



HOW TO: SURVIVE 6TH GRADE!

Jenna Segmiller
GIRL SCOUTS SILVER AWARD

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Community House Middle School

Introduction

This booklet is about helping students adjust to middle school. I went through a hard adjustment and used to think I was the only one having a tough time; but know you aren't alone. I made this booklet for my Girl Scouts Silver Award. It is about my tips for 6th grade survival that I believe would really be helpful. There are quotes throughout the booklet from people who were able to adjust successfully in middle school, especially 6th grade. I hope you find this helpful.

"I got lost twice
on the first day of
middle school!"
-JR

"I was afraid
I wouldn't have
enough time to use
the restroom."
-Anonymous

The School

The Building

When you are in the building, it might look bigger than it actually is but in reality, it's not that big.

TIP: On the first day of school and during semester changes, bring your map just in case.

The building hallways are divided into the different grade levels so you won't really see the other grades. You may see the different grade levels during the changing of elective classes but you don't have to interact with them. Most all the classes you go to are close together so it won't take you so long to get there. If you get lost, it's okay. The teachers will help you and for the first few weeks of school, they don't care if you are late because it's the first weeks.

Class Changes

The amount of time you have to change classes is 5 minutes. This may seem like very little time to get from class to class but you actually have a lot of time. I remember being worried about getting to class and using the bathroom in the allotted time period but in the end, there wasn't really anything to worry about. The hallways are sometimes packed with all the kids, and the lockers. It is a tight fit but you have to find short cuts and ways around the people who are talking and walking really slow.

TIP: ALWAYS go around people who are walking slow if you can because it can get you to your class faster.

There are at least two bathrooms near/in every hall so they are very close if you need to use one during the class changes. Don't worry about having enough time because you will make it. Some students will be out in mobile classrooms and will worry about getting from class to class. Once again, you will have enough time. I was in a mobile classroom once and I learned a lot of short cuts that decrease the length of travel and the time.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT BEING LATE!!

Classes

Teachers

We all have that one teacher that we love and that we dislike. Each teacher is different. Some teachers you will work well with and others not so much, but you will find a way to work with them. Each teacher offers a tutoring day. If you don't understand something the teacher said, if you are confused, or if you really are just lost (which is okay), you can attend the tutoring sessions and your teacher will be more than willing to help you.

TIP: Always ask the teacher if they are having tutoring that day, and let them know that you will be attending.

Each teacher gives a different amount of homework based on what they think their class can handle. Don't get overwhelmed if all your teachers give you a lot of homework because there is a way to get it all done. (Find the homework section in this Booklet if you need more advice on dealing with homework.)

You will hear things about your teachers from the kids who have had them before. Don't listen to the negative opinions. Develop your OWN opinion of your teachers before judging them. Every person has a bad day... yes that includes teachers. They may not be very nice one day, so don't judge them based on that day. You will hear rumors about teachers but the rumors aren't always true, so don't listen to them.

Failing

We have all failed that one test that we knew we weren't ready for. Don't worry about failing. While you study just prepare for the test, only focus on the subject matter and what you need to know. There are a few tips to lessen your chance of failing.

TIP ONE: Before the test, make sure to attend tutoring given by the teacher. Even if you feel like you understand the material, still go because you might remember a question or gain a better understanding.

TIP TWO: Check other teacher's websites who teach the same grade level and subject that you need. You could get other useful information and websites that could help you.

"She was so mean today."

-JS, JR, & KD

"She is my favorite teacher ever."

-Anonymous

"Out of all my teachers, she's my favorite." -JS

"I'm going to fail this test." -Anonymous

“Some teachers gave
homework and
some didn’t.”
-Jacob Segmiller

TIP THREE: Always do the study guide if given one. Some study guides have the same structured questions the test will have. You can also use them to help to make sure you understand and are ready.

TIP FOUR: Ask for help. Don’t be scared to ask questions in class because you most likely aren’t the only one with that question. Even at home ask your parents for help because you may just get lucky and they will understand it.

If you fail a test, you will most likely be given a chance to retake the test or do corrections to improve your grade.

Homework

Every teacher gives a different amount of homework each day. Some days you will have none and other days you may have a ton. But don’t worry if you have a lot of homework and have to go to after school activities because it can be done. You need to manage your time.

