



# Educator Guide: Transition to High School Activity

## **Recommended for Grades:**

8<sup>th</sup>

## **Time:**

15 minutes

## **National Health Education Standards:**

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 7: Demonstrate practices and behaviors to support health and well-being of self and others.

## **Learning Objectives:**

After completing this activity students will be able to:

1. Identify what sexual harassment is.
2. List two things they can do to ease the transition to high school.
3. List two ways they can get involved at their new high school.

## **Activity Description:**

The Transition to High School Activity is designed to get 8th graders thinking about their move into high school. Common fears and myths are addressed, as well as tips to make the transition smoother. Students will have the opportunity to work through a lesson, video, truth/myth activity and a resource page. It is self-guided and can be explored in any order.



### Pre and Post-test Questions:

Use the following questions with your students in any way that you see fit (on paper, using a survey tool, etc.) You may choose to combine questions from various lessons and activities that your students participate in. Correct answer choices are bolded.

1. Which of the following is true about sexual harassment?
  - a. It is any unwanted sexual attention.
  - b. It could include touching, grabbing or slapping
  - c. It should never be tolerated.
  - d. All of the above.**
  
2. What is one thing you can do to make the transition to high school easier?
  - a. Be open to meeting new people.**
  - b. Stick with your small group of middle school friends.
  - c. Stay away from extra activities or sports because you'll be busy with schoolwork.

### Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself and your students as you complete the Transition to High School Activity. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Bullying – unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance, and is usually repeated over time
- Clique – a small group of people who spend time together and typically don't include others in their group
- Cyberbullying – the use of technology (cell phone, tablet, computer, etc.) to bully
- Friend – someone who likes you for who you are, is there to help you when you need them and supports you
- Sexual harassment – any unwanted sexual attention, comments, touching or name calling that makes someone uncomfortable
- Transition – the process of changing or moving from one place, state or idea to another
- Trusted adult – a grown-up you can go to for help

# Supplemental Activity: Journaling Activity

## Objectives:

After completing this activity students will be able to:

- Identify one or more thing they are worried about with their upcoming transition to high school.
- Describe two things they can do to make their transition to high school as smooth as possible.

## Materials Needed:

- Journaling Worksheet (can be found on the next page or downloaded directly from the Journaling Activity page on the E-Learning Center)

## Time Required:

20 minutes

## Instructions:

In this activity students will take some time to think about their upcoming transition to high school. They will be reflecting on a few questions and journaling their answers. Depending on time, have a discussion with students to discuss some of their fears about high school. Or invite a few high school students to come and answer some questions that your students may have. Encourage students to talk with their parent or caregiver about things they may be worried about and things they are excited about experiencing in high school.

The questions for this journaling activity can be found on the next page and on the Journaling Activity page on the E-Learning Center.

# Journaling Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions. You may use an extra sheet of paper if you prefer.

What are you most nervous about when you think about going to high school?

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What are you most excited for when you think about going to high school?

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What will you do to prepare yourself for high school?

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# Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



# Cyberbullying

## What Is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices like cell phones, computers and tablets. It includes:

- Posting mean, hurtful or embarrassing comments or rumors about someone online
- Threatening to hurt someone or telling them to kill themselves
- Posting a mean or hurtful picture or video
- Pretending to be someone else online in order to get or post personal or false information about someone else
- Posting mean or hateful things online about any race, religion or ethnicity
- Creating a mean or hurtful webpage about someone

## How Can I Stop Cyberbullying?

Some teens have learned to stop cyberbullying and keep it from happening. Here's what you can do:

- Do not re-send cyberbullying messages.
- Block contact with cyberbullies.
- Tell your friends to stop cyberbullying.
- Report cyberbullying to a trusted adult.
- Work with other students, teachers and school leaders to create rules against cyberbullying.
- Help your community learn more by holding an assembly or other event.
- Make a contract to be safe online with your parents or caregivers. Come up with the rules together.

