

Middle school is a huge step in your life. You are leaving the world of elementary school and entering into the big world of middle school. Some parts will be scary, and some will be fun. After all, it opens the door to what your high school years will be like. Middle school can be stressful, scary, exciting, and fun all in one. :)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVIVAL GUIDE

- 1) School IS important! Pay attention! Take notes and listen! If you don't pay attention, you won't understand anything later. Middle school isn't just about your social life. If you goof off and don't try in middle school, high school will not be much better either. :/ Therefore, stay focused. You're at school for a reason, so learn something!
- 2) Ask questions! Questions are the key to a successful life. Don't be scared to ask something in fear of sounding dumb. It is better to ask the question and have a chance to get the answer correct on the assignment or test! If you don't ask questions, you will be one of the only ones who doesn't know the answer! During class isn't the only time you can ask questions: Before/after class, before/after school, or during the teacher's planning. If you don't ask the questions during class time, you need to be sure to write it down so you can ask it later.
- 3) Always, always, ALWAYS be yourself. Although it may be considered "cool" to do what everybody else is doing, fitting in only crushes your ability to stand out. Middle school is a place where you find out who you really are. It is where you make yourself YOU! So do what makes you happy, be who makes you happy, and have fun!
- 4) Get involved. Try new things :) Middle school has activities that you can engage in, such as band, athletics, clubs, etc. You can engage and develop a new passion. You can meet lots of new friends while you are getting involved. You don't have to be good at what you take as an activity. You are at school to learn.
- 5) Stay out of gossip and getting in trouble with friends. These are usually the years when you get tangled up in drama without meaning to. For some people, their friends turn into someone who they could barely recognize anymore. NEVER judge someone before you know him or her! EVER! Another word: If you hear it, don't spread it! Gossip is the gateway to trouble that you don't want to be in! Drama, drama, drama! This may seem hard, impossible at times, but talking about a friend behind their back will never end well. Even if you feel like you're right and there's a legitimate problem, talking to anyone but your friend will only make things worse. If you talk to your friend directly, you may be able to solve the problem and repair the friendship.
- 6) Get to know your teachers well. Teachers are people, too, just like you, people in your family, and your friends. They (and you) will make mistakes. Some teachers expect more than others do, and different teachers have higher or lower tolerances than others. The more that you treat them like human beings the more likely it is that they will do the same in return. Teachers are also very helpful in certain situations such as an embarrassing situation, a family concern, or if you need someone to lend an ear.
- 7) Meet NEW people! Middle school is a perfect place to meet new friends. While you were in elementary school, you were used to about 25-30 kids, but now you are in a hallway with about 200 kids all at once! It can be crazy and scary, but if you commit to meeting someone new, who knows who you'll get to know! :) That is how new friends are made! You want friends that have similar interests; you don't want to be friends with someone just because they are popular. Don't write people off based on assumptions that you or others have made in the past. If you like them, and more importantly if you like who you are around them, you have the start of a healthy friendship.
- 8) Relationships. I know now since you are entering middle school you think it's time to find a guy/girl... It's not! Just because you are in middle school doesn't mean you're not a kid anymore. Enjoy your new experiences that come from middle school and leave the boyfriend/girlfriend bit for much later. You'll have time later down the road for that. Refer to number 7 if you are looking for relationships!
- 9) Remember: There is no such thing as a "popular" kid. Everybody is popular in his or her own way! Basically, the most important thing: Be yourself! This may sound cliché, but honestly, that is really all you have to do to get by in middle school. Just be yourself.