

Getting Over the Middle:

Transitioning from Elementary to Middle School



North Carolina Parent Information and Resource Center

a project of the exceptional children's assistance center

Parent Involvement Benefits

When parents are actively engaged in their children's learning, students usually benefit in the following ways:

- Earn higher grades and better test scores;
- Enrolled in higher-level programs;
- Promoted more and pass more of their classes;
- Earn more class or course credits;
- Attend school more regularly, and drop-out less;
- Have better social skills and demonstrate better behavior;
- Go on to postsecondary education or other productive life choices.



Let's Focus

1. What do you want for your child?
2. What do you need to do to get what you want?



Know How Your Child Learns and Develops

- Children learn by watching and copying models
- Children learn by the consequences of their behavior



I didn't do my homework and will have to stay after school instead of going to the ballgame.



Transition involves change...

As they mature, young people go through many changes!

- Physical development
- Hormonal changes
- Develop an interest in the opposite sex
- Mood swings



We have to acknowledge and accept these changes and prepare the young person to deal with them in an appropriate manner.

Teen issues ...

- Risk taking behavior.
- Want to be independent from the family
- Want their privacy
- Avoiding responsibility
- Want to “fit” in



Parenting Teens

- Preteens and Teens are moody! - *be as accepting as possible*
- When teens ask tough or embarrassing questions - answer directly
- Express your love for them!
- Encourage teen to be aware of their behavior!

Parenting Your Teen



- Remember, parents matter. Provide guidance and structure.
- Stay warm and close. Spend time together at meals and say, “I love you.”
- Be consistent. Children need structure their lives.
- Stay involved with your teen’s life. Ask questions.
- Set limits and provide structure. Communicate your expectations.
- Enforce rules and consequences. Follow through.

Parenting Your Teen ...



- Engage your teen in decisions and conversations. Discuss the reasons for rules and consequences.
- Don't use harsh discipline. This is not an effective long-term approach.
- Treat your teen with respect. Acknowledge your teen's increasing independence.
- Understand adolescence is a period of change-for parents and children.

What were they thinking?

- Excited about going to middle school but concerned about changes.
- Concerns about unfamiliar buildings, finding and opening lockers, class schedules, etc...
- Academic demands and workload.
- Multiple teachers with differing styles and expectations.
- Making Choices



What Parents Can Do To...

Make the Most of Middle School

- Attend Open House.
- Meet with School counselor.
- Expose your child to a broad range of experiences and programs.
- Set ground rules for your child.
- Stay aware of your child's homework and school demands.
- Monitor your child's progress.
- Remember your child's next transition—high school.

The Parent's Role

Changes as young person moves into adulthood, but you are still important!



Websites to Know



- Test samples
www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/parents
- School Report Cards
www.ncreportcards.org
- National Center for Bullying Prevention
www.pacer.org/bullying/index.asp

There are only two lasting
gifts we can give our
children
one is roots-
the other is wings...

-Hodding Carter

Sources

Goodbye Old Hello New! Transitioning form Elementary to Middle, Jefferson County Schools,
jc-schools.net/parent/middleschooltransition.ppt

“Life is a journey-Transition to Adulthood” (ppt), Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center, www.ecac-parentcenter.org

Engaging Families at the Secondary Level: What Schools Can Do to Support Family Involvement, Southwest Educational Development Lab 2005

10 Principles for Parenting your Teen, Healthy Teen Development, Iowa State university Extension, 2001