

**University is
not a dream,
it's a plan**



**WORKSHOP 1
HIGH SCHOOL
HERE WE COME!
WORKBOOK FOR PARENTS**

Name _____

School _____





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When I was fifteen years old...

INSTRUCTIONS: Reflect and answer the following questions, you can write them down or just think about them.

How was my relationship with my parents or the people who raised me?

What were my needs at the time?

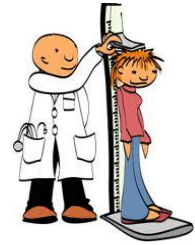
If I could do it again, what would I change?

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DEVELOPMENT DURING EARLY ADOLESCENCE

PHYSICAL:

• During early adolescence, the body undergoes more development than at any other time, except the first two years of life. Developmental growth includes significant increases in height, weight, and internal organ size as well as changes in skeletal and muscular systems, and the onset of puberty. Physical growth is often rapid and uneven, causing many adolescents to lack coordination and literally have growing pains.



INTELLECTUAL:

• During early adolescence, youth are most interested in real-life experiences and authentic learning opportunities; they are often less interested in conventional academic subjects. They are deeply curious about the world around them but may lose interest quickly if information is not presented dynamically with plenty of interaction and peer-to-peer involvement. Young adolescents develop the capacity for abstract thinking, and they are able to think about their future, anticipate needs, and develop personal goals.



MORAL/ETHICAL:

• Young adolescents tend to be idealistic and possess a strong sense of fairness. They are moving from being self-centered to considering the rights and feelings of others. They begin to realize that moral issues are not strictly black and white. They are able to consider ethical and moral questions but lack experience and reasoning skills to make sound moral and ethical choices, which can put them at risk.



EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL:

• Young adolescents begin to seek independence and to develop a strong sense of individuality and uniqueness. At the same time, they are highly sensitive to criticism, want to fit in with their peers, and are likely to have low self-esteem. They may be moody, restless, self-conscious, and unpredictable as they experience intense emotions and stress.



SOCIAL:

• Young adolescents have a strong need to belong to a group. Peer approval becomes more important and they are likely to turn to friends first when experiencing a problem. As they mature socially, they often have opposing loyalties to peer group and family. Though young adolescents may be rebellious toward parents and adults, they still depend on them and desire their approval. They tend to test limits and challenge adult authority figures. .



(Adapted from Caskey & Anfara, 2015)



UNIVERSITY IS NOT A DREAM, IT'S A PLAN HIGH SCHOOL CHALLENGES AND RISK FACTORS

When High School begins, parents and students may have fears during this time of transition that should be taken into account and be addressed by students, parents and school representatives. Social and personal problems should first be addressed at home and then complemented by the school. Major fears during this transitional time are:

- More focus on quantity and quality of study time
- Bullying and cyber-bullying fears
- Peer pressure around drugs and sexual activity
- Lack of family communication between parents and their children
- Sexual orientation and sexual preference
- Self-esteem: finding oneself and be accepted by one's peers

During the process of teaching-learning, there are many changes that impact student's socio-emotional and academic well-being when they begin High School that may cause uncertainties making transition difficult and resulting in high risk behaviors.

Below are summarized research findings that might be helpful for you to better understand about challenges and risk factors during adolescence and High School transition:

Family dynamics have changed due in part to many social and cultural changes, for some parents resulting in being less involved in their child's education. But less time doesn't mean that parents can't get involved as change agents in their child's education – Hernández y López, (2006)
Pérez-Díaz, Rodríguez y Sánchez (2001)

It's important to know that communication between parents and teachers is often lacking. High School teachers may have to start from scratch at getting to know the student - Jones, 2009).

Some research has found that self-concept is at its highest in eighth grade due to being the oldest in elementary school but when they transition to high school, sixth graders may face challenges and a decrease in self-concept as they are not the youngest in school - (Seaton, Egliston, Marsh, Franklin y Craven (2014)

Good communication is the best way to oversee this transition - (Seaton, Egliston, Marsh, Franklin y Craven (2014)

These risks and fears can translate to lower school achievements, lower self-esteem and security, and in socialization, could face lots of difficulties in relation to their new school and new personal relationships both with their teachers and other students -(Spinath y Spinath, 2005).

High School transition may increase a student's anxiety levels, which may negatively result in low academic achievement – (Rains, 2004), (Gimeno, 1996; Erikson, 2007)



HIGH SCHOOL HERE WE COME! CHANGES AND RISK FACTORS DURING HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION

High School can present situations and changes that can lead to certain challenges if they come too fast and **BEFORE** we are prepared with resources to address these new demands from transition. All of this is also affected by the lack of support in responding to these changes.

HIGH SCHOOL
Curriculum is more specialized, specific and new. Academic subject matter and the amount dedicated to study hours and homework becomes more demanding and harder. Students can perceive themselves to be less competent and capable when faced with new academic activities.
Teaching methods are generally centered on the teacher’s knowledge directed at the class, from textbooks or learning by memory. There are several teachers: a variety of teaching methods and styles for learning.
The number of teachers increases based on curriculum subject matters. Typically, one teacher per subject. Move from one classroom to another base on the class and teacher.
Homework is less specific “study the following subject matter...”, more group work. Homework becomes harder.
Bigger schools. Teacher-student relationship is more distant. More students per teacher’s subject matter with an average of 100-150.
In California high schools, a guidance counselor serves approximately 822 students. The national average for a guidance counselor is 250 students. This makes it hard for guidance counselors to dedicate time gearing students up for college (23% of their time) and for the quality of personal and academic guidance. (National Association of College Admissions Counselors, 2015)
Communication and contact between parents and teachers becomes less and less.
More Independence and autonomy is expected from student during class and outside of school.
A more closed friendship circle. More peer dependence and new personal relationships.
School may be farther away from home. More hours in the classroom and more time spent outside the home.
In High School, grades become a key focal point.
There could be a change in self-image due to the change in school context and environment as they become the “babies”, youngest ones in high school during 9th grade which is a new role to undertake.
Students may lose interest in school activities and may be more inclined towards social activities outside of school like sports, music, friends or social media.

