

CENTRAL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL **INSTILLING PRIDE, INSPIRING OTHERS**

MS. VLACH'S **COUGAR CONNECTION**

APRIL IN ACTION: LEARNING, LEADING, ACHIEVING

April brings one of the busiest and most exciting times of the year at Central Valley Schools, as our students are actively engaged in a wide range of opportunities both in and out of the classroom. From academic assessments to extracurricular competitions, this time of year highlights the hard work and dedication of our students and staff. As we move through the month, spring testing is well underway. Our juniors have completed the ACT, while sophomores will be taking the PreACT. Students in grades 7–8 are participating in the NSCAS assessments, and all students will continue MAP testing as the month progresses. These assessments provide valuable insight into student learning and help guide our continued focus on improving achievement, particularly in our school improvement goal of increasing reading comprehension.

Beyond the classroom, our students continue to excel in a variety of activities. Participation remains strong in Track and Field and Golf, with many students representing Central Valley with pride. We are especially proud of our state-level accomplishments, including Emalee Leth and Laretta Davis qualifying for State Speech, and Lauren Diessner earning her State FFA Degree. Our students will also represent our school at State FCCLA. In addition, both our junior high and high school students have been actively involved in scholastic contests, quiz bowls, and Science Olympiad, earning recognition in multiple areas. These experiences reflect not only student achievement but also their commitment to growth, leadership, and teamwork. And looking ahead, we are excited for upcoming events such as the conference and district music contests and concerts, where our students will have the opportunity to showcase their talents and dedication.

At the same time, we have already begun planning for the upcoming school year. Work is underway to develop student schedules and finalize important calendar dates, while continuing to align our efforts with our literacy goals and overall school improvement plan.

Finally, we remain committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for all students and staff. This includes conducting monthly fire drills, practicing spring tornado drills, and continuing to review and strengthen our district safety procedures. These proactive steps help ensure that we are prepared and responsive in the event of an emergency.

As always, we appreciate the continued support of our families and community. Together, we are able to provide meaningful opportunities and a high-quality educational experience for all Central Valley students.

Central Valley Elementary

April Newsletter

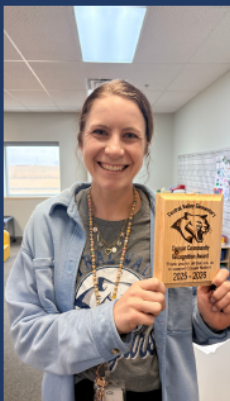
From the Principal's Desk: Mr. Nick Carlson

Happy Easter

**Cougar Community Recognition
February Star Student
Winners
(HONESTY)**



**February Cougar
Community
Recognition**



Preparing to Show Our Best

We are entering an important time in the school year. Spring has arrived, and our students are continuing to build on all the learning and growth they've made throughout the year.

April also brings end-of-the-year testing. These assessments are an opportunity for students to show what they've learned and how much they've grown. Our staff is working hard to prepare students, build confidence, and create a positive testing environment.

Families can play a big role during this time by helping students come to school well-rested, on time, and ready to do their best each day. Encouragement at home, maintaining routines, and emphasizing effort over perfection can make a big difference.

We are proud of the hard work our students have put in all year long, and we are excited to see them finish strong. Thank you for all you do to support your child and help them succeed.



Star Student Winners: Clinton Bauld, Everett Bloom, Cannon Marshall, Jayde Hansen, Haidyn Nekoliczak, Daelyn Spiegel, Marlee Woolsey, Briggs Nekoliczak, Tucker Bloom, Evan DeRiso, Jase Riddle, Drake Stomp

