

James Tippit Middle School



Counselor's Corner

Middle School Years

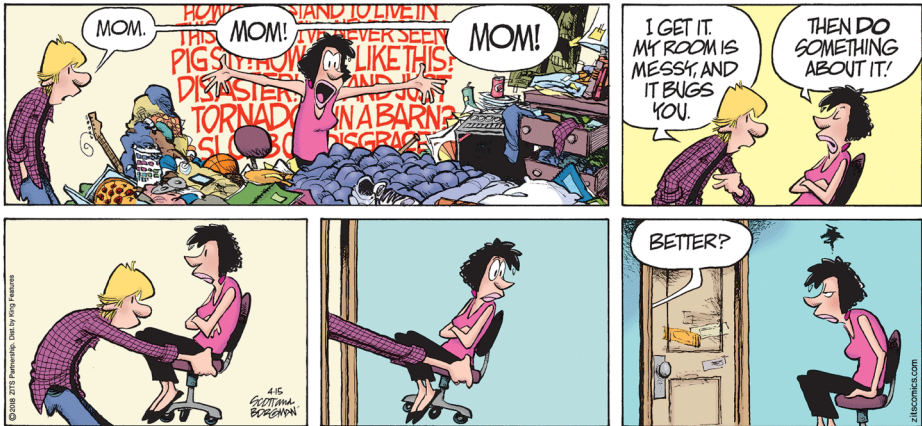
Does My Middle Schooler Still Need Structure and Routine?

By Holly Barrett

The simple answer is Yes! As your child grows and becomes more independent, it is still important to help your child establish routines and to monitor bedtime and wake up times. What are the benefits?



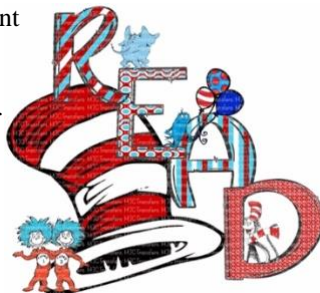
- **Cognitive Development:** Cognitive skills are the core skills the brain uses to think, read, learn, remember, reason, and focus. A consistent sleep and wake time and enough hours of sleep each night are very important for healthy brain development. Growing teens need 9-10 hours per night.
- **Independence:** Children feel safer and more in control when they know what to expect. They gain confidence from being successful with daily routines and structure which in turn fosters independence.
- **Coping Skills:** The consistency of routines and structure is reassuring during times of stress or difficult situations. Children are better able to cope with adversity when they can follow their normal day to day routine.
- **Success:** Routines help children develop healthy habits and learn time management and responsibility through doing daily chores, activities, and homework.



Reading Matters!

By Sean Moore

March 2nd is Dr. Seuss's Birthday! Dr. Seuss made a significant impact on the literacy world with his fun children's stories. Be intentional this month with getting into the habit to read and encouraging your son/daughter to read. Not only is reading fun, it has also been shown to improve student performance in school by improving reading ability, vocabulary, writing skills, and helping us shape our understanding of the world. Reading also stretches our brain muscles and helps us build empathy. To learn more about how reading is positive, tips to encourage reading, or suggestions to find books for teens, click [here](#).



UPCOMING



Mandatory Cosmetology Parent Meeting – March 9th

There will be a meeting for parents of 8th grade students interested in the cosmetology career path in high school on Monday, March 9 from 6-7 at East View High School. Parents must either attend the meeting or reach out to Holly Jones (cosmetology teacher at EVHS) if a student wants to be in the lottery to be in the program.

Next Year Course Selections

Most students have now completed their course selections for next school year. Please check with your child to make sure he/she has turned in the course selection form to a science teacher or to the counselors. All students will get a course verification form in April to make sure their requests are correct or make any changes.

Spring Break (March 16-20)

This is an awesome opportunity to spend time with family and recharge!

Contact



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WHAT TRUSTED ADULTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT: SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

Social Media is often scrutinised as having a negative impact on children's mental health. Children and young people are now growing up in a technology dominated world, and social media plays a major role in their social lives. This balanced guide focuses on both the positive and negative impacts that social media can bring to young people and their mental health.

POSITIVE IMPACTS

EASY ACCESS TO SUPPORT AND HELP

Due to delays in young people getting help for their mental health, such as experiencing low mood, or suffering from anxiety, they may sometimes reach out to access support from others online. Sharing problems or issues with friends, peers and broader social networks can be met with positive reaction, with nearly 7 in 10 teens reporting to receive support on social media during tough or challenging times. Where there are moderated communities which offer support and guidance, children can be provided with a great source of support.

SUSTAINING FRIENDSHIPS AND MAKING CONNECTIONS

There is evidence to suggest that strong adolescent friendships can be enhanced by social media interaction, allowing children to create stronger bonds with people they already know. Online relationships can actually make children more relationship-oriented, thoughtful, and empathic. By sharing comments on pictures, videos and posts, it can create long-term friendships as they can continually keep in touch, even with a distance between them.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Support can be found in various places online; sometimes this is known as "finding your tribe". Online platforms and groups can provide a wonderful sense of belonging for children. They can find peers with similar interests and circumstances which can sometimes be difficult to find in real-life. As a result, this can create stronger connections and help to build confidence.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS

SELF-ESTEEM & BODY IMAGE

There are 10 million new photographs uploaded to Facebook alone every hour, providing an almost endless potential for young people to be drawn into appearance-based comparisons whilst online. No one is the same as how they portray themselves online as we tend to only show the best part of ourselves. The pressure to fit-in and conform is huge, which can become a driving force for children to replicate what they see from friends, celebrities and sponsored adverts. This pressure may contribute to anxiety, low mood and a feeling of inadequacy. As a result, it can lead to a feeling of low satisfaction with their own lives.

HARMFUL ADVICE

The online world provides the opportunity for anybody to upload and share photoshopped pictures, edited video, fake news and even unvetted advice. Children may stumble upon this, which could potentially encourage them make wrong decisions and not get the help that they need. It's important that you teach your child to differentiate between what is true and useful information and what is fake.

ADDICTION AND COMPULSIVE CHECKING

Social media addiction is thought to affect around 5% of teenagers. The Office for National Statistics found that children who spend more than 3 hours a day on social media are more than twice as likely to support poor mental health. Furthermore, compulsive checking due to 'Fear Of Missing Out' has been linked to poor and disturbed sleep, as well as difficulty to relax during evenings. One in five young people say they wake up during the night to check messages on social media, leading them to be three times as more likely to feel constantly tired at school than their classmates who don't use social media during the night.

CYBERBULLYING

One recent large-scale UK study showed that cyberbullying is one of the biggest challenges for young people. Other studies suggest that cyberbullying has a bigger effect on wellbeing and mental health than other types of bullying. 7 in 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying, with 37% of young people saying they experience cyberbullying on a high-frequency basis. Young people are twice as likely to be bullied on Facebook than on any other social network.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



HELPFUL APPS:

- Hub of Hope - <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>
- Mindshift
- Smiling Mind

SOURCES OF HELP:

- Childline, 0800 1111 or visit their website
- Bullying UK, 0808 8002222
- Young Minds Parents Line, 0808 802 5544