

## Keeping Open Communication Through Middle School

Both kids and parents can be nervous about the transition to middle school, but relationships can continue to be positive for your family with a few simple steps:

1. Continue to be an involved parent during middle school.
  - a. Volunteer regularly at school
  - b. Stay up to date with things your child brings home
2. Enjoy 3 or more family meals a week together. (After all, research shows that family meals have been correlated with decreased anxiety, depression, alcohol and drug use, delinquency, and increased academic performance).
3. Keep talking with your child daily
  - a. Ask about friendships and meet their friends
  - b. Ask about the best and worst part of the day
  - c. Talk about feelings – Emotional health is critical to physical health, yet many parents shy away from talking about feelings.
  - d. Ask about grades, organization, and study habits – Independence is important, but a transitional balance of independence with support is also important for success with independence.
  - e. It's okay to insist that your child has his/her earbuds out around the house and in the car so you can find times to talk.
4. Set limits and supervise online privileges and social media

Make time for enjoyable activities with your child. Positive time spent together paves the way for ongoing open communication



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