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A PARENTS' GUIDE TO the Middle School Years

==== JOE BRUZZESE

Because today's children seem to grow up so fast, middle school has become the new high school. Concerns about homework, social issues, sexuality, technology, and emotional health confront parents earlier than they would like or expect, leaving many of them feeling lost and overwhelmed. Yet middle school can (and should) be a time of positive transformation—an exciting opportunity where children gain independence, parents become supportive coaches, and a rewarding new bond is formed.

In *A Parents' Guide to the Middle School Years*, educator and parent Joe Bruzzese offers parents and their children empowering support to face the critical years from sixth to eighth grade with confidence. Filled with valuable advice, its proactive plan of action enhances communication and helps parents find workable solutions for their most pressing concerns, such as the following:

- Keeping kids safe online.
- Identifying the signs of bullying, cyberbullying, and depression.
- Confronting drug and alcohol abuse.
- Understanding a child's emotional shifts, academic challenges, and social stressors.
- Achieving balance between school and extracurricular activities and more.

Helpful hints—including rules for cell phone use, tips for productive parent-teacher relationships, and strategies for academic achievement—allow parents, children, educators (and other mentors) to work together as a team.

With Bruzzese's clear take-away advice, families can foster an environment that gives children love, support, and room to grow—ensuring a smooth transition into adulthood and a happy and healthy relationship between parent and child.

JOE BRUZZESE, MA, is a professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has taught at the elementary and middle school levels and coached club soccer for twenty years. He is a featured writer on middle school information websites and frequently speaks at national educators' events. He lives with his wife and two children in **Santa Barbara, California**, and is available for interviews.

Visit www.thinking-forward.com.

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