

Ten tips for supporting your child in their first year of high school



1. Help them organize their binder

- a. Make sure they have dividers
- b. Check backpack for loose paper
- c. Ask them how they organize. Where is new work going?

2. Make agenda use habitual

- a. If they don't have any homework, have them write "English: No homework". Form good habits.
- b. Have a routine where they check their agendas when doing homework.
- c. Agenda always stays in backpack when not in use.

3. Pack bag at night

- a. Again, habit forming. One last check to make sure everything is completed and packed. Not forgetting things when they're scrambling in the morning.

4. Don't hesitate to check in with a teacher.

- a. Sometimes parents notice when kids are struggling before the teacher does. We appreciate hearing from parents.
- b. When kids need to be in a specific class for PLT ask the teacher if they can hold a spot for them.

5. ...BUT...Encourage them to ask questions and advocate for themselves

- a. Teachers are there to help.
- b. Grade 8s are often scared to ask questions.
- c. Remind them that their teachers just want to help them

6. Put limits on cell phone use.

- a. Sleep- don't let them sleep with their cell phone.
- b. Avoid doing homework with cell phone nearby
- c. Focus Friend App
- d. Talk to them about **why**.
- e. Do they need a cell phone for high school? No.

7. Sleep

- a. So much brain development is still happening.
- b. Marked decrease in academic performance in kids who don't sleep well.

- c. Cumulative effect- they get behind and have to catch up so stay up later which results in them missing more during the school day and having to spend more time at home catching up.
- d. Often contributes to anxiety and poor mental health.

7b. ...But how?

- a. Make sure they aren't starting their homework too late.
- b. Be mindful about overscheduling them
- c. Avoid screen time before bed.
- d. Encourage them to find ways to be better sleepers- Many strategies can be found online (physical activity, routine, diet, breathing exercises, etc...)

8. Encourage reading:

- a. Have books around- book shelf, library books, etc.
- b. Model- be reading yourself. Make sure they see you reading.
- c. Discuss reading- read the same thing as them, whether it be a novel or a newspaper article, and discuss. Ask lots of questions.

9. Encourage a growth mindset.

- a. Avoid focussing on final outcomes and focus instead on process and effort.
- b. If they're disappointed, encourage them to use it as a learning opportunity. Discuss ways they could do things differently to find better results next time.

10. Talk to your kids about AI.

- a. Chat GPT and generative AI are changing our world and they're changing our kids learning.
- b. Most kids do not have the maturity and self-regulation to think about what's best for them long term, and when given the option to do something the easy way, they will often take it, no understanding how this will impact their learning and development.
- c. Generative AI can be a helpful study tool. It can act as a personal tutor. Show your kids how it can help them study. Guide them in its use.
- d. Talk to them about the consequences of taking the easy way out and using it to produce work that should be their own. It's not just about cheating. Most HW is meant to help kids practice skills. Using AI to complete work means they are not developing those skills.