

Study Work Grow

10 Things to Teach your High School Leaver

1. How to cook

The novelty of eating two-minute noodles every day will soon wear off, so if your teen has never been interested in cooking, now's the time to get them started. They don't have to be gourmet chefs, being able to prepare a few simple meals from scratch could set your child up to eat more healthily and save money.

2. How to care for themselves

Self-care means lots of things. From knowing how to do your laundry (and saving you from dealing with a semester's worth of stinky socks coming home), cleaning where you live, knowing some basic maintenance – even if it's just putting up pictures and keeping the drains unblocked. To being responsible for their own health and wellbeing as well as knowing when and where to ask for help.

3. How to manage money

It's great for your school leaver to know how to plan a budget based on their income, (whether that's from a salary, scholarship or loan); and also to keep track of their expenses.

They'll also need to know how to:

- pay bills
- start saving
- stay out of debt
- pay taxes
- contribute to their super
- avoid credit cards and debt
- compare prices
- be aware of scams

4. Staying safe

This is no doubt something you've been drumming into your child since day dot. But if they're leaving home and becoming more independent, then you may not be around to remind them. It's a great idea have a chat together and work out a few ways to stay safe, including:

- avoid walking alone at night or in unsafe areas
- locking doors and windows
- understanding how their own and other people's behaviour can change under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- knowing some first aid, CPR and self defence
- be careful who they share information with or allow to get close
- keeping their online details safe and secure
- having an emergency plan if something happens

5. How to get around

It's hard to be independent if you rely on others for lifts everywhere or haven't experienced using public transport. Get your kids to use the local buses and trains, from working out which route they

need to figuring out the timetables and fares. Ask them to organise Ubers and taxis, maybe even pay for them too. If they're learning to drive – great! They'll also need to feel confident about driving in the dark and all kinds of weather conditions. And it's a good idea to teach them some basic mechanics from filling their wiper washers, to checking oil, pumping up or changing tyres.

6. Finding work

It's called "job hunting" for a reason. If your child hasn't had a job before, now's the time to encourage them to find something part-time. Make sure they have a decent looking resume and know where to look for jobs, how to apply and practise their interview techniques too.

7. Work life balance

We all want our kids to be hard workers and do well. They often put plenty of pressure on themselves though, so it's great to talk about and role model great work life balance. Having fun and taking time out to care for yourself is important too.

8. Dealing with relationships

You and your child might be used to you dealing with problems in the past, but letting them handle their own issues and giving them tips on how to deal with situations themselves will really empower them. Get them to speak up and be assertive, use their initiative and ask questions, compromise, set boundaries that they feel comfortable with, voice concerns and settle arguments. Remaining calm, walking away from conflict, being professional are also good pointers to go over.

9. Being a great global citizen

Encouraging your teen to:

- be kind
- take responsibility for their actions and impacts on others
- be aware of what's going on around them not just on a local scale but around the world
- travel
- seek out opportunities
- live by their values
- stand up to ignorance and intolerance
- get involved in communities, projects and programs
- take action and advocate for themselves and for others

You'll help to show your child that they have a voice. Even if the world is changing fast, they can always make a positive difference, and do their bit help to build a fairer, happier, safer, and more secure world.

10. Be true to yourself

Inspire your young person to be themselves, remind them that:

- It's ok if not everyone likes you
- You should follow your passion, listen to your intuition
- You can change your mind
- Let go of past mistakes and issues and move on
- Be honest about what you want to do, how you feel, and what you need
- You are enough!