

## McCleskey Middle School 10 Tips for Parents of Middle School Aged Youth

### Start a successful school year—and keep it going!

1. **If you and your child have fallen out of your bedtime routine this summer, get back into a solid routine!** A week before the first day of school is a good time frame in which to begin.
2. **Plan and shop for healthy breakfasts and lunches a week in advance.** This will save you precious time and prevent much stress in the long run!
3. **Go back to school shopping together.** Most middle school teachers will provide specific lists of supplies for their classes. Your area's office supply store may also have local school lists on hand. Shopping from a teacher-supplied list will ensure your child has the right supplies, and could save you a ton of money and time.
4. Starting middle school can mean a new building, lockers, and possibly moving from classroom to classroom for each subject. **Pay a visit to your child's new school during open house. A tour around the new campus can be a simple way to ease the first day jitters.** Encourage your child to keep a small notebook handy so that he/she can jot down reminders such their locker combination or lunch time.
5. **As much as you may dislike it, middle school is usually the time when fashion becomes important to students.** If you're not already familiar with your school's dress code, check your school's website for a list of dos and don'ts. Take this opportunity to set clear guidelines about the type of clothes your pre-teens are permitted to wear, whether or not makeup is allowed, and talk about personal hygiene. Set clear standards with your child about her clothing allowance.
6. A move to middle or junior high school means more responsibilities. **If you find that your child needs help managing his/her new middle school schedule, set up a daily assignment checklist to keep at home and review daily.**

7. At this age students may pull away and not talk to you as much. This type of middle school behavior can sometimes be influenced by peers or life changes—such as attending a new school. **Continue to ask questions and be engaged with your child. Contrary to popular belief, parent/child engagement is still needed.**
8. Around ages 11, 12, and 13, shifts occur in students' thinking. **Keep them engaged in school and learning. Encourage their curiosity.** Many are strongly influenced by friends; so if they have friends who only want to socialize and not learn, emphasize the importance of having friends and working hard to learn.
9. Because students this age have strong emotions, they tend to either “love” school or “hate” it. **If your child happens to “hate” school, help him/her identify parts that are more enjoyable—even if they are recess, gym, and lunch.**
10. Most students at this age think there is too much homework in middle school. **Emphasize how homework helps students learn.** Do homework with them. Make it fun. Applaud their learning and new knowledge.

It is my hope that these tips help both you and your child(ren) as they start or return to McClekey for a wonderful school year.

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