

## The Middle School Experience

The middle school years can be some of the most exciting, challenging, and interesting—for both the student and the parent. Your pre-teen will be growing physically and emotionally at a rapid pace during these three school years.

Students will be faced with lots of new opportunities and challenges. Some of the biggest changes they will find are the new expectations to be more independent, more focused, and more responsible than they were in elementary school. They will be more worried about fitting in, having friends, and questioning how successful they will be in this new environment.

Middle schoolers need lots of direction, guidance, and support. To help your child succeed, follow these suggestions.

1. Provide school supplies and a place to study at home.
2. Help set academic goals
3. Insist on daily attendance. ATTENDANCE IS THE NUMBER ONE SCHOOL SUCCESS FACTOR!!!!
4. Attend all parent programs and parent/teacher conferences.
5. Make sure that your student knows that you EXPECT to see EVERY mid-term report and EVERY report card.
6. Use rewards when you want to encourage a change in behavior, attendance, or effort.
7. Teach your child that there are consequences for poor school performance. Be sure that the consequence is reasonable and logical.
8. Help them with organizational skills. Students who are organized generally get better grades and are less frustrated.

9. Encourage involvement in school activities.
10. Encourage independent problem solving.
11. Help them with time management.
12. Make homework your child's responsibility.

Support and work with the administrators, teachers, and counselors at your school. Like you, they want your child to have a great middle school experience.

Middle school is a critical time when parents need to be the most involved and vigilant because this is the time when children "get off track." Always know where your child is, who they're hanging out with, and what they are going to be doing. Meet their friend's parents. Never hesitate to call the supervising parent of any party or activity to verify the information you have been provided by your child. Our kids call us "nosey"---we call it "PARENTING"!!! It is our job!!

Middle School Parent Guidebook by Linda O'Brien