# Cyberbullying Resources

- Children's Wisconsin, [ParentsActNow.com](https://www.ParentsActNow.com)
- Cyberbullying Research Center, [cyberbullying.org](https://www.cyberbullying.org)
- KidsHealth, [kidshealth.org](https://kidshealth.org)
- National Crime Prevention Council, [ncpc.org](https://www.ncpc.org)
- Pew Research Center, [pewresearch.org/topics/teens-and-technology/](https://www.pewresearch.org/topics/teens-and-technology/)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [stopbullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov)



# Sexual Harassment

## What Is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is bullying that involves unwanted sexual attention. This could include:

- Calling people names because of their sexual orientation
- Making comments about someone's body
- Touching or grabbing someone's body
- Forcing a person to kiss or do sexual things
- Snapping someone's bra
- Giving or showing sexual pictures, videos or notes to someone
- Pulling someone's clothes off or down
- Being physically close to someone in a sexual way
- Asking someone for naked pictures of themselves ("nudes")
- Spreading sexual rumors about someone (in person, by text or social media)
- Posting sexual comments, videos or pictures
- Making sexual comments, jokes or asking sexual questions

## Facts about Sexual Harassment

Here are some facts about sexual harassment:

- Both boys and girls can be sexually harassed.
- Both boys and girls can sexually harass others.
- Sexual harassment is illegal.
- Sexual harassment can happen in person or online.
- Sexual harassment is not the victim's fault.

## How to Handle Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment won't go away on its own. Here is what you can do:

- Tell the person to stop what they are doing.
- Tell a trusted adult.
- Keep telling until a trusted adult steps in and helps make it stop!
- Get support.

*Repurposed from Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School, American Association of University Women*





# Transition to High School Resources

It's normal to feel somewhat apprehensive about moving on to high school. But remember that lots of other incoming freshmen are feeling the same way you are. And it's important to know that there are lots of resources out there to help make your transition as smooth and worry-free as possible. Here is a list of websites that provide additional information on the topics discussed in the Transition to High School Activity. Don't forget that parents, older siblings, teachers and counselors are also great resources when you have questions or concerns.

- Children's Wisconsin, [ParentsActNow.com](https://www.parentsactnow.com)
- Cyberbullying Research Center, [cyberbullying.org](https://www.cyberbullying.org)
- TeensHealth, [teenshealth.org](https://www.teenshealth.org)
- U.S. Department of Education, <https://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrshpam.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [stopbullying.gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov)



# Transcript

## Transitioning from Middle to High School Lesson

### Slide 1

Starting a new school can create a lot of conflicting feelings. You may be excited to see your old friends, but at the same time you're nervous about the amount of homework you'll have now that you're in high school. Here you will learn some tips to help you deal with the nerves and fears that a lot of kids experience when moving from middle school to high school.

### Slide 2

According to a survey conducted by TeensHealth.org, the top fears of kids your age when entering high school have to do with schoolwork and social issues.

### Slide 3

Is the work in high school going to be much harder than it was in middle school? Of course it is going to get more challenging, as it builds upon what you learned in middle school. But whether or not it is unmanageable mostly depends on how well you organize and handle your new responsibilities. You will be more independent as a high school student, but that doesn't mean you have to do it alone. There are many resources available, such as teachers, counselors, study groups and tutors. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you are feeling overwhelmed or if you just want to prepare yourself for the new workload.

### Slide 4

To help you handle the more challenging workload, it helps to plan ahead and organize yourself. Get a day planner for assignments and projects. Stick with it to keep track of your schedule throughout the year. If it's lost at the bottom of your locker, it won't help you stay organized!

Time management is really important as you gain more responsibility in high school. Most likely you will have more than just school work to do after school. Many kids also play sports, belong to clubs or have part-time jobs. Create a homework schedule for yourself to get your school assignments done. Use your study periods wisely to complete homework instead of socializing. Procrastination only brings frustration if you are up at midnight trying to scribble out homework after everything else is done for the day.



