

# Conversations with Your Middle School Student

Family conversations are good opportunities to validate and support the feelings, thoughts, and challenges that your middle schooler may be experiencing. Consider these tips to help initiate a meaningful conversation!

## TIPS, TRICKS & REMINDERS

- Have you spoken about your own middle school experience? It can be helpful for your middle schooler to hear what middle school was like for you, even if they don't act like they appreciate your stories in the moment.
- Ask more open-ended questions that begin with "what" or "how" instead of questions that require only a "yes" or "no" answer.
- The more you have conversations with your middle schooler, the more likely you will be to notice any subtle signs that they are struggling with peers, classwork or something else.
- Find opportunities to talk every day with your middle schooler. Conversations don't have to be formal or long. Experienced parents of teenagers say that the car can be a great place for connecting.
- Middle school students are socially focused. It's normal for middle schoolers to be more focused on each other than on the adults in their lives. Having empathetic conversations keeps your relationship strong during this time.
- Even though middle schoolers may not act like it, they do value their parents and other caregivers in their lives.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

- How do you like where you are sitting in the classroom? Who do you sit by?
- What are some things that you like best about your classes?
- What are some things that you don't like so much about your classes?
- What do your friends say about your classes?
- What do you do between classes?