Cougar Community Recognition: Mrs. Skyler Nekoliczak, Mrs. Whitney Beck



Central Valley Elementary

April Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working

Upcoming Events

March 30th – April 2nd

Food Drive

April 1st

1:30 Dismissal

April 2nd

Preschool Grandparents Day
CVE Easter Egg Hunt 2:30–3:00

April 3rd & 6th

NO School. Easter Break

April 10th

Preschool Roundup 9:00

April 13th

Kindergarten Field Trip
Kearney Childrens Museum

April 17th

5th Grade Field Trip. Stuhr Museum
Kindergarten Transition 2:30

April 24th

Cougar Community Recognition 3:00

April 27th

4th Grade Field Trip. Kearney Archway

April 30th

Preschool Walking Field Trip

February Golden Spoon Winner: Mrs. Schimenti's Kindergarten Grade Class



Central Valley Elementary

April Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working

**2nd Semester
Cougar Point
Goal:**



100,000 Points



**Semester Two
Total: 61,250**



Barnyard Day



Central Valley Elementary

April Newsletter

CVE Core Values: Respectful, Kind, Responsible, Positive, Honest, Hard Working

**WAY TO GO,
STAR STUDENTS!**

February Pizza with the Principal

**Sponsored by
the Central
Valley PTO!**



Third Quarter Honor Roll Students

SENIORS

*Jon Bernt
*Ky Cargill
Lauren Diessner
Tyler Luscomb
*Taylor McIntyre
*Caleb Studley
*Zavyer Wolf

JUNIORS

*Griffin Allen
Lane Foltz
*Cayle Grossart
Kinley Nelson
*Brooklyn Perrott
Wyatt Rosander
Landon Shoemaker
Luke Shoemaker
Caden Straka
Dallas Wadsworth
*Gunnar Vanosdall
*Annaka Wood

SOPHOMORES

Laretta Davis
*Bentleigh Dugan
*Dalton Dugan
July Gotschall

SOPHOMORES CONT.

*Trasa Klein
*Payton Kniss
*Maggie Kriewald
*Ethan Lobner
Kerry Luscomb
*Laurel Mann

Stetson McManaman

Lincoln Nekoliczak

Tenley Perrott

William Pokorny

Taten Sherman

*Oaklan Soto

Nevaeh Vanosdall

*Zevan Wolf

FRESHMEN

Haylee Allen
*Drexon Dugan
*Maci Ford
Alexa Gonzalez
Cash Hammerstrom
Owen Malmstrom
*Landen Poss
*Taylor Rosander
Addison Ryan
*Lydia Studley
Craytyn Wagner

8TH GRADE

*Kwyn Cargill
*Kinley Boydston
Turner Freeman
Harper Jensen
Hadlee Sherman
Mavdan Soto
Jaxon Stephens
*Breckyn Straka
Quincy Wright

7TH GRADE

Jentry Dugan
Reed Gotschall
Destiny Haynes
Cayda Landers
Peyton O'Connor
Gracen Owens
Lauryn Rosander
Kashlyn Samway
Mason Shoemaker
Zethan Wolf
Graysen Wuertz



QUIZ BOWL

Mrs. Sarah Hansen, Sponsor

The Central Valley Quiz Bowl Teams wrapped up a busy season filled with strong competition and great student effort. The team kicked things off with Conference Quiz Bowl on February 16th, followed by several exciting events throughout March. Junior High students competed at the ESU 10-hosted Quiz Bowl at UNK on March 9, gaining valuable experience against area schools. They continued their season at the Junior High Scholastic Contest on March 17th, where Wyatt Hansen earned a medal in the Health and PE contest—an outstanding individual achievement. The High School team closed out the season with their ESU 10 competition at UNK on March 23rd.

We are proud of all of our Quiz Bowl participants for their hard work, dedication, and representation of Central Valley throughout the season!



High School students compete at Conference Quiz Bowl in Elba on February 16th. Students who attended: Zevan Wolf, Zavyer Wolf, Griffin Allen, Gunnar Vanosdall, Brooklyn Perrott, Laretta Davis, Bentleigh Dugan, Maggie Kriewald and Trasa Klein.



High School Students compete at UNK Quiz Bowl.

L-r: Tylor McIntyre, Bentleigh Dugan, Brooklyn Perrott, Laretta Davis, Griffin Allen, Gunnar Vanosdall



Welcome Spring!



Junior High Students at the Scholastic Contest in Palmer on March 17th.