### Slide 5

Besides the workload, many kids also worry about the new social situations and challenges that come during high school. Common fears are: not fitting in, not having any friends, feeling judged, getting bullied, drama and cliques.

It's true, friendships change in high school. There are often several middle schools and private schools feeding into one big high school, which means there are lots of new people to meet. Or there may be multiple high schools so your old friends don't go to the same school you're going to, which means you will need to make new friends.

To make new friends in high school, keep yourself open to the possibilities. Getting tied into cliques can limit your options, as they may try to dictate clothing, social and activity choices. Instead, remain friendly with many different types of people. Don't only stick with a tight group that doesn't let others join, and be careful not to listen to gossip or repeat rumors. That just fuels unnecessary drama. Join different clubs or sports and try something new that you are interested in but haven't tried before. It's a great way to meet new people with similar interests.

### Slide 6

Getting bullied is often a big worry of kids, but research shows that bullying rates actually go down in high school. That doesn't mean it never happens, though.

### Slide 7

Because of the role technology plays in our daily lives, bullying can take the form of cyberbullying over the computer, phone or other electronic devices. To guard against cyberbullying and protect your online reputation, remember:

Nothing is temporary online – anything you post, from IM conversations and text messages to pictures and comments, can be copied, saved or retrieved after you try to delete them. Even if it is on a private page, it can be hacked or copied and reposted by others. Be careful about responding to posts or commenting on something when you are angry, as that can come back to haunt you.

Protect your passwords and profiles. Some bullies impersonate others online, and post nasty things through someone's stolen online accounts. To avoid this, safeguard your passwords, change them often and don't use the same one for every account. Put a password on your cell phone if you have one too, and don't make it too easy to guess.

Make sure you also mark your profiles as private, so you don't leave everything for the whole world to access without you knowing.

If you feel like you are being targeted online, or see it happening to someone else, stand up for yourself and others. It's important to tell an adult and get an outside perspective on it, especially if it is 'anonymous' or you aren't completely sure who's



messing with you. Reporting online bullying that you observe happening to others can help the victim from feeling alone and get the bully the help they need.

#### Slide 8

So, we know there can be lots of worries about starting high school. Well, here are some things that can help:

It's easy to try and make up time by sleeping less. However, growing teenagers need at least 8-and-a-half hours of sleep to be healthy and alert. That doesn't mean you can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping 20 hours a day on the weekend though. Not getting enough sleep can make it hard to concentrate or make you fall asleep in class. Too many days of sleep deprivation in a row can also lead to illness. Organize your schedule so you can get enough sleep every night and don't stay up all night talking to and texting your friends, or playing video games and watching TV.

You've known since you were little that healthy foods fuel your body and help you learn and grow. That is still true as a teenager. You need to eat a variety of healthy foods every day. And it's still true that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It will help you learn better and concentrate in school. Make a point to eat something healthy every morning before school. And you know, soda and cheese puffs are not a healthy breakfast! Try a sandwich or granola bar and milk or juice if you're in a hurry.

Staying physically active keeps your body healthier, and can be a great stress reliever. Find an exercise or activity you enjoy, or try out a new sports team or club. If you can find a friend who likes to be active in the same way, you can encourage each other to consistently exercise every day, even on the weekends!

All of these basic healthy tips work to maintain health and release stress so you can handle all the responsibilities coming at you in high school.

#### Slide 9

The transition from middle school to high school can seem scary and exciting at the same time. Getting adjusted to a new school and routine can take some time. Remember back to the first day of other school years and how nervous you were? Things calmed down after the first week or so, once you figured out what was going on, learned the layout of the school and got used to the routine.

Most problems adjusting to school are only temporary. It doesn't hurt to remember almost all of the other 9th graders are also nervous and in the same boat as you.

If you are still feeling nervous after the first few days, talk to a guidance counselor, teacher or parent about how you are feeling and what you can do to make it better. High school isn't supposed to be torture, and everyone has to go through it, so rely on your resources and trusted adults to help you through the transition period.



