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## **Communicating With Your Teen: 70 Questions Parents Can Ask After “What Happened At School Today?”**

Communicating with your teen at times can be challenging, but it is important. Teens may seem unwilling to interact, but while they are learning to show their independence, they still need structure, connectedness, and encouragement from their parents/guardians and families. Talking to your teen will help maintain these needs and strengthen your parent-teen relationship. Use the questions below as conversation starters to help engage your teen in meaningful conversation beyond the typical one word responses. And remember, once they start talking, really listen!

### **General Questions About School**

1. What happened at school today? Is there anything in particular that was interesting or different that stood out today? If so, what?
2. What do you enjoy about school? What makes a day at school a good one?
3. What is something new you learned at school today? Did you find anything particularly interesting?
4. Is there anything new you learned at school today that you could apply right now to the real world? What?
5. What was the funniest thing that happened at school today? Can you tell me more about it?
6. Are there any subjects, concepts, or topics in school that you are having trouble understanding?
7. Do you enjoy going to school? Is there anything you wish the school could do better?
8. What has been the best/worst part of school this week?
9. What do you like most/least about school? Is there anything you can do to help change it?
10. Are there any school events coming up that I need to know about? Are there any in particular that you are planning on attending? If so, what are they and when are they happening?



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11. Do you enjoy learning in school? What would your teachers say about you?
  12. What are some big ideas you are learning from your classes this year?
  13. What teacher do you think helps you learn the best? What is it that they do?
  14. Is there anything you are looking forward to at school tomorrow or this week?
  15. Do you know any of the school staff who are not teachers? Who is your favorite?
  16. What would make school more enjoyable?
  17. In what ways would you like me to be involved with your school? Do you see other parents around helping out?
  18. What can I do to help you be more successful in school?

### **Academic and Monitoring Questions**

19. Have you gotten any grades back recently? How are they? Are you happy with them? Why or why not?
20. Are there any school supplies you need? What are the current projects you have been working on?
21. What is your homework for tonight? What are you supposed to do? Can you explain it to me?
22. Can you teach me something that you learned today?
23. Can you tell me some more about that class you don't enjoy much? Was there anything particularly interesting that happened in that class today? What?
24. What are your strengths and weaknesses in this particular class? Why do you feel that way?
25. If I were to ask your teachers to describe you, what would they say? Why?
26. What can we do to improve your grades in this particular class? Why do you think you are struggling? Is there anything I can do to help you improve?



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27. What projects do you have due in the next couple of weeks? Have you started working on them?
  28. Are any of your projects group projects? Who is in your group? Do you get along well together?
  29. When you are having a difficult time learning something what do you do? How can we work together to think of some strategies to help?
  30. Do you like your teachers? Who is your favorite teacher? Who is your least favorite teacher? Why?
  31. Do you like the classes you are taking this year? What is your strongest/weakest subject?
  32. Do you enjoy group projects in school or projects where you work alone better? Why?
  33. Did you have any tests this week? How do you think you did on them? What were some of the questions asked?
  34. Do you have any tests coming up? In what classes are they? Are you prepared for them? If not, what needs to be done?
  35. What class went by the fastest/slowest today? Why?
  36. Do you take notes during class? Does taking notes help you learn the material? Can I see some of your notes?
  37. What are you learning about in your classes? What are the state standards for the lessons? Can you explain them to me?
  38. Do you feel like you need extra help in a particular class? What kind of help do you need?
  39. Is there anything you are doing in middle school that you want to continue to get better at in high school?
  40. How is the paper you are writing coming along? Have your ideas for the paper come in a flurry or gradually, over time? Have you gotten stuck anywhere? Have you surprised yourself at all by what you wrote? How?



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### **Friends and Social Life Questions**

41. Who did you hangout at school with today? Did you meet anyone new? If so, who?
42. What did you and your friends talk about at school today? Did anyone do anything funny? What was it?
43. Who is your best friend at school? Why do you get along so well?
44. What is something that you really enjoy doing? Are there any extracurricular activities, sports, or clubs you want to get involved in?
45. How many text messages did you send today? Did you send many during school? What were they about?
46. Who did you sit with at lunch today?
47. Do you have any friends in your classes? Which ones?
48. What class do you have that has most of your friends in it?
49. What makes you nervous? Is there anything going on at school that makes you nervous right now?
50. What do you think about volunteering? Is this something you would be interested in doing after school? Is there an organization or agency that you would like to learn more about?
51. Who is someone you look up to at school or in after school activities? Why? What about them is special?
52. Is there anything in particular you would like to do this weekend? What is it and who is going to be involved?
53. What are characteristics you admire in others?
54. How do you choose your friends?

### **Questions About Planning for the Future**

55. Are there any classes you want to take in the future? What are they?



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56. Are there any classes that you are really enjoying this year? Is the subject something you could see yourself studying in college or doing as a career? Why?
  57. Have you thought about attending college after high school? Where do you think you would like to go? Is there anything in particular you would like to study?
  58. What do you see yourself doing after middle/high school?
  59. Have you looked into any colleges or universities? Are there any you are interested in attending?
  60. Are you planning on taking the PSAT, ACT, or SAT? Has anyone at school talked to you about these?
  61. Have you heard about any resources such as financial aid or scholarships that will help to pay for college? What are they?
  62. Do you think getting an education is important? Why or Why Not?
  63. What goals have you set for yourself this year?
  64. What do you want to be when you grow up? How do you plan to get there?
  65. What are some of the things you are doing to get into the college you want?
  66. Do you have any questions about what will happen after middle/high school?
  67. Are you looking forward to attending high school? What do you think high school will be like?
  68. What is the most difficult part about applying to colleges?
  69. How are you doing budgeting your time to complete all of your college applications, especially given your full schedule?
  70. Which teachers do you think you would like to ask to write you recommendations? Why?

Adapted from *Questions to ask your high school kids after, "How was school today?"*  
Iowa Statewide Parent Information Resource Center. Retrieved March 1, 2011 from  
[http://www.iowaparents.org/files/High\\_School\\_Questions.pdf](http://www.iowaparents.org/files/High_School_Questions.pdf)