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TRAIL

Helping your child make a happy transition to high school

Parenthood has its share of challenges! So, when your child reaches the crossroads between childhood and adolescence and prepares to make the leap to high school, it's quite an adjustment, both for them and for you as a parent!

Here are a few tips to help you guide your child through this transitional period

Preparation



Starting in grade 5 or 6

- Gather all the relevant information about the high school (or schools, if there are multiple possibilities);
- Visit the school or school grounds with your child (e.g., at an open house event);
- Encourage them to talk to another young person who already attends this high school;
- Make the trip to school with your child (bus, bike, walk, etc.).

During the summer, before starting the new school year

- Encourage your child to practice opening their lock;
- Help them organize their equipment;
- Take time to discuss the various upcoming changes with them.

The week before school starts

- Help your child prepare their backpack and materials for the first day;
- Establish a routine that works for them;
- Look over the rules of their future school together.

After school begins

- Help your child to use their agenda and organize their materials;
- Encourage them to sign up for an extracurricular activity;
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_parent_suppl_high_school.pdf

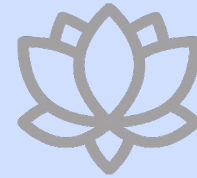
Communication



- Allow your child to express their point of view;
- Be a good listener, speak calmly and respectfully;
- Take an interest in their passions, activities, friends, etc.;
- Seize every opportunity to discuss as a family;
- Make sure you maintain good communication with their other parent;
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_parent_suppl_communication.pdf

Reducing stress and anxiety

- Help your child master what makes them stressed or anxious;
- Be a role model and set an example;
- Provide a safe, caring environment;
- Encourage their autonomy and independence;
- Reduce sources of pressure;
- Help them adopt good lifestyle habits;
- Be a good listener;
- Help them use strategies to manage stress;
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_talking_about_anxiety_parents.pdf



Helpful attitudes

- Distinguish between typical adolescent behaviour and your fears;
- Try to maintain a good relationship, even if you disapprove of the way they behave;
- Support their autonomy;
- Allow them to make mistakes;
- Recognize their efforts and perseverance;
- Offer them consistent support tailored to their needs;
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_parent_suppl_attitudes.pdf

Academic success

- Create an environment that makes learning easy;
- Establish a study and homework routine;
- Maintain a positive view of school;
- Encourage them to develop positive attitudes toward learning (interest in school, willingness to improve, effort, etc.);
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_parent_suppl_academic_success.pdf

Keep watch and Get help

- Watch for the following distress signals: recurring sleep problems, loss of interest in activities, isolation, sudden drop in academic performance, deterioration of relationships, etc.;
- Seek help from the resources available to you and your child;
- To find out more: https://sante-mentale-jeunesse.usherbrooke.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HPp1_EN_parent_suppl_distress_resources.pdf



And above all... trust your child!

This tool was developed by



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