## Truth or Myth Activity

1. Every student entering high school will have to go through some type of initiation or hazing by upperclassmen. Truth or Myth? Click on your answer.

That's a MYTH. Usually, it's all talk. Sometimes not knowing what to expect can be the biggest cause of our fears. But if you do see or experience any incidents of hazing or intimidation, it's important not to dismiss or ignore the behavior and immediately talk to a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, counselor or another adult at your school.

2. High school friendships and relationships can contain a lot of drama. Truth or Myth? Click on your answer.

That's TRUE. A lot of freshmen do get wrapped up in drama, rumors and gossip, but you'll be a lot happier and less stressed if you can separate yourself from that drama. Remind yourself to not repeat rumors or spread gossip and choose to hang out with friends who are drama-free.

3. Anything you post online, including pictures, texts, comments, e-mails and IMs, can still be found, even if you think you deleted them. Truth or Myth? Click on your answer.

That's the TRUTH. Almost everything done online or on a cell phone is traceable, and once posted electronically, it exists virtually forever. Cyberbullies can be traced through their electronic messages, whether it's from a text, social network site or e-mail. So, think twice before posting, and if you feel you've been targeted, go immediately to a trusted adult and explain the situation.

4. People slapping or grabbing other people's butts in the hallway is just part of high school fun. Truth or Myth? Click on your answer.

That's a MYTH. Actually, any unwanted sexual attention, such as touching, groping, slapping or grabbing, is considered sexual harassment and should never be tolerated. If you're uncomfortable with an action, even if it's by a friend.... tell them to stop, then talk to an adult.

5. The classes in high school are harder than middle school and will require good organization skills and lots of studying. Truth or Myth? Click on your answer.

That's the TRUTH. For many, the move from middle school to high school can be challenging, but there are some things you can do to ease the transition. Get a planner to help you keep up with reading, homework assignments and deadlines, as well as dates for upcoming quizzes and tests. You may want to cut down or limit time spent playing on the computer, playing video games, talking on the phone or texting and even watching TV. Remember, talk to your teachers when you have questions or feel overwhelmed with the workload.

## Video: Real Life Advice

Boy: If you're like most middle-school kids, you're probably as anxious about starting high school as you are excited. You may be wondering "How will I fit in?" and "Will I ever find my way around?" One of the best things you can do is simply get involved! Whether you choose a club, a sport or any of the many after-school activities, it's a great way to get connected to your school, and to make new friends, including some upperclassmen! And hey...those new friends may be able to help you find your classroom if the hallways feel like a maze.

Girl: You'll be faced with a lot of choices in high school, and you'll make better decisions if you feel good about yourself. Some ways that can help are to recognize what you can and can't change. Set goals – both short-term and long-term. Take pride in your opinions and ideas, and view mistakes as learning opportunities. Remember, try to focus on the positive, and not the negative and aim for accomplishments rather than perfection. It may take some work to develop good self-esteem, but once you do.... you'll always know that you did the best you could.

Boy: The work in high school builds on everything you've learned in middle school, and you'll probably find that with more homework and projects, it becomes more challenging. You can get ready to meet the challenges head-on with just a little advance planning. Organization is the key. Be ready at the beginning of the year with your supplies, a planner and anything else you'll need. Set some goals for the year. Write them down and include tips for helping you reach those goals. And finally, create a schedule for daily homework, longer-term projects and tests so you're not up late the night before scrambling to finish!

Girl: Sometimes the stress of high school may become overwhelming—but remember there are ways to deal with it without losing your cool. You can start by letting someone know what you're up against. That could be a parent, a teacher, coach, counselor or advisor or even a good friend. Talking things through with someone is sometimes all you need to sort through the stress or worry. It also helps to get enough sleep and learn to relax, whether it's through exercise and sports or a favorite hobby. Finally, a positive attitude and believing in yourself can go a long way towards managing the stress...and for making sure your first year of high school is the best it can be!



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