Back row: Wyatt Hansen, Turner Freeman, Mavdan Soto, Zethan Wolf, Jaxon Stephens, Quincy Wright, Daniel Wuertz

Front row: Kinley Boydstun, Karter Brown, Hadlee Sherman, Cayda Landers, Kwyn Cargill



The Junior High Quiz Bowl Team at the UNK Campus for their competition.

Junior High Quiz Bowl Team: Karter Brown, Kwyn Cargill-Team Captain, Jaxon Stephens, Daniel Wuertz, Zethan Wolf, Wyatt Hansen, Cayda Landers



Junior High Quiz Bowl students competing at UNK.



Celebrating the Week of the Young Child

The Early Development Network provides early intervention services for families with children birth to age three with developmental delays and/or health care needs. Our program connects families with needed services and provides ongoing support. EDN has caring and professional Services Coordinators to serve families with an individualized and strengths based focus. These services are free to families and we welcome anyone who may have questions or concerns.

If you are concerned about a child's development or know someone who is please call EDN (308)237-2280 at ESU 10 for services in Region 10 or 1 (888) 806-6287 for referrals throughout Nebraska. If you are unsure which EDN office serves your area please call (308)237-2280 and we are happy to assist you in finding your best contact person. To learn more about our program please visit esu10.org and choose the EDN tab in English or Spanish or visit edn.ne.gov.





BOX TOPS for Education

Hello Cougar Nation!

I'm excited to announce that we have **hit our goal this year!** 🎉 Let's keep scanning to see just how much more we can earn!

A quick note: there is a "Greeley School" option in the Box Tops app. This was supposed to be combined with Central Valley when we merged. If you currently scan for that school, you can easily **click "Switch Schools"** in the app. Any money earned for "Greeley School" has still been sent to us, but we'd love for everyone to be on the **same school** in the app.

If you have any questions, please email **Mrs. Schimenti** at: joleigh.schimenti@centralvps.org

Thanks again for helping support our school!



Set an example to encourage reading

Your child learns by watching you so that the things you regularly spend time doing are important. Show her that reading is one of those things?

- **Sit down with a book**, newspaper, or other reading material every day. Talk to your child about why reading is worth your time.
- **Look up a word** in the dictionary when you read one you are unsure of. Ask your child if she knows its meaning.

- **Read a tidbit aloud** when you come across something you think your child might find interesting. She may even be motivated to read the rest herself.
- **Join your child.** When you see her reading, pick up something to read yourself. Get comfortable and enjoy the time together.
- **Give books as gifts.** This shows your child that you think books are valuable.



- ♦ Friday, April 3 - No School, Spring Break
- ♦ Monday, April 6 - No School, Spring Break

JUST A LITTLE
Reminder

Worth quoting

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else!"

Mark Twain

Helping Children Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

April 2026



Give your elementary schooler the facts about how students learn

Studies show that some common ideas about learning and how to do it effectively aren't supported by evidence—and they may even get in the way of your child's way.

Here are some myths to be aware of, along with research-based facts to discuss with your child:

- **Myth:** Everyone has one "style" of learning that works best for them. *The fact is* children learn in all kinds of ways, and they often learn material better by using multiple strategies—reading, listening, looking at pictures, drawing diagrams, making models, etc.
- **Myth:** Talent matters more than effort. *The fact is* learning and achieving in school requires persistence, practice and self-control. Students who work hard often do better than "gifted" peers who goof off.
- **Myth:** Reading and rereading material in one long session the night before a test is the best way to study. *The fact is* it's more effective to practice recalling the material in several short study sessions spread out over time.
- **Myth:** Left-brained people are better at math and right-brained people are better at art. *The fact is* there is no proof that one side of the brain dominates during learning—or at all.

Source: D. Leonard, "7 Myths Your Students Probably Believe," Edutopia.



Recharge concentration

Everybody gets distracted from time to time. But when students regularly "zone out" when studying or doing schoolwork, it affects their ability to learn. To boost your child's focus:



- **Minimize distractions.** Turn off TVs and loud music. Avoid interruptions that can wait.
- **Help your child divide** large tasks into smaller, less overwhelming pieces.
- **Encourage "brain breaks."** Suggest that your child take a five-minute break after every 20 minutes of studying.

