



I'm not robot



Continue

Loveland middle school staff

The transition from middle school to high school marks a pretty 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 just because the buildings are physically larger and the campus is unknown. Children leaving the middle school bubble for the high school jungle not only have to deal with new teachers and academic applications, but also a completely different set of students, some of whom are three years older and much more mature. Moving to high school can be disastrous if a child doesn't make the transition smoothly -- more kids fail in ninth grade than any other class [source: Weber]. Most school systems do not pave the way by implementing transition programs, which can involve everything from campus visits to shadowing students, but it is never easy. Our list of the top 10 differences between middle school and high school will help you identify some of the pitfalls you might encounter as your child enters ninth grade -- what happens when your math whistle that plays trombones learns that the band's practice conflicts with calculus? Hopefully you will find some tips that will get you through this time often crazy. Contents One of the scariest things about moving from middle school to high school is the often dramatic increase in the size of the school. It's daunting enough to make the transition from a three-grade school to a four-degree school -- and then, on top of that, several middle schools in a district often throw themselves into a single high school. So there could easily be four times as many kids in high school, most of whom will be absolute strangers. As the first day of ninth grade looms, it can be overwhelming to imagine entering a totally unknown (and much larger) campus and walking around in a sea of new faces. Most high schools are pretty careful about facilitating the transition, but it's not hard to see kids can get lost in shuffle. The larger student body leads to the next item on our list... Advertising We know that high schools have higher-than-average enrollments, so it's normal for individual classes to grow. The ratio of students and teachers varies greatly across the country, but in general, high school classes are higher than middle school classes. It might not be much, but it makes a difference. Jumping from a class of 15 students to one with 20 children doesn't seem like a big deal, but it results in things feeling 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 expected to be more accountable and independent, so they (in theory) do not need as much attention from their teachers. And a child who's not ready for pregnancy can end up, end, falling through the cracks. Advertising eighth graders seem to spend an excessive amount of time trying to make it clear to their students (or trying to scare their students, however you want to look at it) that there will be many more homework in high school. And I do this for a reason: there are a lot more homework in high school. Children who aren't ready for it may be in a nasty shock in the first month or so in ninth grade. The increased workload -- combined with the stress of new environments, programs, expectations, teachers and classmates -- can really throw a few kids for a loop, so it's especially important that parents are at stake during this transition period. Eighth grade advertising - especially in the last two months - is a shouting time for some children. They're the oldest (and therefore the coolest) in school, and they take any opportunity to master this fact over whoever they consider to be under them (that's it, it would be, you know, everyone). But when September rolls, he discovers pretty quickly how demoralizing it can be to collapse from the head of the pack to the bottom of the barrel. For this and other reasons we discussed, many children find themselves floundering in ninth grade. Some schools have tried to combat this phenomenon by separating freshmen from crowds just a little bit -- they set up ninth-grade academies or smaller class sizes to maintain some of that feeling of middle school for a while. Advertising In most middle schools, with a focus on community building and student cultivation, children have no choice in which classes they take. Students could be placed in different groups depending on the skill level, but in general there are few variations in the courses. Sixth grade is American history, seventh grade is pre-algebra, and that's about it. High school is a whole new game, with seemingly unlimited choices -- which is interesting, obviously, but it can be overwhelming. And programming is always hard, too: What if your trombone-game child is also a math whiz, and advanced trigonometry is at the same time with band practice? Or if physics conflicts with French? It may not be an easy response or a quick solution, but if parents, teachers and counsellors work together, they can create a balanced program. Advertising One might think that as academic and athletic demands increase in high school, so does parental involvement. After all, this is a critical moment in your child's life - pretty soon, they fly into the henhouse, not to be seen again. But you'd think wrong: parental involvement decreases in high school years. One reason is that high schools often don't court parents' involvement as much as elementary and middle schools -- it's just a more hands-off type Environment. Parents also usually assume that their contributions are not needed as much children are older and more responsible. It's not like that. Many studies have shown that parental involvement is a major factor in their children's success. So go ahead and give yourself to the volunteers-- your kids might be ashamed to have you around, but it's for their own good. Advertising People often refer to middle school as a bubble -- students do their reading, writing and arithmetic, of course, but sometimes the process is emphasized more than the end result. Children learn about themselves, are safe in their small community, and don't focus too much on the outside world. But that's all changing in high school. Suddenly the goal is very clear: college. Stop fooling around - this is the real deal. Some students, to be sure, are focused on grades from day one, so this goal change can be exhilarating -- finally, everyone who matters for something! However, it can be shaken for a child who would not have been all that concerned about degrees. So again, it's up to you parents -- it's your job to remind those who aren't performing to get up to work. Advertising Poor ninth graders. As if they don't already have enough to manage, what with an overwhelming new environment, the larger size of the class and the increasing academic demands, they also have to juggle more new teachers. In middle school, children probably have at most two or three different teachers a day, but high school (so it happens altogether) kicks that up a few notches. Now, they could have six or seven teachers every day -- all with their own methods, standards, workloads, moods and idiosyncrasies. No wonder grades drop and dropout rates flowed in ninth grade. So even while you sit on top of child labor and notes, remember to be understanding - this can be a difficult time. Once they're in the 10th and 11th grade, however, you can break the whip. Advertising Most of the changes we've discussed so far in this article have a certain ambivalence attached to them -- the transition to high school is exciting and scary. But sport is a part of high school life that can be parked honestly in the interesting spot. Most middle schools have sports teams, but they don't bring the school to life that's how high school sports can. It's just like switching in focus with academics: Sure, middle 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 plenty of opportunities for social interaction with new classmates. Also, the taste of the school spirit never hurts -- it gives children the beginning of a new identity, which can make the transition a little more Painful. Advertising you knew we'd get to that sooner or later, didn't you? Peer pressure raises its ugly head quite early on in any child's life, but the stakes are certainly high in high school. Pressure to drink and do drugs certainly occurs for some during years of school, but children (and parents) soon realize that these concerns are small potatoes compared to what is hidden in high school. And it's not just illegal substances -- they're clothes, eaten, cheated, anything. Yielding to peer pressure can quickly derail an academic career, and is a major factor in many cases of abandonment. As always, parents must be vigilant and, most importantly, keep the lines of communication open. To learn more about the differences between middle school and high school, check out the links on the next page. Parents mow the obstacles and hardships before their children can face them. HowStuffWorks talks to experts about parenting style. Bennett, Laurie J. and Mac Iver, Martha Abele. 'Girls tend to stop walking; Boys Get Told Not to Return: A Report on Sex and the Dropout Issue in Colorado Schools. October 2009. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Ray. The right type of peer pressure. Slate, May 12, 2010. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Nancy B. and Irvin, Judith L. Transition from Middle School to High School. Journal of the National Association of Middle Schools, May 2000. (Accessed September 10, 2010) High School Center. Facilitating the transition to high school: research and best practices designed to support high school learning. (Accessed September 10, 2010) PTA. Moving from middle to high school. (Accessed September 9, 2010) . Moving to middle school and high school. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Dave. Back to school: The toughest test of all is 9th grade. August 14, 2010 (Accessed September 10, 2010) l.com/2010-08-14/news/os-ix-graders-stumble-081510-20100814_1_ninth-grade-middle-schools-classroom-performance 2010) s.orlandosentinel.com/2010-08-14/news/os-9-grade-stumble-081510-20100814_1_ninth-graders-middle-schools-classroom-performance