

Your Child Is Moving Up to Middle School. Here's What to Do When Worry Takes Over (Your & Theirs!)

- Stay calm and project a sense of confidence in your child's ability to succeed. Listen to their concerns, VALIDATE their fears, and let them know that those concerns and fears are totally normal. And don't forget: Your own modeling of brave behavior and positive coping strategies is a powerful tool for encouraging your child's self-confidence and resilience.
- Practice deep breathing. Focusing your attention on your breathe calms your system down and allows you to take a break from worried thoughts. Even a few breaths can be very helpful.
- Highlight past successes. Be specific. Focus on the strategies that your child used before and point out their ability to use those strategies now.
- Establish and maintain a consistent routine. Consider setting a specific time for getting up, doing homework, and going to bed. Sleep is extremely important.
- Focus on logistics. Attend your child's school's transition events to help your child locate lockers, classrooms, bathrooms, and other important locations.
- Get organized. Have your child keep a copy of their class schedule in a place that's easy to access, use different colored binders for each class, designate a special homework spot, use a planner to track assignments.
- Praise your child's effort. Transitions are difficult for most people. Verbally praise the small successes. Sometimes getting up on time, talking to someone new, and participating in a project are reasons enough to celebrate. Growth is made in small increments, so be on the lookout and praise the baby steps.