



# Miami Springs Middle School

## December Newsletter

### Look for Meaningful Ways to Motivate your Preteen

You can't make your preteen love middle school, but you can motivate her/him to do well there. First, you need to know what doing well means. If your idea of a job well done involves nothing less than straight A's, you should rethink some things. It's unwise, and unreasonable, to demand perfection from your preteen, especially during middle-school years.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't expect your child to do well. It just means that you need to be reasonable. If you are not sure what "reasonable" looks like, talk to her teachers or guidance counselor. They may be able to offer some insight about her/his abilities.

Beyond that, help your

middle schooler stay motivated by modeling motivation yourself. Show your child what a motivated person looks like. Talk to her/him about your own struggles. Let her/him see you work toward your goals, even when you stumble along the way. For example: "This sales report kept me up a few nights, but I finally finished it!" Share your successes and your failures.

To motivate your middle schooler even more:

- **Use Encouragement.** Middle schoolers need love and support from their parents (no matter what they say.

Sometimes, putting your arm around your child's shoulder may be all it takes to get her through a rough patch.

- **Use realistic praise.** Don't call your preteen a "genius" just because she did so-so on a test. She'll see right through it. Instead, use more down-to-earth words like "creative" or "hard-working." Show your child that you notice these real qualities in her.
- **Support your child to make her/his own choices.** Whenever possible, have your child make decisions. By giving her the freedom to make her own choices, even if it's about something as simple as what color shoes to buy, she'll realize that her

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Mr. Javier Perez,  
Principal

input is important. And feeling important is a great motivator.

Source: "From slacker to scholar: Helping to motivate your middle schooler," Mohonasen Central School District, [www.mohonasen.org/03parents/MSParent/slacker2scholar.htm](http://www.mohonasen.org/03parents/MSParent/slacker2scholar.htm).

### December Events

MSMS Winter Holiday Concert 7:00 P.M Auditorium	12/7
Early Release	12/08
Magnet Fair	12/13
Spirit Week	12/14-12/16
Title I Parent Meeting Media Center 9:30 a.m.	12/14
EESAC	12/15
Holiday Concert MSMS Auditorium 7:00 P.M.	12/15
Blue White Game	12/16

### Connect, Have Fun with Your Preteen during Family Meals

Where's the best place to connect with your middle schooler? It may be the dinner table. Sharing meals with your child is an important way to stay in tune with him. To make the most of family mealtimes:

- **Don't beat yourself up.** If you can't eat together every night, enjoy the meals you do share.
- **Include your child in the conversation.**
- **Ask specific questions.** Instead of the standard "How was your day?" be specific. Ask, "What's one interesting thing that happened at school?"
- **Keep it pleasant.** Don't argue with your child

during dinner. If something bothers you, bring it up later.

- **Laugh.** Humor makes dinner-time fun.
- **Be flexible.** If night-time meals are difficult, then try to schedule it during breakfast.
- **Go low-tech.** Turn off the TV.

Source: Carleton Kendrick, "Family Dinners: The Recipe for Connectedness."