

My Mentee is Growing Up

Some currents to be aware of as your mentee moves up to 6th grade—Middle School!!

Social and Physical changes to keep in mind

- a. Preteen life changes
 - i. Rapid Physical growth
 1. Girls are apt to be taller and heavier than boys = they feel large, clumsy, unattractive
 2. Boys typically begin their growth spurt at 12
 3. There is high anxiety about peer comparisons
 - a. Who is fatter?
 - b. Who is taller?
 - c. Who is skinnier?
 - d. Who has developed?
 - ii. Pressures to “fit in” and be popular increase
 1. Wearing the “right” clothing labels
 2. Fear of speaking up against bullying
 3. Being put down for not being like everyone else
 - iii. Preference for snacking on “empty calories”
 1. Bad eating habits are formed or engrained
 - iv. Choosing to sleep less
 1. Energy levels may sag from lack of sleep
 - v. Less physical activity
 1. Four times more time spent watching TV and computer monitors than doing homework
- b. The average 6th grade shows more assertion and curiosity.
- c. Some kids are better able to express their feelings because their vocabulary has expanded, and experience hormone-induced ranges and intensities of emotions.
 - i. The language of children of poverty does not expand as much.
- d. Students are exposed to, and tempted by, more high-risk behaviors.
- e. Inappropriate, off-color and silly language is common
- f. They need, but rebel against, behavior limits
- g. They need guidance with:
 - i. Coping with change
 - ii. Transition to adolescence
 - iii. Interpersonal skills
 - iv. Handling peer group pressures
 - v. Developing personal interests and abilities
 - vi. Taking greater responsibility for behavior and decisions

Resources:

<http://life.familyeducation.com/sixth-grade/cognitive-development/29544.html?detoured=1>

<http://school.familyeducation.com>