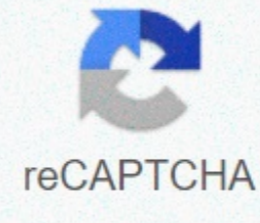




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The transition from high school to high school marks a rather exciting time in the life of a child - and a parent. But it can be scary, too. It's not just a move to another school - it's a whole new environment. The beginning of high school can be overwhelming and confusing, and not only because the buildings are physically larger and the campus is unfamiliar. Children who leave the high school bubble for the jungle in high school not only have to deal with new teachers and academic requirements, but also a completely different set of students, some of whom are three years older and more mature. Moving to high school can be disastrous if a child doesn't make the transition flawless - more children fail in ninth grade than any other grade [source: Weber]. Most school systems do pave the way by implementing transition programs that can include everything from campus visits to shadowing students, but it's never easy. Our list of top 10 differences between high school and high school will help you identify some of the pitfalls you might run into as your child enters ninth grade - for example, what happens if your trombone playing math whiz on the site that bands practice conflicts with calculus? We hope you find some advice that will get you through this often crazy time. Content One of the scariest things about the transition from high school to high school is often a dramatic increase in school size. It's scary enough to move from a three-grade school to a four-grade school - and then on top of that, several high schools from the same district often dump into one high school. To be able to easily have four times as many children in high school, most of whom will be absolute strangers. As the first day of the ninth grade looms, it can be overwhelming to imagine entering a completely alien (and much larger) campus and walking into the sea of new faces. Most high schools are pretty careful about departure transitions, but it's not hard to see how kids can get lost in the shuffle. The larger student body leads to the next item on our list... Advertising We know that high schools have higher enrollment than high schools, so there is a reason that individual classes are going to get bigger, too. Student-teacher relationships vary widely between countries, but in general, secondary school lessons are higher than in secondary school. It might not be much, but it makes a difference. The jump from a class of 15 students to one with 20 children doesn't seem like that overwhelming out of the deal, but it does make things feel a little more impersonal and less one-on-one interaction with the teacher. There is certainly much less hand-holding in high school - older children are expected to be more responsible and independent, so they (in theory) don't need so much attention from their teachers. And a child who is not completely ready for the task may end through the cracks. Advertising Eighth grade teachers seem to spend an excessive amount of time trying to clear their students (or trying to scare their students, however you want to look at it) that there will be a lot more homework in high school. And they do it for a reason: There is a lot more homework in high school. Children who are not ready for it may be in for a nasty shock during the first month or so of the ninth grade. Increased workload - combined with the stress of new environments, schedules, expectations, teachers and classmates - can really throw some kids in the loop, so it's especially important for parents to be on their game during this transition. Advertising in the eighth grade - especially over the last couple of months - is a giddy time for some children. They're the oldest (and he's the coolest) in school, and they take every opportunity to lord this fact over anyone they believe is beneath them (it's like you know everyone). But when September rolls around, they reveal pretty quickly how demoralizing it can be to plummet from the head of the pack to the bottom of the barrel. For this and other reasons we've just discussed, many kids find themselves floundering in ninth grade. Some schools have tried to combat this phenomenon by separating the freshman from the crowd just a little bit - its institute of ninth grade academies or smaller class sizes to keep some of this high school feeling for a while longer. Advertising in most high schools, with their emphasis on community building and nurturing students, children don't get much choice in what classes they take. Students can be placed in different groups based on skill levels, but in general, there are few differences in courses. The sixth grade is American history, the seventh grade is pre-algebra, and that's about it. High school is a whole new ballgame, with seemingly endless choices - which is exciting, of course, but it can be overwhelming. And planning is always tough, too: What happens if your trombone playing child is also a math whiz, and advanced trigonometry is at the same time as the band practice? Or if physics conflicts with French? There may not be an easy answer or quick correction, but if parents, teachers, and counselors work together, they can create a balanced schedule. Advertising you might think that as academic and sporting requirements increase in high school to allow parental involvement. After all, this is a critical time in your child's life - pretty soon, they fly with cooperation, never again need to be seen. But you might think wrong: Parental involvement actually decreases during high school years. One of the reasons is that high schools often don't court parental involvement as much as primary and secondary schools do - it's just a more hands-off kind of environment. Parents also generally assume that their contribution does not require as much children are older and more responsible. Not so. Many studies have shown that parental involvement is a key factor for their children to succeed. So go ahead and volunteer - your kids might be embarrassed to be around you, but it's for their own benefit. Advertising People often refer to high school as a bubble - students make it reading, writing and arithmetic, of course, but sometimes the process is emphasized more than the end result. Children learn about themselves safely in their own little community, and there's not much focus on the outside world. But that all changes in high school. Suddenly the goal is very clear: college. No more fooling around - this is the real deal. Some students, to be sure, are grade-focused from day one, so these change goals can be exhilarating - finally, all those like to count something! However, it can be jarring for a child who probably isn't all about grades. So again, it's up to you, parents - it's your job to remind underperformers to step up to the plate. Advertising for Poor ninth graders. As if they are not yet enough to manage, in a compelling new environment, greater class size and increased academic requirements, they must also juggle several new teachers. In high school, kids probably have no more than two or three different teachers a day, but high school (as is the case with everything) kicks that up to a few notches. Now they could have six or seven teachers every day - all with their own methods, standards, workload, tune and idiosyncratic. It really is no wonder that grades plummet and dropout rates soar in the ninth grade. So, even when you stay on top of your child's work and grades, remember that there is an understanding - it can be a rough time. When they hit the 10th and 11th grades though, you can really crack the whip. Advertising Most of the changes we've discussed so far in this article are some of the confusion that has been added to them - the transition to high school is exciting and daunting. But sport is one part of high school life that can be placed squarely in an exciting spot. Most high schools do have sports teams, but they don't give school to life like high school sports can. It's like a switch in the spotlight with academics: Of course, high school sports are fun, but a high school football game is the real