TIP ONE: Do A-day¹ homework such as (science or social studies) on A-day so if you have a lot of B-day² homework you won’t have to do both.

TIP TWO: If you have a big project, don’t wait to the end to do it.

TIP THREE: Some teachers give you website links for homework. You know how technology is, it may not work when you need it to. Don’t wait until the last minute to do the assignment.

TIP FOUR: Use your time wisely in class. If you have a few minutes before the bell rings and the teacher is letting you talk or hang out, you can do your homework. During Enrichment class if you don’t have anything to do, do your homework. Just make sure it is okay with your teacher.

¹A-Day is a certain day where you will have a certain schedule. The only difference between A-Day and B-Day schedules are what elective you have and whether or not you have science or social studies that day. (The only thing that will be the same for both days is math and language arts).

²B-Day is a schedule for that day. The only difference between A-Day and B-Day schedules are what elective you have and whether or not you have science or social studies that day. (The only thing that will be the same for both days is math and language arts.)

Make-Up Work

When you start middle school and miss a day, you have to make-up the work. The teachers won't tell you what to make up, unless you make the effort to talk to them.

TIP: Email your teacher and check their website.

Gym

In gym, you have to change out into your gym uniform which includes a CHMS shirt, the CHMS shorts, and tennis shoes. Always remember to have your gym clothes with you on days that you have gym.

TIP ONE: Have a set of gym clothes at home and a set at school to keep in your locker. Then at the end of the week, bring your gym clothes home that were in your locker to get washed and then bring the set that's already clean at home to school for the next week and repeat.

If you feel don't feel comfortable changing out, that's okay; most people don't. But as the time goes on that you have gym, you learn that no one actually pays attention to people changing. Everyone is in their own world trying to get ready and no one cares about you changing because they are too.

TIP TWO: Wear a tank top under your clothes when you have gym to feel more comfortable.

TIP THREE: ALWAYS have hair ties with you! They can be used to put up your hair or to tie your shirt up if it's too long.

Usually you have enough time to change out of your uniform to get back into your regular clothes. It doesn't matter how much time you have to change back because you will learn to change out quick to have free time and talk to your friends.

"Changing out was weird at first but then I just got used to it."
-Anonymous

***Jenna's Must Have's For Gym BESIDES Gym Clothes:**

- Deodorant
- Perfume
- Extra Socks
- Hair Brush
- Hair Ties

***Boy's Must Have's For Gym BESIDES Gym Clothes:**

- Deodorant
- Extra Socks
- Cologne

Lockers

Lockers are something that most everyone looks forward to when going to middle school. Lockers are great but they can be stressful. Wondering if you have enough time to go to your locker, leaving your homework in your locker, and even stressing out about getting past everyone to get to your locker, can be stressful.

The school has a lot of students which means at least half of those students have to share. When picking who to share with, I recommend picking a friend or someone you know well. If you pick someone that you don't know very well, it can also cause stress. Since you don't know the person that well, you don't know their organizational habits and what they are like.

TIP ONE: Have a locker shelf. Having a shelf gives you a few different ways to organize your locker to find what works best for you and even if you have to share it with your partner. (A locker shelf can be purchased at an office supply store, Target, or Walmart.)

TIP TWO: Don't have your locker combination code pre-set so you can just go open it. Yes it saves time but your stuff can get stolen. Some students like to pull on locker handles and see if they open, so don't pre-set your code.

TIP THREE: I don't recommend decorating with a white board, rugs, or chandeliers because it makes it harder to go to your locker and get what you need fast. These decorations can fall and it won't be easy to get your stuff and go. I think having a mirror in your locker is okay! You can always check to see if your hair style is falling out or if you need something. The mirror should be put in the back of the locker where it can't fall.

TIP FOUR: Before starting middle school, I recommend getting a lock and start working the combination.

TIP FIVE: Set your locker to zero after you get your stuff and go to lock it up. It will save you time when going to unlock it.

Social Tips

New People

There are other schools that go to Community House Middle School. About five different elementary schools go to Community House. You are going to meet different people. Some you are going to be best friends with and others not so much. People come from all different walks of life. Before you judge the new people you are meeting give them a few chances. You never know you may end up being friends.

