

HELPING YOUR CHILD “MOVE ON” TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

What new changes should my child expect from elementary school?

- Larger building to discover
- More friends / classmates / teachers to meet
- Personal daily class schedule to follow
- Meeting new students from other schools
- Different courses than previously offered
- Lockers to store materials (rather than desks)
- New rules to follow
- More homework
- More independence (to start thinking about future goals)
- Rapid physical and emotional changes

How can I help my child become more organized for middle school?

- Make sure Student Planner is filled out every day!
- Use 3-ring binders with colored dividers
- Gentle reminders to keep folders, backpacks and lockers clean and up to date
- Find a quiet place for completing homework, in your home, with good lighting and few disturbances (sibling interruptions, phone calls from friends...)
- Help your child prepare for school by helping him / her to 1) lay out clothes the night before, 2) eat a healthy breakfast, 3) make lunch in advance...
- Encourage your child to join the After-School Homework Club
- Help him / her to develop good study habits on school nights (review notes from class, jot down questions that he / she has, discuss what he / she is learning at school with you and your family...)
- Make sure he / she has a public library card (and provide resources for your home, if possible)
- Ensure that he / she eats healthily and gets sufficient sleep

How can I help my child to develop positive new friendships?

- Get to know your child's friends and welcome them into your home
- Get to know the parents of your child's friends
- Encourage your child to try making “healthy” friendships (e.g., by becoming active in a club or activity)
- Suggest that they find a friendly face with whom to eat lunch (perhaps ask a student from his / her class BEFORE lunchtime begins)
- Explain to your child the importance of being a good friend: someone who is friendly, a good listener, and stays “true to self”

How do I help my child deal with peer pressure?

- Share with your child the options to 1) simply say no; 2) walk away; 3) give a reason for why they're saying "no" (to cheating, skipping school, using alcohol / tobacco / other drugs, bringing weapons to school...). Some reasoning statements could be:
 - "If you really cared about me, you wouldn't pressure me!"
 - "I'll be grounded if I stay out late,"
 - "Yeah, smoking could probably help me run the mile in an HOUR flat!" ☺
 - "That's against the law. We could get suspended or expelled...and our friendship might be ruined if it gets bad."
- Encourage him / her to talk with someone (parent, teacher, counselor, older sibling, relative...) when he / she is under stress
- Have serious conversations about 1) avoiding bullying; 2) eliminating sexual harassment; 3) addressing racism (e.g. setting an example of tolerance and respect for other cultures)

How can I help to keep my child safe?

- Tell your child to stay alert and avoid being alone (if he / she is feeling harassed or bullied)
- Encourage him / her to walk away, AVOID fighting back, and find a way to resolve the conflict
- Promote your child's self-esteem...he / she will make healthy decisions as a result!

What can I do to make the transition to Sennett easier for my child?

- Get involved by becoming a volunteer
- Contact your child's homeroom teacher for more information
- Have open and honest conversations about his / her middle school concerns, expectations, and questions

We are so happy to have your child join us at Sennett. In addition to your child's homeroom teacher, please feel free to contact one of us if you have any questions or concerns:

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