care about. And make it clear that you love your teen for who he is, not what he does.

Create a high school plan

In order to choose classes wisely, your teen will need to keep his future goals in mind. Making a plan now for the rest of his high school career will help him stay on track. With your teen:

- 1. Learn** about high school graduation requirements.
- 2. Find out** about college admission requirements. These may include more classes (and more rigorous ones) than are required for graduation.
- 3. Plan** when he will take each class he needs. This lets your teen see where he has room to be flexible in his choices.



Call for respectful behavior

It's normal for teens to get upset with their parents and teachers. But that doesn't mean that rolling eyes, shouting and using foul language is appropriate.

Tell your teen that having strong feelings is OK, but being disrespectful isn't—at home or at school. Set boundaries: You will be happy to hear her out when she can speak respectfully.

Resist the 'helicopter' urge

When it comes to schoolwork, it's important for your high schooler to take the lead. Studies show that when parents take over, students' self-image and school performance can suffer. To help without hovering:

- **Give your teen responsibility** for doing homework. Ask him about it, but don't check on him every 15 minutes.
- **Encourage your teen to try** to solve issues at school. Let him talk to his teacher about a poor grade.
- **Tell your teen that you think** he has the ability to manage his schoolwork.

Source: K. Reed and others, "Helicopter Parenting and Emerging Adult Self-Efficacy: Implications for Mental and Physical Health," *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, Springer US.

Parent Quiz

Are you starting the year off right?

Your teen's journey toward success in school this year begins on the first day. Are you providing the guidance that will support her on her way? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

___ **1. Have you asked** your teen to establish a regular homework and study time?

___ **2. Have you made sure** your teen has a calendar she can use to keep track of assignment due dates and test dates?

___ **3. Have you discussed** your family rules with your teen? As she matures, adjust the rules as necessary.

___ **4. Do you schedule** family time, and expect your teen to participate? Close ties to family give teens confidence to face challenges at school.

___ **5. Do you encourage** your teen to invite friends to your home? That way, you can get to know them.

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are setting the stage for a successful school year. For each no, try that idea.

*"Begin with the end in mind."
—Stephen Covey*

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