You may not like everybody but that's okay. Learn to meet new people and find out who you are going to be friends with. Don't be worried about meeting new people. You are going to have to work with all kinds of people in your grade, try to find a common ground with them such as sports, classwork, teachers, and afterschool activities. Those will give you something to talk about so the conversation will be less awkward.

Friends

Middle school can be rough with your friends. You are going to lose some friends from elementary school and you are going to gain a lot of new friends. Since there are about five different elementary schools going to Community House Middle School, there are a lot more people to meet.

Losing friends is always hard. When you lose a friend, you learn that they aren't a true friend because true friends try to make friendships work.

TIP ONE: Don't let it get to you. If you ever need advice about your friends, talk to your guidance counselor or someone close to you.

Gaining new friendships is very fun. Make sure your new friendships are true friendships. Be open to making new friends. Ways to gain new friendships is to find common ground and find out a lot about them. Your circle of friends can already be good for you but new friends can make your friend group bigger and more fun.

"Some people I met
in 6th grade I'm
really good friends
with."
-NV

"During middle
school I learned
who my true friends
were."
-Anonymous

Some of your friends from elementary school aren't going to be in your class or even on the same class team as you. That's okay but it does mean you have to work extra hard to keep these friendships going. Don't let them fail.

TIP TWO: Keep in contact (call, text, Instagram, etc.) with your friends and always try to hang out as much as you can.

Some people will date and others will not. Dating is up to you and your parents. If you don't want to date, you don't have to. You won't be the only one not dating. There will be the 6th grade dance but don't worry about going with a date because that isn't really what the dance is like. Most people go in groups of friends and that's fine. Normally at the dance the boys and girls keep their distance and only hang out with each other.

TIP THREE: Dating is okay if your parents approve but make time for both school, dating, and friends. Don't just forget about your friends or school because you are dating someone.

Drama (Not the Class)

There is going to be drama in middle school. I tried my best to avoid it but everyone has their drama. Don't stress over drama, it isn't that big of a deal.

TIP ONE: Talk to an adult or friend about issues that bother you or about something going on that is upsetting you. They can give advice on how to handle a certain problem.

Don't get worried about the drama, all you can do is try and work out your issue and leave it at that. A way to avoid getting sucked into the drama is to not start rumors or gossip about other people. If you don't gossip, you aren't getting involved and are avoiding the conflict.

Bullying

Bullying is not good at all. You need to recognize when someone is bullying you or someone else. Don't let anyone walk all over you. I know this may be hard but stand up for yourself and others.

TIP ONE: Learn to say no, if someone wants something from you that you don't want to give them.

TIP TWO: You need to know that people only bully people to feel better about themselves. They think you are better than them and you are if you aren't bullying someone else.

TIP THREE: When bullied you need to talk to an adult or guidance counselor. If you see someone bullying another person you need to get help (get an adult involved) and stop the problem.

Social Media

It's okay to have social media; I have it too. But you always need to be careful. The school checks your social media, if you think they can't, they can and they are.

TIP ONE: Think before you share. If you are going to share something that isn't nice, or can be taken in a negative way, don't share. You will be held accountable for whatever you share.

Conclusion

This Booklet was made for my Girl Scout Silver Award but it was for much more than for an award. I went through a rough adjustment to middle school. I had anxiety every day during the first half of 6th grade but after learning the ropes of the school it got better. This Booklet for me is a way of sharing what I went through. Making the Booklet was difficult because not many people knew about what I was going through. If you are having a rough adjustment or tough time talk to your guidance counselor, your parents, or an adult. All of the tips in the Booklet is what I learned about middle school. I hope the Booklet is helpful for you.

****Disclaimer****

All statements and comments (excluding quotes) referenced in this Booklet are the sole opinions and expressions of Jenna Segmiller based on her personal experiences.

Author Information

Jenna Segmiller is currently 13 years old. She is in the 8th grade at Community House Middle School. Some of her hobbies are dance, Girl Scouts, writing, and art. Jenna has been in Girl Scouts since Kindergarten. Her greatest achievements are having a short story published, earned her second degree black belt in karate and her Girl Scouts Bronze Award.