Model aspects of respect

Respectful behavior takes many forms. Help your child learn how to show them by experiencing them. Show your child:

- **Consideration.** Avoid embarrassing or making fun of your child.
- **Fairness.** Don't pass judgment on your child before learning all the facts.
- **Dependability.** If you tell your child you'll do something, do it.



Family meetings foster cooperation

Holding regular family meetings provides your child with opportunities to develop cooperation skills—such as communication and negotiation—and you all get a chance to reconnect. To make meetings benefit your family:

- **Choose a regular time—** once every week or two. Family members should also be able to request a meeting if they have something important to discuss.
- **Create an agenda.** Before each meeting, ask family members what topics they want to discuss.
- **Appoint a leader.** The leader should follow the agenda and make sure everyone gets a chance to speak. Initially the leader should be an adult. Let children take a turn leading once meetings become familiar.
- **Problem-solve.** Have family members take turns explaining how they feel about an issue. Brainstorm solutions together, with adults having the final say. Write down decisions to revisit and evaluate at future meetings.

Set goals for a strong finish

Your elementary schooler has come a long way since September. But there is still plenty of time left in the year to set and achieve learning goals. Review these steps together:

1. **Identify the goal.** Make it specific.
2. **Define specific steps to take** for meeting the goal.
3. **Post the goal** prominently and discuss it with others to build accountability.
4. **Carry out** the plan.
5. **Celebrate** when the goal is met!



Helping Children Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

April 2026

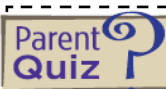


Deployment has unsettled my child. How can I help?

Q: My spouse is deployed overseas and won't be home for several more months. This is challenging for our third grader, whose schoolwork is starting to suffer. What can I do to help my child cope and get back on track over the next few months?

A: Having a loved one be away for months at a time is hard for anyone. Here are some ways to help your child:

- **Acknowledge feelings.** Say something like, "We love Daddy very much. Of course we miss him. Whenever you feel sad, you can tell me."
- **Alert your child's teacher** to what's happening so the school can respond appropriately. Ask for suggestions for helping at home.
- **Stick to daily routines at home.** Consistent routines give children a sense of stability and predictability.
- **Encourage your child to stay in touch** with your spouse with phone calls, video messages and email.
- **Reach out to friends,** family and other military families who have had similar experiences. They can offer ideas for coping.
- **Look for ways your child can help others.** This helps kids put their own problems into perspective.



Are you supporting school success?

Decades of research show that when families and schools work as a team, students are the real winners. Are you playing your part in making your child's education a success? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you make sure** your child attends school every day on time and prepared to learn?
2. **Do you ask** your child about school every day and review all communications the school sends home?
3. **Do you review** your child's schoolwork? If your child is struggling with a subject, do you ask the teacher how you can help?
4. **Do you share** information about your child with teachers?
5. **Do you reinforce** school rules and the need to follow them?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are a valuable player on your child's family-school team. For each no, try that idea.

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

—Phil Jackson

Transform text into poems

April is National Poetry Month. Writing blackout poems is a creative and fun way to celebrate with your child. You'll each need a page of text from a magazine or newspaper and a black marker. To create a poem:



1. **Scan the words** in the text to get an idea for your poem.
2. **Underline the words** and phrases that will make up your poem. The words should appear in your poem in the same order they do in the text.
3. **Black out** the remaining text with the marker to see your poem pop!

Source: J. Stock, "Bringing Poetry Outside," Edutopia.

Discuss discipline's purpose

Maintaining discipline is easier when you involve your child from the start. Talk with your elementary schooler about discipline. Why is it helpful? How does it work? Take your child's ideas into consideration when establishing rules and consequences. Then, reinforce the behaviors you want to see by noticing and offering praise when your child displays them.

Instill a can-do attitude

When students encounter difficulty learning, some say "I'm just not good at this" and quit trying. But other kids say "This is a challenge, and I love a challenge!"

