

Ready for

MIDDLE

SCHOOL

Activities to help  
you get middle  
school started  
off right

# Get to know your school

To get middle school off to a good start, learn as much as you can about your school. From attendance policies to where you can go for help, there's a lot you need to know.

## The basics

- ▶ What are your school colors? \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ What is your school mascot? \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Have you been to your school's website?  yes  no
- ▶ Do you know the rules you need to follow?  yes  no
- ▶ Do you understand your school's dress code?  yes  no

## Rules and policies

- ▶ What do you do if you're absent or late? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ What do you do if you have to leave early? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Can you see your grades online? If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Where to go for help

- ▶ Your counselor's name \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ How do you make an appointment with your counselor? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Your homeroom/advisory teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ Your principal's name \_\_\_\_\_

# Think about your skills

In middle school, you have more work to do and a lot more to keep track of. Having good academic skills will help you do well in your classes, and earn the grades you want.

The most successful students do each of the following things well. How do you measure up? Put a check mark in the column that best describes how strong your skills are.

	Very good	OK	Not great
Organization	_____	_____	_____
Managing your time	_____	_____	_____
Class participation	_____	_____	_____
Homework	_____	_____	_____
Taking notes	_____	_____	_____
Taking tests	_____	_____	_____

► Which one of these areas do you want to improve the most? \_\_\_\_\_

► What can you do to improve it? \_\_\_\_\_

Being in school every day is very important in middle school. The more school you miss, the harder it is to succeed in your classes. How would you describe your school attendance up to now?

almost perfect     very good     fair     bad

► If you marked "fair" or "bad" how can you improve your attendance?

# Get involved

Middle school isn't just about academics. It's also about making friends, developing new skills, and expanding your horizons. The best way to do this is to get involved in activities.

## Reasons to get involved

There are lots of great reasons to get involved and participate in activities this year. Draw a line from each Student Quote to the matching Reason to Participate.

### Student Quote

"I'd never been in a play before, but it turned out to be a lot of fun."

Lucia

"I work in the office one period a day. I like helping them out." Tyler

"Band is so much fun. We're all friends and we have a great time together." Hannah

"Being a class representative has helped me gain confidence and leadership skills." James

"I play the flute in the band and I'm getting better all the time." Tasha

"Basketball practice helps me get rid of a lot of stress. It's great to forget about school for awhile." Jasmine

"I didn't like school last year, but now I'm on the soccer team, and I like school a lot more." Carlos

### Reason to Participate

spend time with friends

become a leader

try something new

provide a service

relieve stress

enjoy school more

develop your skills and talents

# Make good choices

In middle school, you have more freedom. You also get to make more of your own choices and decisions. Remember, YOU are responsible for your actions and the choices you make.

## What would you do?

Read each situation and circle the choice you would make.

1. You are walking down the hall at school with several classmates. One of them starts making fun of another student. What do you do?
  - A) laugh and be glad they aren't making fun of you
  - B) keep quiet and just keep walking
  - C) stand up for the other student
2. You are at a store with a friend and he takes a candy bar without paying. What do you do?
  - A) No one is looking, so you take one too.
  - B) Pretend you didn't see him take it.
  - C) Tell him to put it back.
3. While out with your friends, someone dares you to take a hit of a vape. What do you do?
  - A) Wanting to be cool, you agree to try it.
  - B) You take the vape, but pass it to someone else without trying it.
  - C) Say "No thanks," and start talking about something else.

**Scoring** – Give yourself 0 points for every A answer, 1 point for every B answer, and 2 points for every C answer. Total your points. \_\_\_\_\_

**5–6 points** – Good for you! You know how to think for yourself and you aren't afraid to say and do what's right.

**2–4 points** – You're on the right track. Try taking a stand more often.

**0–1 points** – Work on thinking for yourself and not letting your friends influence your decisions.

# Stand up to bullying

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, hurtful, and repeated. Making your school bully free needs to be a team effort, and everyone must do their part.

## Types of bullying

There are four main types of bullying: physical, emotional, social, and cyberbullying. Read each statement and decide whether it's true or false.

True False

### Physical bullying

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Examples of physical bullying include hitting, shoving, kicking, and elbowing. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Hazing is a form of bullying.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Witnesses shouldn't get involved.  |

### Emotional/social bullying

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Leaving someone out of a group is an example of social bullying.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Students who get called names usually deserve it.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Saying something mean or embarrassing isn't bullying if it's true. |

### Cyberbullying

- |                          |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. If someone threatens you by text, email, or on social media, you should delete it right away. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Cyberbullying is often done anonymously.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Cyberbullying can be very harmful, even though no one is physically hurt.                     |

What are some things you can do if you see a classmate being bullied?

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1. true 2. true 3. false 4. true 5. false 6. false 7. false 8. true 9. true

# Make new friends

Having friends makes coming to school a lot more interesting and fun. Friends like you for who you are, and they are there to help you when you need it.

## New friends

Having friends is really important, and middle school is a great time to develop new friendships. Here are a few tips to help you make some new friends this year.

- ▶ Go out of your way to talk to the students in your classes, those you see at lunch, and the students who are in the same activities as you.
- ▶ Smile and be friendly. If you're shy, push yourself a little. Try acting as if you're more outgoing than you feel.
- ▶ Join something. It's easier to make friends when you're part of a group or involved in an activity.

## What makes a good friend?

Friendships aren't always easy and fun. Sometimes friendships can be stressful—or even harmful. How do you know if someone's friendship is making your life better or worse?

Check the box that shows the kind of friend each statement describes.

1. someone with whom you can share your true feelings without fear of being judged
2. someone who pressures you to do things you don't want to do
3. someone who actively listens to you
4. someone you feel comfortable being yourself around
5. someone who talks badly about other friends behind their backs

Good friend      Not a good friend

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Take care of your mental health

Mental health refers to your social, emotional, and psychological well-being. Middle school can sometimes be stressful, but there are lots of things you can do to reduce stress and feel more relaxed.

## Take care of your mind and body

Get eight hours of sleep, eat healthy, and get regular exercise.

Do you get enough sleep each night?  yes  sometimes  hardly ever

How healthy is your diet?  very healthy  just ok  not great

Are you physically active?  yes  sometimes  hardly ever

## Take time for yourself

Do something that has made you feel calm or happy in the past. Listen to music, go for a walk, play with a pet, or spend time in nature.

What do you do when you want to relax and feel calm? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Breathe

If you're ever feeling anxious or stressed, just breathe. Close your eyes, relax your body, and imagine a relaxing scene—adding as many details as you can. Breathe in deeply, count to four, and exhale. Repeat several times. **Try it now!**

## Get support

Confide in others when you have a problem or are feeling stressed. Whether it's a friend, family member, spiritual leader, or counselor, it's much healthier to share your concerns than it is to go it alone.

Who can you talk to when you are feeling stressed or have a problem?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_