

My Baby is Going to Middle School!

Saying that statement three or four times with the inflection on a different word each time illustrates the numerous feelings you are probably having about this transition!

Transition is defined as a passage: the act of passing from one state or place to the next; as well as a conversion: an event that results in a transformation.

The transition to Middle School opens new and exciting opportunities for both students and parents... both academic and social.

On the academic side, you may spend time wondering if your child will be on the right team, in the right math level or getting the correct foreign language. Will they be able to handle the homework? All good questions that the middle school teachers, administrators and guidance counselors will help you navigate.

The social and emotional transitions that your 10 or 11 year old will make during the middle school years are not quite as black and white. For example, as you exit elementary school, many parents are still arranging “play dates” and coordinating social activities for their children. There is a time in middle school (different for each child) when that will shift. You may get a call just as the school day is ending. Your child is waiting for the bus at middle school asking, “**Can I walk to John’s house today?**” And you think... *hmm, I don’t know John or his parents or even his address...* but my son is on the phone with this question and needs an answer now!

The social transitions that happen in middle school are typically subtle and slow and then suddenly – your son or daughter is initiating or responding to social invitations that present entirely new circumstances. The after-school request is one example. There may be sleepovers, parties (eventually girl/boy parties), dances, trips to the mall, walking around Wayne, walking to the ice cream parlor from school ... countless social possibilities and often parents find themselves answering on the fly or “going along” with what they perceive other parents are allowing.

ARCH helps you stay informed and gives you good food for thought.

Look for ARCH programming, news article and book recommendations, as well as family tools like the Cell Phone Contract. ARCH encourages parents to communicate with other parents. You will likely learn that other parents are facing the same thing.

ARCH shares information via **Facebook**. Visit www.facebook.com; Search: ARCH Area Residents Caring & Helping; and “like” us!



ARCH is one source of information for parents.

ARCH Mission Statement:

We are a coalition of parents, educators, and community members committed to promoting the well being of youth in Tredyffrin and Easttown Townships. We serve as a resource to families as they help their children form a positive self-image, make healthy choices, and reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD).

So if ARCH is all about helping parents keep their kids drug and alcohol free – why would you, a 4th grade parent, need to know about this organization?

ARCH provides parents with information and tips to help them make **INFORMED** decisions, as well as, set **EXPECTATIONS** in middle school that will follow to high school.

If you clearly communicate your family’s rules to your children, early-on (*like in Middle School*), it will be easier to continue with those practices into high school (when the issues may be dicey).

EACH FAMILY IS DIFFERENT
The rules will vary from one family to another. Making sure that your child is aware of YOUR EXPECTATIONS can alleviate confusion.

www.archcares.org - ARCH, Box 149, Paoli, PA 19301

ARCH meets once a month and welcomes parents to attend – to listen and/or participate.
ARCH is a 501(c)(3) organization and gratefully accepts charitable donations.