



# Program Preparation

---

## Program Overview

Each of the nine lessons is designed to run for one hour and 15 minutes. The components are:

- **Tools 4 Tomorrow:** Parents and their Gearing Up-age students work together for the first **20 minutes** of class on science and transition activities. This time will provide opportunities to learn real-life skills and emphasize hands-on learning by doing and career exploration.
- **Parent Discussion:** During this **45 minutes**, parents separate from their children and meet with a facilitator to discuss aspects of adolescent development, transition to middle school and guidance for healthy growth.
- **Peer Connections:** Students spend their group time (45 minutes) with a facilitator who guides them through specially designed learning activities and minilectures in preparation for the work and world of middle school.
- **Wrap Up:** The last **10 minutes** of class reconnects the middle school students and their parents. Additional transition and career information is shared. A handout with terms, activities and homework also will be given to families as they leave.



## Arrival and Welcome

Make certain doors are unlocked for participants to enter the building at least 30 minutes before class. If your program provides sibling care, it should be available at least 15 minutes before class begins.

Prepare signs and post on entry doors to direct families to the unlocked doors. Inside the building, use signs to list room numbers for sibling care and all classrooms.

Teachers can take turns greeting families at the door and telling them where to store coats and belongings. Also inform participants where to find the rest rooms and nametags. Encourage everyone to wear a nametag.

## Classroom staff includes:

- Parent educator (parent educator, middle school counselor, principal or teacher)
- Middle school teacher
- Licensed child-care professional (for sibling care)
- Care assistant(s) – number depends on ratios, ages and needs of sibling

## Classroom space needs:

- Safe, age-appropriate room(s) for sibling care
- Parent education room with tables, chairs, projector, screen; optional: refreshments
- Student room with tables, chairs, projector, screen; optional: refreshments
- Large room (the gym for example) for Tools 4 Tomorrow and other movement activities

## Sibling Care

The **child care provider** prepares the room and activities for the children in care. Items to consider for younger children include: nametags; photos with parent upon arrival the first week and each time a different adult delivers the child (to check at departure); sign-in sheets with cell phone numbers in case you need to ask the parent to change a diaper or toilet the child, or if a child becomes ill or inconsolable; snacks (allergies); age-appropriate toys; diaper bag storage; restrooms; ratio of children to caregivers; and homework help for older siblings in a quiet area.

Caregivers may be on-site an additional 30 to 60 minutes, depending on setup and cleanup requirements of the location.

## Tools 4 Tomorrow (parent and Gearing Up student)

The **teachers** share responsibility for preparing the lesson and the room for the first 20-minute segment of the class.

### Before the session

- ❑ Review the instructions for the activities each week.
- ❑ Collect needed supplies for each activity.
- ❑ Arrive 30 minutes prior to class for setup.
- ❑ Set up the activity stations with supplies and instruction.

### During the session

- ❑ During Tools 4 Tomorrow, explain the activity, then the **middle school teacher and the parent educator** mingle with parents and students, visiting briefly about the activity, what is being learned and how it ties to middle school science or the transition to middle school. You also may wish to include some brief welcoming conversation that includes checking in about the family's week.

- ❑ Make suggestions to keep the activity flowing. Refrain from talking about specific child issues in front of the adolescent. Keep the parents' attention on their student and the activity.
- ❑ Be the timekeeper for the room. Give a five-minute warning before cleanup so everyone can finish his or her project. Invite everyone to clean up in the area where he or she was last working.
- ❑ If anyone is not participating, direct him or her to a task by saying, "Emily, please put the pencils back in the can on the green table." Not everyone is comfortable picking up in an unfamiliar space, but seeing how capable their adolescents are and how to motivate them to pitch in and do their share is helpful for all parents.

## Parent Education (adult participants)

### Before the session

- ❑ Read the appropriate segments of "You and Your Adolescent, The Essential Guide for Ages 10-25" by Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D.
- ❑ Review the PowerPoint and lesson guide.
- ❑ Copy the handouts. Read the lesson guide preparation section, and assemble all materials for the activities, icebreaker and alternative activities you choose to use.
- ❑ Know how to use the projector, computer and PowerPoint. Practice each lesson.
- ❑ Know how to call for tech support in the building after hours, if needed.
- ❑ Read additional material on the Web pages listed in some lessons.
- ❑ Prepare the room and set up technology equipment. Prepare refreshments if your program chooses to serve something.

### During the session

- ❑ Use the PowerPoint to go through the lesson. The "To do:" notes are for your information. The "To say:" notes are for you to read or

say to the participants. If you feel you have participants who are not readers, please read the slide out loud as you explain more from the “To say” notes.

- ❑ Session 1 includes the use of the word “pass,” the parking lot, a talking piece and the classroom rules. Use these as needed for all nine lessons.
- ❑ Use the icebreakers, activities and alternative activities each week. Adult participants benefit greatly by participating in these brain-engaging learning situations.
- ❑ If you find you end a little early, talk about last week’s successes with the materials they tried from class. Use the last slide to end the class discussion.
- ❑ Remind parents to gather for the 10-minute wrap-up portion of the session.
- ❑ All staff members stay to help each other with cleanup until all families leave the building.

## Peer Connections (students)

### Before the session

- ❑ For additional information, read the appropriate segments of “You and Your Adolescent, The Essential Guide for Ages 10-25” by Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D.
- ❑ Review the PowerPoint and lesson guide, game, project or other teaching materials for the lesson.
- ❑ Copy handouts. Read the lesson guide preparation section and assemble all materials for the activities, icebreaker and alternative activities you choose to use.
- ❑ Know how to use the projector, computer and PowerPoint. Practice each lesson.
- ❑ Know how to call for tech support in the building after hours, if needed.
- ❑ Read additional material on the Web pages listed in some lessons.
- ❑ Prepare the room and set up technology equipment.

### During the session

- ❑ Use the PowerPoint or lesson plan to go through the lesson. The “To do:” notes are for your information. The “To say:” notes are for you to read or say to the participants. If you feel you have participants who are not readers, please read the slide out loud as you explain more from the “To say” notes.
- ❑ Remind students to gather for the 10-minute wrap-up portion of the session.
- ❑ All staff members stay to help each other with cleanup until all families leave the building.

## Wrap-up (parents and students)

### Before the session

- ❑ Copy the lesson handout.

### During the closing session

- ❑ Explain the various parts of the shared handout. The purpose of the lesson handout is to provide a vehicle for parents and students to share the topic and information they each received in their separate sessions. The shared handout has a section for parents, a section for students, a “gear grinder” and a “going into overdrive” (homework activity) to do together if they choose to do so.
- ❑ Each Tools 4 Tomorrow activity has a set of questions about the activity and how it ties to career options. Encouraging students and parents to begin to think about future careers, as well as classes that will get them to that point, is important.

With the students and the parents together, lead the following discussion:

### Think About our Tools 4 Tomorrow Activity

- What skills did you learn or practice?
- In what job/career might you be able to use that skill?
- Do you know someone in that career?
- Are these jobs available in our region?