The can-do attitude of the children in the second group makes them more likely to stick with problems—and solve them. Encourage this attitude by offering praise for effort and persistence. "That was challenging, but you kept trying different things until you got it!"

Source: J. Stillman, "New Stanford Study: A Positive Attitude Literally Makes Your Brain Work Better," Inc.

Helping Children Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.

Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.

Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.

Editor: Alison McLean.

Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.

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Helping Students Learn®

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10



April 2026

Review five steps for making well-reasoned decisions

As students get older, they begin to make more decisions independently. Some choices have consequences that can affect their education and lives beyond school. It's vital that your child understand how to think decisions through and make wise choices.

Teach your child to:

- 1. Collect needed facts.** Before deciding to take a job caring for a neighbor's dog for the weekend, for example, your child should find out what is involved. What are the tasks? What is the timing?
- 2. Consider potential conflicts.** There's a test on Monday to study for, and your child has been asked to go to a friend's soccer tournament on Saturday. Can your middle schooler do both and still care for the dog?
- 3. Think about possible outcomes.** If your child skips the soccer, will the friend be upset? If your child turns down the job, will the neighbor ever ask again?
- 4. Brainstorm options.** Perhaps your child could explain to the friend that caring for the dog might lead to future dog-sitting jobs. Could your child go to a different game?
- 5. Understand that even wise decisions** may have downsides. Sometimes a small sacrifice is necessary to achieve a long-term benefit.



Boost thinking with a chat

Thinking skills aren't fixed. Your middle schooler's ability to think can get sharper—and conversations with you can help. To encourage deeper thinking, discuss:

- **Things your child** has seen online or heard in the news. Get your child's opinions and ask for the reasons for them.
- **Open-ended questions.** "What have your teachers said about AI?" Ask follow-up questions.
- **Educational or news shows** you watch together. Discuss specific topics in them and what you've learned.

Art lets your child imagine

Art is a positive outlet for creativity and self-expression. Suggest that your child try:

- **Sketching** future self-portraits. What does your child picture doing in 10 years? 20?
- **Creating** a collage of items that inspire happy thoughts.
- **Making** an "add-a-little-each-day" design that reflects ideas, events or moods.



React constructively to poor grades

You may feel upset if your child brings home a low grade. But expressing frustration or anger is unlikely to help. Instead, respond in a way that helps set your child up to make improvements:

- **Put grades in context.** Tell your child that grades matter because they reflect learning. However, they are *not* a measure of a person's worth or potential.
- **Focus on strengths.** Talk about things your child has done well, in an academic subject or other activity. Ask, "What are you most proud of doing?" Emphasize that your child can be successful.
- **Identify possible causes.** Low grades indicate a problem. Ask what your child thinks it is. Sometimes it's not academic ability but poor study habits or test anxiety, for example.
- **Talk to the teachers.** Ask for their views on what's happening and how to help your child.
- **Be realistic.** Expect effort and progress, rather than perfection.

Motivate action three ways

If motivating your child to do just about anything feels like pulling teeth, these three strategies can help:

- 1. Talk about tasks** that need doing *before* your child turns on a screen.
- 2. Create routines** for recurring tasks. Maintain regular study times and bed-and wake-up times, for example.
- 3. Support your child's interests.** Supporting things your child enjoys working on can inspire similar effort in other areas—like school!



Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

MIDDLE SCHOOL

April 2026



What can I do to help my child use time efficiently?

Q: My middle schooler wastes time, then runs out of time to fulfill responsibilities like schoolwork or chores. Plus, my child is often late. How can I teach my student to make better use of time?

A: Middle schoolers often underestimate the time it takes to do things. And many don't plan their time. They wait until they're "in the mood" to begin a task. Most need guidance in how to manage time better.

Encourage your child to:

- **Create a weekly chart** for planning time. Your child should list times of each day in 30-minute intervals.
- **Make a list of tasks to accomplish**, including schoolwork, chores, sports practices, etc., as well as desired activities, such as time with friends. Have your child estimate the time each task will take.
- **Insert each task** into the time planning chart. Remind your child to allow for some free time and unexpected events.
- **Set an alarm** to signal when it's time to leave for school or when the allotted time for an activity is up.

