



You've just made it through your first year of having a teen and now, your child is developmentally and academically ready to take on the challenges and joys of high school.

Teachers want you and your child to know that the decisions your child makes academically will follow them for the next four years and beyond. Students are no longer socially promoted through grades. If they fail a class, they will need to take it over if it is required for graduation. It is also important for your child to develop working relationships with their teachers, as they will be the ones they go to for letters of recommendation for internships, college and jobs.

Their success in high school and higher education will depend on honing their executive skills of organization, planning ahead, chunking out assignments into workable timeframes and asking for help when they don't understand. [You can be there to help your child navigate this new transition.](#) Check in as often as you can. Talk to them about what worked in the past (using a planner or a phone app) and also brainstorm about other organizational tools (electronic folders, paper folders, naming documents, online calendar, ManageBac) and strategies.

How do we as parents get through the teen years? Reading current research and books about the [teen brain](#) and sharing the information with your child so that they are able to think about their behaviors, (use that metacognition) can help your child to have insight and be thoughtful about their behavior in addition to giving them the chance to reflect meaningfully on their behavior when they make a good choice or make a mistake.

It is also helpful for us as parents to think about [other cultures](#) in the world. It is expected in many cultures that 14 year old's take on a lot of adult responsibility. In the western world, we don't really encourage that. However, our teens have an innate need to feel an integral part of the family. How can we fill our teens need to be needed? Yes, our children have high academic expectations, multiple sports, clubs and activities in which they are involved. But it is important to give them [household responsibilities](#) so they can be contributing members of the family. Along with many other character building traits, this teaches your child that they have an important role and are a valued member in the bigger workings of a group. Essential lessons for their life and the many roles they will hold as workers, community members and in having their own families someday.

For more on developmental stages and parenting information, contact your Thrive Parent Liaison, Lori Swenson at lsvenson@bssd72.org or 995-4281.