



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Elementary aged children experience a significant amount of change and transition. School becomes more rigorous and academic focused, social interactions become more sophisticated, and cognitive thinking and development become more complex. Nearly everything is new and different for children at this age because they are experiencing most things for the first time. This can be scary and overwhelming for young children, but there are many things we as educators, guardians, and youth serving professionals can do to support children through transitions. The article [Supporting Kids Through Times of Change](#) from Edutopia shares 10 suggestions for how to do this.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Children experience more developmental transformations during middle school than nearly any other period in their lives, second only to their first three years of life. On top of these developmental changes, middle school students transition to higher levels of responsibility and independence in their learning environment, from getting to classes on their own to managing more coursework. While these transitions can be intimidating for both parents and children, they are also wonderful growth opportunities. The handout [Middle School Matters: A Guide for Families on Middle School Transition](#) from the Georgia Department of Education offers guides for both families and students on how to navigate the many transitions in middle school successfully.

HIGH SCHOOL

Teenagers experience unique transitions as they move from child to young adult. They have more freedom, more responsibilities, more opportunities, and more pressure. Navigating through high school is a beautiful challenge in and of itself, but there is also the transition into the adult world after high school ends. High school allows for the development of necessary skills needed to be successful through adulthood. There are many ways we can support this, such as encouraging teens to reflect on their values and goals, providing opportunities to develop life skills, and guiding them through complex social interactions. For information and tips for both parents and students about the transitions experienced during high school and how to make them as successful as possible, read [High School is Happening: A Guide for Families on High School Transitions](#).

MAKING HEALTHY TRANSITIONS IN LIFE

by *Eddie Underwood*
SEL Program Specialist

As we transition from a complex and challenging school year to summer break, it is important to reflect on all the grows and glows that have transpired. This past year has looked different, but as we move back to a sense of normality it is important to remember how far we have come. Transitions are not always easy. Using positive affirmations such as “I can do this!” can help to manage uncomfortable emotions that can arise from times of uncertainty. Whether your student or child is in transition from elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, high school to college or the work force, or you are transitioning from the classroom to another career, or simply to summer break, remember that there’s nothing inherently bad about change. When changes occur, they reflect a variety of factors, and how you interpret them will determine their impact on you. This month we will help to provide strategies, research, and resources to help support healthy and successful transitions.

Transitions

are a part of life, allowing for perpetual renewal. When you experience the end of one chapter, allow yourself to feel the emotions of loss and rebirth. A bud gives way to a new flower, which surrenders to the fruit, which gives rise to a seed, which yields a new sprout. Even as you ride the roller coaster, embrace the centered internal reference of the ever-present witness.

-David Simon

COPING SKILLS & ACTIVITIES



EMBRACING CHANGE IN A HEALTHY MANNER

by Siomara Bridges-Mata
Community Programs Specialist

Life is full of change. One of the greatest skills we can teach our kids and embrace ourselves is to be flexible. Change may bring uncertainty, anxiety, and stress to our kids, but when embraced with a positive outlook we can teach them that the changes in life, big and small, offer them the chance to grow and be prepared for all that life has to offer.

Here are some simple strategies on how we can help our kids cope with life's challenges in a healthy manner:

- Allow for feelings. Listen and validate all emotions.
- Talk about highs and lows.
- Ensure proper sleep and nutrition.
- Turn unfamiliar into familiar by learning more about what's unknown.
- Be calm, reflective, and model gratitude.
- Approach the situation with an optimistic mindset.

Transitions can be a challenge for anyone, but there is always a way to reduce the level of stress and manage any unpleasant emotion. Continue to read on for additional strategies that you mind find helpful for you.

TRANSITIONING INTO NEW BEGINNINGS

by Charese Cook
Senior SEL Program Specialist

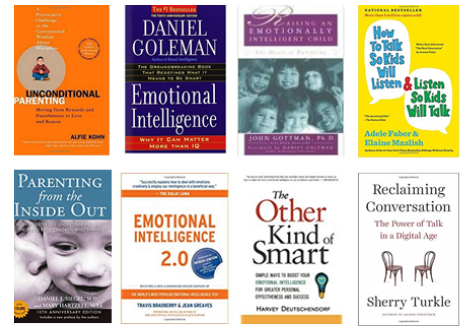
New beginnings and times of transition allow us the opportunity to stop, reflect, and cast positive affirmations and energy into the new chapter of our lives. No matter our age, career, or circumstance, we all deserve the chance to generate uplifting, encouraging mantras that help us turn to a new page. To get the wheels turning, below are examples of positive mantras or affirmations that relate to new beginnings. Try jotting one of these down on paper, or even generate a list of your own that can be housed on your computer or cellphone!

- I choose a path of happiness and wellness as I move forward.
- I welcome this new season with a calm confidence.
- I can clearly see the blessings around me.
- I hold on to only the valuable lessons and release any mistakes I may have made.
- I welcome and embrace powerful changes.
- I am capable of accomplishing difficult things.
- Today, I support my mind and body by moving it and growing forward.
- I am creating my own future by choosing happiness.

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[Recursos en Español](#)



RESOURCES AND READINGS

by Brian Schank
Senior SEL Program Specialist

There are many types of transitions for students and teachers, and all adults. One of the main ways to manage and handle transitions is addressing them head on. For many students, the close of the school year comes with anxiety about the transitions ahead. For strategies to help you and your students address those anxieties and uncomfortable emotions in a positive way, read: [SEL Tip: Managing Worries about Transition](#). This article talks about paving the way for transitions, staying connected, and being proactive.

This next article from Committee for Children® discusses multiple transitions from starting kindergarten, middle school, and high school. It covers helpful hints from executive function, positive mindsets, and having a safe and supportive school environment: [3 Ways Social-Emotional Learning Supports Students' Transition to New Schools](#). The goal is for students is to have a positive transition experience to their next education level, which will then make the next transition better and more manageable, and even exciting. Use these resources to fill your toolbox for the transitions ahead!



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