While high school students are old enough to be fairly independent and make many of their own decisions, they still need their parents to provide guidelines and to set limits. High school students, of course, also need their parents' guidance, support, and encouragement throughout their high school years.

If you are concerned about your son or daughter's academic performance, talk to your child's counselor. A school counselor is not only an excellent resource for students; a school counselor is also an excellent resource for parents.

The tips below will help parents guide and advise their sons and daughters as they go through high school:

✓ At the beginning of each term, sit down with your child and set realistic academic goals for that term.
✓ Encourage your child to be involved in extracurricular activities, and then show your support by attending performances, games, etc.
✓ Make sure that your child understands that he/she is expected to be in school, on time, every day.
✓ Attend all open houses and parent conferences.
✓ Write down the dates that interim reports and report cards come out, and expect your child to bring them home. (If you don’t see one, call the school and request a copy.)
✓ Realize that it is your child’s responsibility to get homework done, to prepare for tests, to follow the school’s rules, and to be in school every day.
✓ Work together with the school. Teachers, counselors, and principals are there to help your child get the best education possible. If you have a question or concern, call the school.
✓ Make sure that your son or daughter is not spending too much time on the phone, playing computer games, watching TV, etc. Also make sure that a job does not interfere with school.
✓ Talk to your child about what is happening in school and be a good listener.
✓ Look for opportunities to praise good grades and extra effort.
✓ If you suspect that your child is drinking or using drugs, talk to your son or daughter immediately. If you need help or advice, talk to your child's counselor or your family doctor.
✓ Encourage your child to take care of things on his/her own. By doing this, your child will learn independence and gain confidence. If your child is unable to resolve an issue, however, or if there is a serious problem, be available to help and/or intervene.
✓ Help your child choose appropriate courses. If you have questions about a course, talk to your child’s counselor.
✓ If you are trying to change a behavior, first make sure that your son or daughter knows exactly what your expectations are. You can then offer rewards if your expectations are met and/or consequences if they are not.
✓ Help your child explore and evaluate a variety of career and educational options.

Make school a top priority. Nothing is more important to your child’s future than education.
Advice for Parents - from Students

Woodburn Press Publishing Company asked a group of high school seniors to tell their staff what advice they would give parents who are about to have a son or daughter enter high school.

The following are some of their responses:

"Don't be overprotective, but do ask where your kids are going, what they are doing, and with whom." Diddi

"Make sure that you know how your kids are doing in school, but don't pressure them too much, and don't nag." Holly

"High school is a rite of passage. Treat your kids as adults. Be open with them and give them space. These years are hard; so cut your kids some breaks. Don't let them be disrespectful though." Casey

"Listen, ask questions, and let your children know that they can talk to you." Stephanie Jo

"Make sure they do their homework, and that their attendance is good - they'll appreciate it later." Kelly

"All high school kids make mistakes. Know this and try to help your kids learn from their mistakes." Jamal

"Encourage your kids to get involved in sports, clubs, or something. They'll like school a lot more." Latish

"Allow your children to go out and have fun with their friends, but set a curfew, and make them check in." Brittany

"Be supportive and be patient." Connie

"Trust your children to make their own decisions, but let them know that you are there for them." Megan