

Ninth Grade is a Pivotal Year: Everything Counts

What to expect from and how to help your ninth grade mentee

1. Differences in maturity are very evident at this age
 - a. Some kids become “know-it-all’s”
 - b. Kids this age begin developing logic and problem-solving skills—very important!
2. Their bodies are not yet fully developed
 - a. Still somewhat awkward
 - b. Boys are still more immature than girls
 - c. Girls lack confidence in changing physical appearances
3. Insecurities about social and academic issues
 - a. Cyberbullying and regular bullying are threats
 - b. Increased exposure to high risk behaviors
4. Time management skills are very important to develop.
 - a. Download a free Homework Planner at <http://www.teamuptutors.com/resources/free-homework-planner/>
 - b. Good organizational skills so there is time for schoolwork, friends, family and activities
 - c. Reduction of parental support = more freedoms, decisions, temptations
5. High school is LARGER—easier to get lost in the crowd, and drop through the cracks if they don’t know how to advocate for themselves
 - a. Upperclassmen like to pick on Freshmen
6. Every grade counts on the permanent record/transcript
 - a. Cannot just “get by” with below grade-level academic skills—especially reading
 - b. Choose classes wisely
 - i. Think carefully about tracks
 - ii. Choose demanding classes
 - iii. Keep grades UP
 - iv. Keep taking foreign language or place out with credit by exam
 - v. Know how to earn college credit in high school
7. Advise the mentee to get to know his/her Counselor NOW
 - a. Will help with course path
 - b. Will help with college choices & recommendations
8. Explain why it is important to begin to “build a resume’
 - a. Colleges are looking for students with varied interests and evidence of leadership potential
 - i. Get involved with extracurricular groups
 - ii. Volunteerism
 - iii. Show leadership development
 - b. Keep all report cards, certificates and volunteer records in a folder

9. What your mentee needs from a you:
- a. Needs to feel heard and valued
 - b. Needs be liked, and know he/she can trust you
 - c. Needs opportunities to explore the world outside his/her world—via articles, websites, personal anecdotes
 - d. Ask about all of the above to let your mentee know you care. If they don't seem to know WHO to talk to, get that information and pass it along for the mentee to follow up on. Keep after him/her until the answer is gotten. The skill of self-advocating is an important life skills
 - e. Talk to your mentee about dream careers and look at career websites
 - i. www.Careeronestop.org >> Explore Careers
 - ii. www.ioscar.org/tx
 - iii. www.online.onetcenter.org >> My Next Move
 - f. Explore which colleges have a focus on what career your mentee is interested in

Resources:

<http://www.teamuptutors.com/resources/blog/2010/04/ninth-grade-success-linked-to-student->
<http://www.schoolfamily.com/school-family-articles/article/10668-high-school-what-to-expect-in-ninth-grade>
<http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/journals/article/index.xml?journalid=30&articleid=38§ionid=84>
<http://collegeapps.about.com/od/admissionstimeline/tp/ninth-grade-college-prep.htm>