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The transition from high school to high school marks a rather interesting time in the life of a child - and a parent. But it can also be scary. It's not just moving to another school - it's a whole new environment. The beginning of high school can be huge and confusing, and not just because the buildings are physically larger and the campus is unfamiliar. Children leaving the high school bubble in the high school jungle must not only cope with new teachers and academic requirements, but also a completely different set of pupils, some of whom are three years older and much more mature. The transition to high school can be disastrous if the child doesn't help the transition smoothly - more children fail in ninth grade than any other class [source: Weber]. Most school systems pave the way for transitional programmes that can cover everything from university visits to shadow students, but this is never easy. Our list of the 10 best differences between high school and high school will help you identify some of the pitfalls you can run when your child enters ninth grade - for example, what happens when your trombone-playing math whisperer learns that band practice is against counting? Hopefully you will find some tips that will guide you through this often crazy moment. Content One of the scariest things about moving from high school to high school is often a dramatic increase in school size. It's frightening enough to go from three classes of school to four grades in school - and then on top of that, several high schools from one district often dump into one high school. So in high school there can be four times as many children, most of whom will be absolute strangers. As the first day of the ninth grade looms, it can be overwhelming to imagine entering a completely unfamiliar (and much larger) campus and walking around the sea of new faces. Most high schools are quite attentive about facilitating the transition, but it's not hard to see how children can get lost in the shuffle. A larger student body leads to another item on our list... Advertising We know that high schools have higher enrollments than high schools, so this means that individual classes will also be higher. The ratio of pupils to teachers varies greatly from country to country, but in general, secondary school classes are higher than those of secondary school. It may not be much, but it makes a difference. Jumping from a 15-student class to one with 20 kids doesn't seem to be a huge deal, but it's causing things to be feeling a little more impersonal and less one-on-one interaction with the teacher. There is certainly much less stock storage in high school - older children should be more responsible and therefore, they (in theory) do not need so much attention from their teachers. And a child who is not fully ready for the task may end up falling through the cracks. Advertising Eighth grade teachers seem to spend too much time trying to clear their students (or trying to scare their students, but want to look at it) so there will be many more homes in high school. And they do it for a reason: In high school there are many more homework. Children who are not ready for it can be in for a nasty shock in the first month or so of ninth grade. The increased workload - along with the stress of new environments, schedules, expectations, teachers and classmates - can really throw some children into the loop, so it is especially important that parents be in their game during this transition period. Advertising eighth grade – especially in the last couple of months – is a giddy time for some kids. They're the oldest (and therefore super) in school, and they take any opportunity to lord this fact through all they think beneath them (that's how, you know, everyone). But when September revolves around, they pretty quickly discover how demoralizing can be a fall from the head of the pack to the bottom of the barrel. For this and other reasons, we just discussed, many children find themselves flounder in ninth grade. Some schools have tried to combat this phenomenon by separating freshman from the crowd just a little - they institute ninth-grade academies or smaller class sizes to keep some of that high school feeling for a while longer. Advertising In most secondary schools, with a special focus on community building and nurturing pupils, children do not get much choice about what classes they accept. Students can be grouped into different groups according to the skill level, but in general the courses differ little. Sixth grade is American history, the seventh class is against algebra, and that is about it. High school is a brand new ballgame, with seemingly endless choices - which is fun, of course, but it can be huge. And planning is always difficult, too: What happens if your trombone-playing child is also a whistling of mathematics, and advanced trigonometry is at the same time as band practice? Or if physics conflicts with French? It may not be easy to answer or quickly identify, but if parents, teachers and counselors work together, they can create a balanced schedule. Advertising you feel that as an academic and sports needs to increase in high school, so can parental participation. After all, this is a critical time in your child's life - pretty soon they fly a coworker, never being seen again. But you're thinking wrong: Parental participation actually decreases during the high school years. One reason is that high school often doesn't court parental involvement as much as primary and secondary school - it's just a more hands-on type environment. Parents also generally believe that their contributions are not needed so much children are older and more responsible. Not so. Many studies have shown that parental involvement is a key factor in the success of their children. So go ahead and volunteer - your kids may be embarrassed to have you around, but that's for your own good. Advertising People often refer to high school as a bubble - students, of course, read, write and arithmetic, but sometimes the process emphasizes more than the end result. Children learn about themselves, safe in their small community, and there is not much attention to the outside world. But that all changes in high school. Suddenly the goal is very clear: college. No more fool around - it's a real deal. Some students, to be sure, are level focusing from day one, so this change in goals can be exhilarating -- finally, all those like expect something! However, it may be jargon for a child, which may not have been all related to grades. So, again, it's up to you, parents - it's your job to remind underperformers to step up to the plate. Advertising Bad for ninth graders. As if they still don't have enough control over things with a big new environment, a larger class size and increased academic needs, they also have to juggle a few new teachers. In high school, children probably have no more than two or three different teachers a day, but high school (as it does with everything) starts with that up to a few spots. Now they can have six or seven teachers every day - all with their methods, standards, workload, moods and idiosyncrasies. It's certainly not surprising that class drop and drop rates soar in ninth grade. So, even if you stay on top of your child's work and classes, don't forget to be understanding - it can be roughly time consuming. When they hit 10th and 11th grade, though, you can definitely crack the whip. Advertising Most of the changes we have discussed so far in this article have a certain duality - the transition to high school is interesting and terrible. But sport is one part of high school life that can be built directly into an interesting spot. Most secondary schools have sports teams, but they don't bring school to life, as high school sports can. It's like switching attention to academics: Of course, high school sports are fun, but the high school football game is a real deal. Even if your child is not an athlete, sporting events offer many opportunities for social interaction with new classmates. In addition, the taste of the school spirit never hurts - it gives children the beginning of a new identity, which can make the transition a little less painful. Advertising you knew we were going to get this one sooner or later, didn't you? Peer pressure grows their ugly head quite early in the life of any child, but bets are certainly raised in high school. Pressure to drink and do really shows some too too school years, but children (and parents) soon realize that these worries are small potatoes compared to what lies in high school. And it's not just about illegal substances - it's clothes, eating, cheating, you name it. Surrendering to peer pressure can quickly derail academic careers, and this is a key factor in many cases of fallout. As always, parents need to be vigilant and, most importantly, maintain open lines of communication. To learn more about the differences between high school and high school, check out the links on this page. The parents of the lawnmower cut obstacles and difficulties before their children can encounter them. HowStuffWorks talks to experts about parenting style. Bennett, Laune J. and Mac Iver, Martha Abele. Girls tend to stop going; Boys Get Told Not Come Back: Report on Gender and Fall Out Problem in Colorado Schools. October 2009 (Opened September 10, 2010) Ray. The right kind of peer pressure. Slate, May 12, 2010 (Opened September 10, 2010) Nancy B. and Irvin, Judith L. Transition from high school to high school. National Secondary School Association Journal, May 2000. 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