Have your middle schooler stick to the time chart for a week. Then, discuss strategies your child thinks would help to spend time more wisely.



Are you making attendance a priority?

Regular school attendance supports academic achievement. Middle schoolers who miss classes often have trouble staying on track. Are you making the importance of attendance clear to your child? Answer *yes* or *no* below:

1. **Do you explain** why attending every class is essential through the last day of the school year?
2. **Do you encourage** evening routines—like packing school bags—to ensure your child gets to school on time?
3. **Do you reinforce** that absent students miss chances to ask questions and have to work harder to catch up?
4. **Do you discuss** school daily and brainstorm ways to address things that worry your child?
5. **Do you work** with the school to overcome attendance obstacles?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are teaching your child that school attendance is a priority. For each no, try that idea.

"By working together—parents, schools and communities—we can keep students present, engaged and on the path to achievement. Every school day counts."
—Carey M. Wright

Prepare for the next stage

A big move is coming up for eighth graders. High school is just a few months away. To reduce anxiety and smooth the path:

- **Build excitement** about the new opportunities ahead for friendships, freedom and pursuing learning interests through a wider variety of classes.
- **Encourage your child** to reach out to school counselors and current high school students for answers to questions.
- **Attend orientation sessions** offered by the middle or high school.
- **Say that you are proud** of your child for reaching this milestone!

Ease stress with exercise

Excess stress can get in the way of your middle schooler's ability to learn. Research shows that regular exercise can be an effective remedy. Exercise helps people feel happier and calmer, and has a positive effect on memory and self-confidence. Help your child fit one hour of exercise into each day. Feeling in control physically may empower your child to take control of studies, too.



Source: "Exercise and stress: Get moving to manage stress," Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

Model respectful behavior

To encourage respectful behavior, show your child what it looks like. Be a model of:

- **Honesty.** Admit your mistakes, and apologize when you are wrong.
- **Dependability.** If you tell your child you'll do something, do it.
- **Fairness.** Get all sides of the story before passing judgment.
- **Consideration.** Avoid embarrassing or making fun of your child.

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Helping Students Learn[®]

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

HIGH SCHOOL



April 2026

Reviewing graded work can help your teen learn from mistakes

Mistakes provide excellent learning opportunities. But after turning in an assignment or taking a test, many students never look at it again. And they go on to make the same mistakes over and over.

Teach your teen to use a four-step process to learn from graded work:

1. Review what went right.

Recognizing that they have successfully learned some material motivates students to take the next step.

2. Analyze what went wrong.

It's hard to learn from mistakes if you don't understand them. Sometimes, the solution is easy: "I made careless errors. I need to check my work." Other times, it requires more analysis.

3. Develop an action plan.

If your teen is confused about the content, asking the teacher for help is the next step. Encourage your student to work with the teacher on a plan for what to do differently next time. Say that you know your teen can improve.

4. Confirm learning by applying knowledge

a new situation. For example, your teen could try to solve problems or answer questions similar to those missed on the test.



Source: H.S. Schroder and others, "Neural evidence for enhanced attention to mistakes among school-aged children with a growth mindset," *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience*, Elsevier B.V.



Guide with understanding and limits

Teens' brains are still developing, and their ability to assess risk and make well-reasoned decisions is, too. Your teen still needs you to provide structure and boundaries. Here are some guidelines:

- **Maintain perspective.** When your teen acts first and thinks later, blurts out the wrong thing or is moody, it's not necessarily targeted at you. Don't take your teen's behavior personally.
- **Establish limits** that can grow with your teen. Make sure your high schooler knows the rules and the consequences for breaking them. But consider granting more

freedom as your teen shows more responsibility.

- **Keep in mind** that your teen's developmental stage may *explain* some behavior, but it is not an *excuse* for misbehaving.
- **Focus attention** on important areas, like safety and schoolwork. Constant correction over small issues, like an occasional messy room, is likely to backfire.