deal. Even if your child is not an athlete, sporting events offer many opportunities for social interaction with new classmates. Also, the taste of the spirit of the school will never hurt - it gives children a new identity, which can make the transition a little less painful. The ad you knew we'd get to date, sooner or later, didn't we? Peer pressure reared its ugly head pretty early in any kid's life, but the stakes are definitely raised in high school. Pressure to drink and do drugs naturally appears some time school years, but children (and parents) will soon realize that these concerns are small potatoes compared to what lies in high school. And it's not just about illegal substances - it's clothing, eating, cheating, you name it. Succumbing to peer pressure can quickly derail academic careers, and this is a key factor in many dropout cases. As always, parents need to be vigilant and, most importantly, keep communication lines open. To learn more about the differences between high school and high school, check out the links on the next page. Lawn mowers parents mow down obstacles and difficulties before their children can face them. HowStuffWorks talks to experts about the style of parenting. Bennett, Laurie J. and Mac Iver, Martha Abele. 'Girls Tend to Stop Going; Boys Get Told Not To Come Back: Report on gender and dropout problem in Colorado schools. october 2009. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Ray. Right Kind of Peer Pressure. Slate, May 12, 2010. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Nancy B. and Irvin, Judith L. Transition from high school to high school. National Middle School Association Journal, May 2000. (Accessed September 10, 2010) High School Center. Transition to secondary school: research and best practices to support secondary learning. (Accessed September 10, 2010) transition from middle to high school. (Accessed September 9, 2010) . Transition to high and high school. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Dave. Back to school: The toughest test of all is 9th grade. Orlando Sentinel, Aug 14, 2010 (Available September 10, 2010) sentinel.com/08-14/news/os-ninth-greers-stumble-081510-20100814_1_ninth-greiders-middle-schools-classroom-performance 2010) ◆as/os-ninth-greers-stumble-081510-20100814_1_ninth-graders-middle-schools-classroom-performance

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