

Welcome to Seventh Grade!

There's a lot going on in seventh grade. The classes are harder and students are expected to do more on their own. There's more homework, the social scene is more complex, and students are dealing with changing bodies.

Your child will learn a great deal this year, but seventh grade is about more than academics. In seventh grade, students develop important social skills as they continue on their journey toward adolescence.

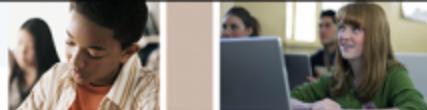
In this guide you will find information that will help you help your child have a successful seventh grade year. Included in this guide are:

- ▶ tips to help your child succeed in his/her classes.
- ▶ ways to encourage safe, responsible technology use.
- ▶ tips for communicating effectively with your child.
- ▶ advice for tackling tough subjects, such as bullying, peer pressure, and puberty.

Your involvement and support are key to your child's success!



Succeeding in the Seventh Grade



Academic Success

Seventh graders are becoming more independent; however, they still need lots of guidance and support. Here are some things you can do to help your seventh grader succeed in school.

Improve Organization

- ▶ Encourage your child to use a planner to record homework assignments, test dates, and anything else he/she needs to remember. If your school doesn't provide planners, purchase one.
- ▶ Most students have lots of papers—homework, notes, handouts. Encourage your child to have a place for each paper (folder, file, or notebook).
- ▶ Have your child get everything ready for the next day before going to bed.

Monitor Progress

- ▶ Make sure your child gets off to a good start in all of his/her classes. Also, make sure that you see all interim/midterm reports and report cards.
- ▶ If you see your child struggling in a class or spending an excessive amount of time on homework, contact the teacher and discuss your concerns.

Provide Support

- ▶ Expect your child to do homework on his/her own, but be available to help (e.g., read over a paper, listen to a speech, help study for a test).
- ▶ Large assignments can seem overwhelming, and sometimes students need help figuring out where to begin. Show your student how to break large assignments and projects down into smaller tasks.
- ▶ Provide encouragement and celebrate your child's successes!

Using Technology

Here are some tips to help ensure that your child has a positive, healthy relationship with technology.

- ▶ Know what devices your child is using, and how frequently he/she is using them. Insist on transparency.
- ▶ Discuss what information is appropriate for social networking sites, and what information is appropriate for your child to view and share online.
- ▶ Tap into your seventh grader's interests. Ask your child to show you some websites that are popular, and to share some of his/her favorite sites with you. This is a great way to stay connected, keep up on technology, and bond with your child.
- ▶ If you need assistance with parental controls, contact your phone and/or internet provider, or search online for "parental controls."
- ▶ Discuss the importance of being respectful and kind to others online—and make sure your child understands that when you send a message or photo, *you can never get it back.*

Set Times to "Unplug"

Insist that all communication devices be turned off and put in a basket during dinner and other family times.

To ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep and isn't on the phone late at night, require that all phones be plugged in for recharging in a central location (e.g., your bedroom) an hour before bedtime each night.



Growing Up: 7th Grade

Be available to help your seventh grader deal with tough issues.

Bullying

If your child ever complains about being bullied or harassed, find out exactly what has happened and discuss how to best deal with the situation.

Students are often reluctant to tell their parents they're being bullied. If you have reason for concern, ask your child if someone is causing problems for him/her at school or online.

Peer Pressure

At some point, your child may have to make a choice regarding smoking, vaping, alcohol, and/or drugs. Make sure your child knows where you stand on these issues—and that there will be consequences for tobacco, alcohol, or drug use.

Puberty

Your child has likely noticed physical changes in him/herself and in peers.

Emphasize that everyone grows at their own pace, and that your child's pace, whatever it may be, is just right for him/her.

"The child supplies the power but the parents have to do the steering." Benjamin Spock



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Communication is Key

As your seventh grader becomes more independent, communicating and connecting with your child becomes even more important.

- ▶ Ask open-ended questions. Instead of "How was school?" ask, "What are you studying in science?"
- ▶ Show interest in the things your child likes, and empathize with the things that get him/her down, even if they seem insignificant to you.
- ▶ Look for times when your child is most likely to be open to conversation (e.g., when you're fixing dinner or driving in the car), and be available to listen when your seventh grader wants to talk.
- ▶ Show your seventh grader that you value his/her opinion. Ask your child what restaurant you should go to, or what he/she thought about a TV show you watched together.
- ▶ Make it clear to your child that he/she can talk to you about anything without fear of punishment or judgment.
- ▶ Pay attention to nonverbal communication. Children aren't always able to put into words the things they need you to know. It is, therefore, important to pay attention to your child's body language, eating and sleeping patterns, moods, and school performance.

Support Your Child

7th Grade



Parent Involvement Guide