

Middle Years

Working together for school success

Short Stops

On the move

When a family moves, everyone's life is affected. You can help by remaining positive about the change. Try to reassure your children, and encourage them to share their feelings about the transition. Talking will help them deal with uncertainty.

DID YOU KNOW? Approximately 25 percent of math errors are the result of sloppy numbers. Suggest that your child write his numbers neatly. He will be less likely to make simple mistakes, and checking his work will be easier.

Believe it!

One way athletes are able to perform their best during stressful games is by visualizing success. Have your middle grader imagine herself making the team or improving a grade. Believing in herself can give her the confidence to accomplish her goal.

Worth quoting

"Do not wait for extraordinary circumstances to do good; try to use ordinary situations."

Jean Paul Richter

Just for fun

Teacher: Why are you reading the last page of your history book first?

Student: I want to see how it ends.



Successful organization

"When's your next science quiz?" If your middle grader can't answer questions like this, it's time he brushed up on his organizational skills. Forgotten textbooks, incomplete assignments, and last-minute study sessions are all signs of poor organization.

Share these tips to help your child organize his...

Time

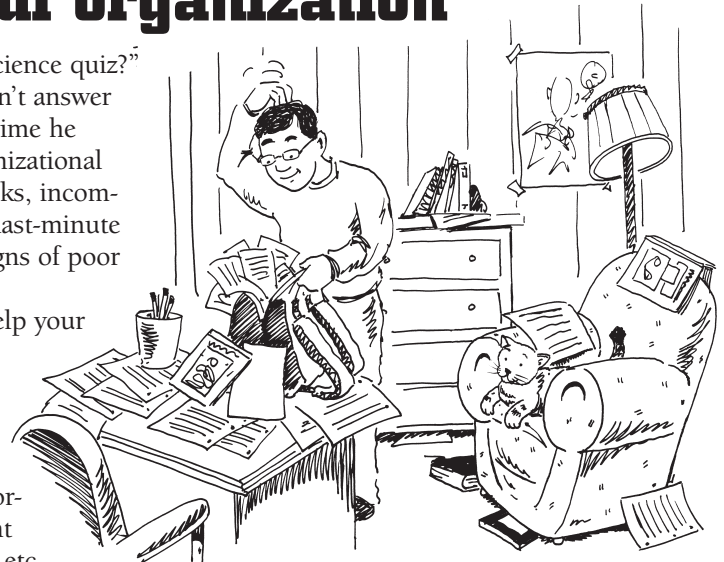
Suggest that your child use a day planner or notebook to list important events—assignment dates, sports schedules, etc. He should review this list every weekend to help prepare for the upcoming week. Knowing what's happening each day can help your child develop a plan to complete his work and limit frustration.

Paperwork

Encourage your middle grader to use a separate notebook or binder for each subject, along with colored pens to emphasize key points as she takes notes in class. She may want to store loose papers, such as returned homework and assignments, in folders. Keeping papers in order reduces clutter and confusion.

Space

Let your child choose a comfortable place to study and do his homework. Some kids like to study at a desk in their rooms, while others prefer to work at the dining room table. The



study area should include supplies like pencils, pens, paper, a dictionary, and a calculator. Having everything in one place will keep your middle grader focused on her work and save time. 👍

Knocking out tests

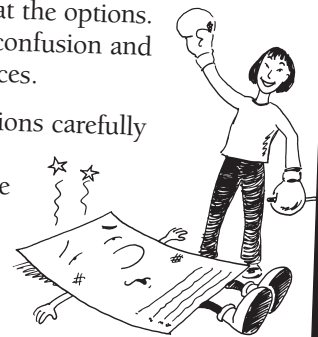
Doing well on tests is no mystery. Share these suggestions with your child to improve her performance on the most common types of test questions.

Multiple choice: Try to answer the question before glancing at the options. This approach can limit confusion and eliminate the wrong choices.

True/false: Read questions carefully for "absolute" words like "always" or "never." These words usually make the answer "false."

Matching: Scan both lists first. Knowing all the options makes matching easier.