(Seaton, Egliston, Marsh, Franklin y Craven (2014)



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Starting High School Tips

So you have a high school student. Kids become vastly more independent. They may start driving, dating, and working at their first jobs. Family time wanes as their teenage lives begin to travel at warp speed. They are hurtling toward their future, and all we can do as parents is hang on for dear life.

Here's our survival checklist:

1

At all times, reinforce and help your teen have a Growth Mindset lifestyle. Don't avoid challenges, not failures, nor mistakes. Teach your teen that success is not only a product of intelligence, but that success is an opportunity to act with great EFFORT, PRACTICE AND CONSTANCY to find the STRATEGIES and SKILLS that lead to learning, progress and changed behaviors. Praise your teen's effort and practices on the process, don't praise the final product that gives you satisfaction, makes you proud or happy. Teach your teen to embrace challenges, persist in the face of problem-solving or difficult tasks and be inspired and happy with the success and well-being of others.

2

Set goals with your freshman. In their freshman year, your teen will start building their college foundation (GPA, A-G courses and SAT or ACT exams). It includes completing state or district's graduation requirements, taking courses that match ability level, and navigate tricky class schedules. For these reasons, successful course selection is crucial. You've been watching this child for 14 years now. Habits are pretty well-established, and look at past grades and habits. **Student success is something every counselor and teacher want to see—and it's their job to help you and your student get there.** Talk to any teacher or counselor and pay attention to recommendations for course levels. They work with their student's day in and day out and they know how that student learns, completes work, and performs on tests. Then choose courses that will stretch your child a bit, but remember that we want kids to feel challenged, but not overwhelmed and drowning.

And they need a plan! This means goals for the year and semester, and then smaller "stepping-stone" goals to help them get there. And of course, check in with them periodically to make sure they're on track and aware that you are monitoring!

3

Help with the balancing act between academics, athletics, and social life. We want our children to be successful students, to feel connected to their school, and to have friends and activities for fun times, but it all has to be carefully balanced. First, school is their job and what should be a student's priority. Class choice and grades will play a big part in determining post-secondary options. It's even more critical to have a set time and non-distractable place to study and do homework.

4

Support your teen's friendships. Of course social interaction is psychologically healthy, but it is NEVER too early for your child to start building their network. If you continue to ask your freshman if they've met anyone new, and then suggest that they invite them over to study or for dinner, you'll provide a comfortable place for these relationships to thrive. This will play more of a role than your teen may ever realize.

5

Be a parent, not a pal. High school comes with all kinds of social events; spectator games, dances, and proms. There will be parties, movies, and just hanging out. Setting firm limits, boundaries and expectations, (how many nights you want your child out, time, relationships, etc.) demanding respect and courtesy, and allowing natural consequences for screw-ups will actually be appreciated by your kids. These types of parameters show that you care and you value your child's health, safety and welfare. They might be mad, but it won't last long. And if it does, just wait until they have kids of their own. Monitor who they are with and where they are going, as well as what they are doing. For these, be a parent, not a pal. Remember "Those Who Host Lose The Most". These are for those parents who want to be the "cool" parents permitting them adult activities (alcohol, pornography, cigarettes, etc.) and/or are non-present with regard to supervision. Some defend their actions by saying they take the keys, or they trust their children. Let's get real here, get caught and you're in a pickle...

6

Make proper digital citizenship a must. Technology is a huge part of our lives, but we don't automatically know how to use it safely and responsibly. But this is important, especially because your student's social media posts can affect their college admission chances.

7

Ask for help! If you discover that your child is struggling academically, socially, emotionally, or with substance abuse or other serious issues, get help fast. With increased independence comes temptations, and there are plenty out there. It's critical to be observant of your child and of their friends. Keep track of academic progress. Notice changes in behavior. Don't try to explain things away. Be honest. Too many parents try to hide their child's struggles and they are fairly quick about notifying the school about academic problems, but not about the other types of challenges. It's not anything to be embarrassed about if your child runs into challenges; it doesn't mean you're not a good parent. It means your child is struggling and help is needed. Collaborate with your school counselor; let them provide suggestions for assistance, run interference with the academic side of things, be an objective sounding board for both you and your child, be the link between outside professionals and the schools. At these times, parents need someone in their corner who can think objectively and unemotionally. School counselors are not there to judge; they are there to support you through a trying time.

8

Negative Peer Pressure. Seek help if she/he is consistently giving into peer pressure. Develop a close, open and honest relationship with your child. Encourage your child to pursue a wide variety of friendships with positive role models, and to join groups or do activities which involve interacting with positive role models. Let him/her know it is normal to want to fit in and that peer pressure is something all children and adults experience at some time. Children are less likely to give into peer pressure or gangs if parents spend quality time with them. Help your child develop a positive self-image. Encourage responsibility, individuality, independence, and assertiveness. Provide positive discipline.

If you are suspicious that your child may have given into negative peer pressure, try to figure out the reason and address it.

Adapted from <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/school>



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THOUGHTS THAT I AM LEARNING ABOUT MY ROLE

Writing down what I need to work on...

	Teen Years	Challenges + Changes	Tips
Be Informed...			
Be Involved...			
Be Inspired...			