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Ridgeview middle school

The transition from high school to high school marks a very exciting time in the lives of a child and a parent. But it can be scary, too. It's not just a move to a different school - it's a whole new environment. The beginning of high school can be overwhelming and confusing, and not just because the buildings are naturally larger and the campus is unknown. Children who leave the high school bubble for the jungle of high school have not only to deal with new teachers and academic requirements, but also a completely different set of students, some of whom are three years older and much more mature. Going to high school can be devastating if a child doesn't make the transition smoothly -- more kids fail in ninth grade than any other grade [source: Weber]. Most school systems pave the way by implementing transitional programs, which can include everything from campus visits to shadow students, but it's never easy. Our list of the top 10 differences between high school and high school will help you identify some of the pitfalls you may encounter as your child enters ninth grade - such as what happens when your trombone-playing math whiz discovers that band practice conflicts with calculus? We hope you will find some tips that will get you through this often crazy time. Contents One of the scariest things about going from high school to high school is the often dramatic increase in school size. It's scary enough to make the transition from a three-grade school to a four-grade school - and then, on top of that, many middle schools from an area often dump in a high school. So there could easily be four times as many children in high school, most of whom will be absolute strangers. As the first day of the 9th grade looms, it can be overwhelming to imagine entering a completely unknown (and much larger) campus and walking around in a sea of new faces. Most high schools are quite careful about facilitating the transition, but it's not hard to see how children can get lost in shuffling. The largest body of students leads to the next item on our list... Advertising We know that high schools have higher enrolments than middle schools, so it makes sense that individual classes are going to get bigger, too. Pupil-to-teacher ratios vary considerably across the country, but in general, high school classes are larger than high school classes. It may not be much, but it does The jump from a class of 15 students to one with 20 children doesn't seem like that huge deal, but it does result in things feeling a little more impersonal and less one-on-one interaction with the teacher. There's definitely a lot less hand-holding in high school - older kids are expected to be more responsible and independent, so they (theoretically) don't need as much attention from their teachers. And a child who's not ready for the project can finish. Finished. fall through the cracks. Advertising Eighth-grade teachers 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 see it) that there's going to be a lot more work in high school. And they do that for a reason: There are a lot more classes in high school. Children who are not ready for this may be in for an unpleasant shock during the first month or so of the 9th grade. The increased workload -- coupled with the stress of new environments, programs, expectations, teachers and classmates -- can really throw some kids for a loop, so it's especially important for parents to be at their game during this transition period. Advertising Eighth grade - especially in the last couple of months - is a giddy time for some kids. They are the oldest (and therefore coolest) in school, and take advantage of every opportunity to master this event over anyone who thinks they are beneath them (who is, like, you know, everyone). But when September rolls around, they discover pretty quickly how daunting it can be to fall off the head of the pack at the bottom of the barrel. That's why, for the other reasons we've just discussed, a lot of kids find themselves staggering into ninth grade. Some schools have tried to combat this phenomenon by separating freshman from the crowd a little - they institute ninth-grade schools or smaller class sizes to maintain some of that middle school feel for a little longer. Advertising In most middle schools, with an emphasis on community building and parenting, children don't have much choice in which classes they take. Students may be placed in different groups based on skill level, but generally, there is little variation in lessons. The sixth grade is American history, the seventh grade is pre-algebra, and that's about it. High school is a whole new game, with seemingly endless options - which is exciting, obviously, but can be overwhelming. And programming 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 band practice? Or if physics conflicts with French? There may not be an easy answer or a quick fix, but if parents, teachers and counselors work together, they can create a balanced program. Advertising You may think that as academic and sports requirements increase in high school, so could parent participation. After all, this is a critical in your child's life - very soon, fly the coop, never to be seen again. But you'd think wrong: Parents' participation actually decreases during high school years. One reason is that high schools often don't court parents' involvement as much as elementary and middle schools do - it's just a more hands-off kind of environment. Parents also usually assume that their contributions are not necessary as much children are older and more responsible. No, it's not like that. Many studies have shown that parents' involvement is an important factor in their children's success. So volunteer, your kids may be ashamed to have you around, but it's for their own good. Advertising People are often referred to in high school as a bubble - students do their reading, writing and arithmetic, of course, but sometimes the process is highlighted more than the end result. Children learn about themselves, safe in their own small community, and there is not much focus on the outside world. But that all changes in high school. Suddenly the goal is very clear: college. No more, that's the real deal. Some students, to be sure, are graded from day one, so this change in goals can be exciting -- ultimately, all of them As counting for something! However, it can be annoying for a child who may not have been all that worried about grades. So again, it's on your mind, parents - it's your job to remind underperformers to step up to the plate. Advertising Bad ninth grader. As if they don't already have enough to manage, what with an overwhelming new environment, larger class sizes and increased academic requirements, they also have to juggle many new teachers. In high school, kids probably have a lot of two or three different teachers per day, but high school (as it does with everything) kicks that up a few notches. Now, they could have six or seven teachers every day - all by their own methods, standards, workloads, moods and idiosyncrasies. It's really no wonder that grades are plummeting and dropout rates are going up to ninth grade. So even when you stay on top of your child's work and grades, remember to be understanding -- this can be a difficult time. Once you hit 10th and 11th grade, though, you can really crack the whip. Advertising Most of the changes we've discussed so far in this article have some ambivalence associated with them -- going to high school is exciting and scary. But sport is a part of high school life that can be parked right in the exciting spot. Most middle schools have sports teams, but they don't bring school to life like high school sports can. It's just like the switch in focus with academics: Sure, 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 new classmates. Also, a taste of the school spirit never hurts - it gives children the beginning of a new identity, which can make the transition a little less painful. Advertising You knew we'd get to it sooner or later, didn't you? Peer pressure upsets his ugly head quite early in every child's life, but the stakes are definitely growing in high school. Pressure to drink and do drugs certainly occurs for some during the school years, 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 about illegal substances - it's clothes, food, cheating, your name. Succumbing to peer pressure can quickly derail an academic career, and is an important factor in many instances of abandonment. As always, parents need to be vigilant and, most importantly, keep the lines of communication open. To learn more about the differences between high school and high school, see the links on the page below. Lawnmower parents mow down obstacles and difficulties before their children can cope with them. HowStuffWorks talks to experts about the style of parenting. Bennett, Lori J and McIver, Martha Abel. 'Girls tend to stop going; Boys get told not to return: A report on gender and abandonment problem in Colorado schools. in October 2009. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Radius. The 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. (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. Move from middle to high school. (Accessed September 9, 2010) . Go to high school and high school. (Accessed September 10, 2010) Dave. Back to school: The toughest test of all is 9th grade. Orlando Sentinel, August 14, 2010 (Accessed September 10, 2010) 2010)