Essay: Jot down a brief outline of your main ideas and supporting facts. This preparation can help you get your thoughts together and write them so they are clear. 👍



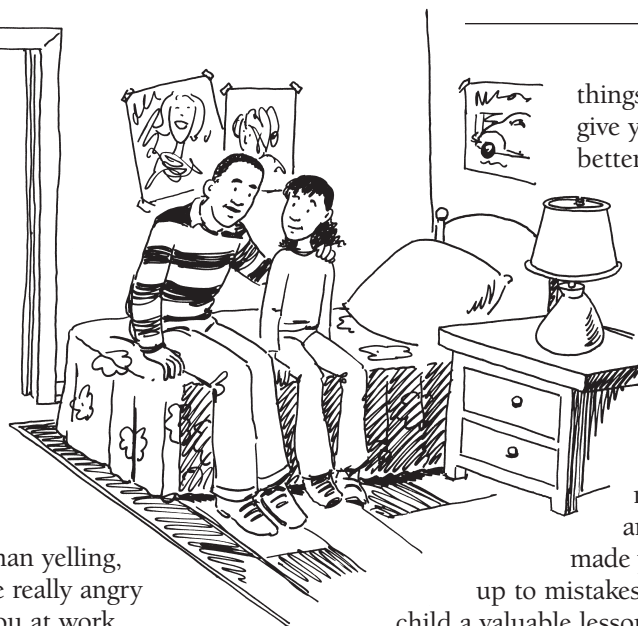
Taming tempers

All parents lose their cool sometimes. While it's important to express disapproval of certain behaviors, how you do so greatly affects your middle grader's responses.

Follow these three steps to anger management:

1 Remain focused. When anger strikes, it can be tempting to ramble off a list of frustrations. But recalling past irritations won't solve the problem. Keep your attention on the current behavior or action. Staying focused can lead to quicker solutions.

2 Write it down. Too angry for words? Rather than yelling, try writing down your feelings. Perhaps you're really angry because you're exhausted or your boss criticized you at work. Whatever the reason, writing your response will help you avoid saying



things you'll regret and give you time to make better decisions.

3 Reconnect.

The most loving parents in the world can overreact. When this happens, admit that you are wrong. Apologize to your middle grader, and explain what

made you angry. Owning up to mistakes can teach your child a valuable lesson about love and respect. 👍

Stop cheating

"I'll do it just this once." Middle graders may not understand the seriousness of cheating. Not only is it dishonest, cheating robs your child of an important opportunity to learn.



Help your middle grader avoid the pressure to cheat with these tips:

- Tell your child that she shouldn't trade homework answers with other students.
- Suggest that your middle grader ask to move to another seat if he's near a classmate who likes to cheat.
- Discuss the penalties for cheating (detention, failing, grounding at home, etc.), and share the importance of honesty.
- Seek help if your child is struggling in a subject.

■ Encourage learning. Stressing grades alone can increase the pressure to excel at any cost. 👍

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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Parent to Parent Making time for family

Work is always hectic for my wife and me, and the kids stay busy, too. I started noticing that sometimes several days went by without our spending time together. So, I came up with some ideas for making sure we found time to be with each other.

First, we plan a special family event each week, such as a pizza night. Once the date is decided, we mark it on the calendar in the kitchen so no one forgets. We try to get in a little family time without planning, too, even if it's just an hour here or there.

Family time is fun time, but my wife and I are serious about making it happen. We treat our scheduled time like other important appointments. We don't let anything except real emergencies interrupt us, including phone calls and e-mails.

We all look forward to family time, and we've become closer. 👍



Q & A Career choices

Q I know it's early, but I'd like my daughter to start thinking about her future career. How can I encourage her?

A Most young kids dream about what they want to be when they grow up—journalist, doctor, fireman. As they get older, they become more involved in the moment and think less about the future. But considering career opportunities now can benefit your middle grader.

Start by having her describe herself. What does she enjoy doing the most?

Is she shy or outgoing? Discovering her natural strengths and interests can help her explore careers that suit her personality.

Then, suggest that she talk to professionals in her field of interest. They can give her a firsthand perspective on career choices.

Finally, emphasize the importance of learning the basics—reading, writing, and math. These skills will give her a solid foundation for any career. 👍