

Parent Action Plan: Middle School

Middle school is important because your child is laying the foundation in a lot of subjects and forming study habits. Developing certain skills now will make it easier for your child to adjust to the challenges of high school and college later — and will lead to more college options. Here are some things you and your child can do to make the most of this time.

- Help your child set goals for the year. Working toward specific goals will help your child stay motivated and focused.
- Review the school calendar together. Note important dates and put them in a shared online calendar or in an easy-to-view place, such as a bulletin board in your kitchen.
- Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. If you keep up with your child's tests, papers and homework assignments, you can celebrate successes and head off problems as a team. Get [homework tips for your child](#).
- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in clubs and other groups is a great way for your child to identify interests and feel more engaged in school. Read more about [the benefits of extracurriculars](#).
- Discuss ways to take on challenges. Encourage your child to take the most-challenging courses that he or she can handle. Tackling tough courses can give your child confidence and prepare him or her for higher-level high school classes.
- Come up with fun reading ideas. Look for magazines or newspapers your child may like and talk about the books you loved reading when you were your child's age. If your family makes reading enjoyable, it can become a daily habit.
- Visit a nearby college together. If you live near a college, look for upcoming events on campus that are open to the community or see if the college offers classes to local children and families. Just being on a campus may get your child interested in college.
- Get the big picture on paying for college. It's not too early to learn the basics of [financial aid](#).