Nurture a desire to learn

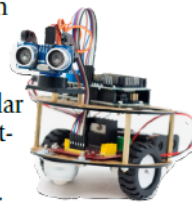
Students who are naturally curious and find satisfaction in learning things have built-in motivation. To foster this feeling in your high schooler:

- **Discuss the real-world uses** for what your teen is learning.
- **Encourage your teen** to ask questions and explore topics beyond the assignment at hand.
- **Express confidence** in your teen's ability to learn and overcome obstacles.
- **Talk about the value** of knowledge, rather than focusing on grades.

STEM classes open doors

STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers are a well-paid job sector that includes the fast-growing field of artificial intelligence. Preparing for these jobs starts in high school. Encourage your teen to:

- **Take** at least one math and one science class in all four years.
- **Seek out** extracurricular programs such as robotics, coding, and math and science olympiads.



Share stay-alert strategies

In order to study effectively, students must be alert. Energy drinks, however, are not a healthy way to fight off drowsiness. Instead, advise your high schooler to:

1. **Get at least eight** hours of sleep every 24 hours, and limit naps to under 40 minutes.
2. **Exercise every day.** Active teens have more energy.
3. **Study with a friend** or in a group.



Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

April 2026



What can I do to get my teen to stop putting things off?

Q: My teen often waits until the last minute to start assignments. This usually means a late-night panicky rush, and work that isn't as well done as it could be. How can I help my teen stop procrastinating?

A: Students who procrastinate create unnecessary stress for themselves. This often affects their academic performance.



To help your teen adopt more effective work habits:

- **Identify reasons.** Sit down together and ask, "Why do you think you put things off?" Is your teen afraid of performing poorly? Or, is it exciting to work at the last minute? If you aren't certain how to address the issue, suggest that your teen meet with a school counselor.
- **Reinforce time management strategies.** Help your teen break big projects down into pieces and set deadlines for each. Your teen may still wait until right before a deadline to start, but the project will get done.
- **Talk about larger goals.** Learning to manage time effectively will improve your teen's chances of success throughout high school and also in college or the workplace later on.

Prevent a spring slack-off

In the longer, warmer days of spring, teens' attention spans often seem to go out the window to play in the sun. To help your student stay focused on schoolwork:

- **Ask questions** about it. Which assignment did your teen think was most interesting? Most difficult? Why?
- **Keep an eye** on your teen's workload. If it seems to shrink suddenly, ask why.
- **Combine studying** with the outdoors. Reading on the front steps lets your teen enjoy sunshine without losing study time.



Set the tone for respect

Rolling eyes. Rude comments. Bad language. It's not OK for your teen to treat you—or anyone else—with disrespect. To reinforce respectful behavior:

- **Explain to your teen** that having strong feelings is OK, but expressing them disrespectfully is not.
- **Establish rules for civility**, and enforce them consistently.
- **Be a model.** Demonstrating respect lets your teen see that is how adults behave.

Teens can make a difference

Teens naturally concentrate on their own immediate wants and needs. Doing things for other people helps them understand that everyone else's needs matter, too. Suggest that your teen think about needs of people in your neighborhood. Could your student organize or participate in a community service project? Are there people without computers who could use your teen's help signing up online for a service or appointment?

When teens work for the benefit of others, they also develop a better understanding of their own value to the world at large.



Are you thinking ahead to summer?

The weeks between now and the end of the school year will go quickly. Now is the time to make plans for summer learning. Are you helping your teen prepare for a productive summer? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Have you verified** that your teen is on track to pass all classes? Failing students may need to take remedial classes over the summer.
2. **Have you encouraged** your teen to consider taking a summer class in a subject of interest?
3. **Have you told** your teen to ask the school's college and career office for advice on finding summer job opportunities?
4. **Have you talked** with your teen about places that may need summer volunteers?
5. **Have you asked** your friends about jobs and internships that

may be available at their places of employment?

How well are you doing?

More yes answers mean you are helping your teen make the most of summer opportunities. For each no, try that idea.

"Education is a continual process, it's like a bicycle... If you don't pedal you don't go forward."

—George Weah

Helping Students Learn®

Published in English and Spanish, September through May.

Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.

Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.

Editor: Alison McLean.

Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.

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