

Positive Parenting

Creating a Smooth Transition from Elementary to Secondary School (Grade 8 to 9)

“Parents who stay involved in the learning process of their child create a climate of success which serves as a springboard for future achievement.” Robert W. Smith

Parental involvement is very important for students who are transitioning from Grade 8 to 9. Parents may be tempted to pull back at this critical time but their support is even more important during this period of great change. This support will assist in setting your child up for success rather than failure.

Secondary Schools are large and confusing places and can be quite overwhelming for most students but even more so for a student with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and/or other academic and social challenges.

Students, parents and the school need to work together in partnership.

What Parents Can Do:

- attend the Secondary School Open House with your child (to learn about the physical set up, courses, activities and meet some of the staff) – January/February of Grade 8 year.
- attend the Secondary School Registration with your child to help with organization (locker, assignment, time table, etc.) – August.
- become familiar with the key people’s names (administration, guidance and special services staff, classroom teachers) – August/September.

- immediately encourage your child to use his/her organizer and set up a routine for daily homework and long term assignments – early September.
- meet the teachers within the first 2 weeks by phoning for an appointment -early September:
 1. discuss strengths, weaknesses and possible areas of difficulties that he/she may encounter.
 2. inform teachers that you want to be kept updated on your child's progress, especially if difficulties begin to appear.
 3. talk about your child's interests and passions in order to hook them in.
 4. share strategies that may have been successful in elementary school (praise, a homework buddy, peer tutor, reducing quantity, use of an organizer).
- be aware of other staff that can be a support to you and your child (Youth Counselor, Special Education Resource Teacher, Guidance Counselor, Community Police Officer, Public Health Nurse).
- inform the teacher(s) that significant information may be available in your child's Ontario School Record (OSR) – early September:
 1. Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC) Forms, Individual Education Plans (IEP), a Central Auditory Processing Report (CAP), etc.
 2. Information on medication and other health issues.
- stress and encourage the importance of daily attendance, good nutrition, a good night's sleep and taking of prescribed medication.
- attend every "meet the teacher night", see every report card and follow his/her daily progress.
- encourage your child to become involved in activities at the school (sports teams, clubs, etc).
- when problems occur contact the school and work with school staff to develop a plan of action.
- inform the school if you are including a support person at an IPRC, IEP meeting or a case conference.

Tip: You will need to continue to advocate for your child with each teacher, at the beginning of each term and every year.