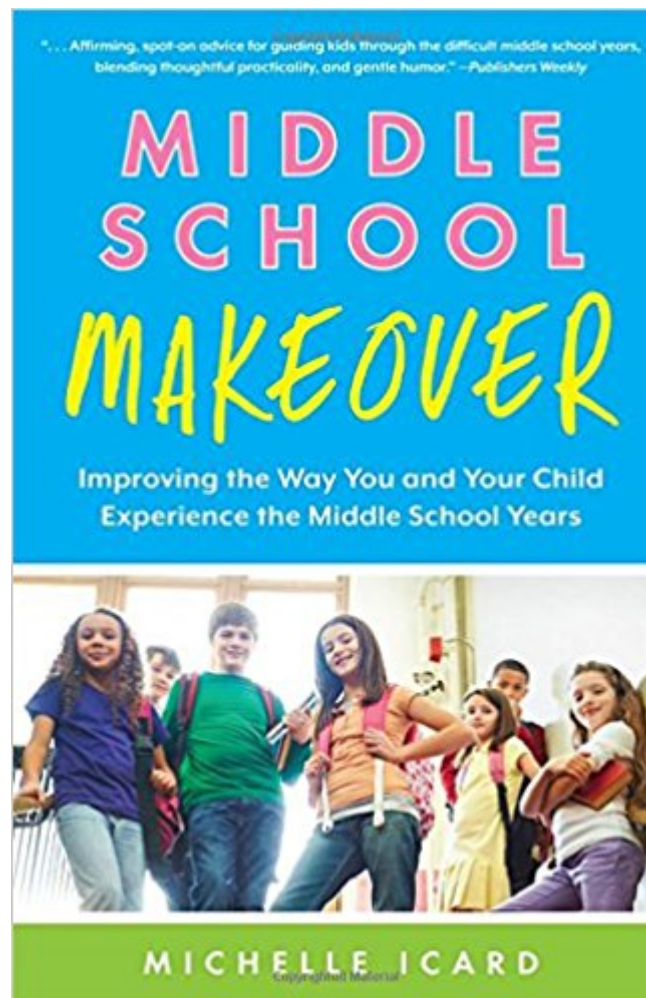




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# Middle School Makeover: Improving The Way You And Your Child Experience The Middle School Years



## Synopsis

Middle School Makeover is a guide for parents and educators to help the tweens in their lives navigate the socially fraught hallways, gyms, and cafeterias of middle school. The book helps parents, teachers, and other adults in middle school settings to understand the social dilemmas and other issues that kids today face. Author Michelle Icard covers a large range of topics, beginning with helping us understand what is happening in the brains of tweens and how these neurological development affects decision-making and questions around identity. She also addresses social media, dating, and peer exclusion. Using both recent research and her personal, extensive experience working with middle-school-aged kids and their parents, Icard offers readers concrete and practical advice for guiding children through this chaotic developmental stage while also building their confidence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Michelle Icard, the creator of the middle school social skills courses *Athena's Path* and *Hero's Pursuit*, shares affirming, spot-on advice for guiding kids through the difficult middle school years, blending thoughtful practicality, and gentle humor. Icard recommends that parents serve as the calm & assistant manager to their children's growing brain, guiding them toward slower thinking and problem solving, and acting as empathetic coach rather than micromanager; she offers sample conversations to demonstrate what that might look like. Icard supports giving children greater independence, letting them take risks, and (monitored) use of social media, among many other helpful tips. Most importantly, Icard successfully positions herself as a

knowledgeable, sympathetic peer; someone who knows that parents want to have a great relationship with their children during this period of rapid change.

— Publishers Weekly; Middle School Makeover is a great resource for anyone with a current or soon-to-be middle schooler in their life. With the voice of a friend, plenty of humor and lots of practical tips, Michelle Icard provides insight and answers to tween behaviors. Middle School Makeover also equips adults with useful “do” and “don’t” tips for helping their middle schooler gain independence and confidence.

— Melisa Holmes, MD; founder, Girlology; author of Girlology: A Girl’s Guide to Growing Up; Written with humor, empathy, and remarkable insight, Middle School Makeover feels less like a book and more like a conversation with friends over coffee. Parent-to-parent, Michelle Icard translates cutting-edge developmental research and professional terminology into plain language and practical advice for managing the many twists and turns of early adolescence. Most importantly, the book transforms the image of middle school as dreadful for kids and dreaded by parents into a stage of life that is unique, exciting, and full of potential. You will not look at your child, or perhaps even recall your own middle school years, in the same way again!

— Beth A. Kotchick, PhD, associate professor, Loyola University, Maryland; Was middle school bad enough when you were going through it? Is facing middle school again through your child’s experience giving you pause and anxiety? Worry no more. Michelle Icard has done an incredible job of offering parents not just the empathy they seek but the strategies they need to navigate their child’s middle school year with wisdom, grace, and foresight. Icard so deftly blends storytelling, research, and guidance, you’ll feel like you are having lunch with that smart, compassionate friend who never lets you feel defeated. Middle School Makeover will empower you to capably and calmly parent through the hard times and inspire you to celebrate through them, too.

— Rosie Molinary, author of Beautiful You: A Daily Guide to Radical Self-Acceptance; A makeover is desperately needed indeed. In twenty-five years of working with teenagers and their families, I’ve only had two people ask to volunteer to work with middle schoolers. In that same time, the stress that embraces parents is exactly what Michelle has described. Middle School Makeover is a book I will insist the families with whom I work and the students I teach have at their fingertips.

— Brian Foreman, EdD, youth ministry consultant and author of #Connect: Reaching Youth Across the Digital Divide and How to Be #SocialMedia Parents. Middle School Makeover is a masterpiece of how-tos for any parent dealing with the challenges of the middle school years. Parenting a middle schooler can be one of the most difficult times for parents to navigate. Michelle guides parents, using concrete solutions to

real-life problems, faced by kids in their teen years. Michelle Icard's practical advice and humorous writing style make for an easy read for busy parents on-the-go. Seanna Crosbie, LCSW clinical therapist and director, Child Guidance Center, Texas; Every middle school parent, teacher, and child would benefit greatly from this makeover. With clear writing, warmth, and humor, Icard offers straightforward paths through some of the bumpier aspects of the dark, scary place known as Middle School. She weaves personal anecdotes together with research and expert insights to give parents and educators all the tools they will need to navigate this phase with their child. By addressing not just the needs of the middle schooler but the middle school parent as well, she reveals herself to be the perfect ally during this sometimes tumultuous phase. But Icard's greatest gift and the book's primary accomplishment is how it subtly shifts our expectations of middle school. By the end, every reader will feel that this is not a phase to be feared, but celebrated and enjoyed. We highly recommend to anyone who lives or works with middle schoolers. Erin Dymowski and Ellen Williams, Sisterhood of the Sensible Moms; Middle School Makeover is a must read for anyone who has or works with middle students. Michelle brings understanding, compassion and wisdom to caring for this much misunderstood group of young people. I encourage every middle school parent to pick up this book, your middle schooler will be so glad you did! Vicki Abadesco, co-founder, Soul Shoppe author of Free to Be: Creating a Safe, Fun & Bully-Free World; Michelle's book is a terrific blend of solid research, innovative ideas, and good old-fashioned experience with adolescents. There are a lot of books full of buzz words and generic advice, but Michelle's book drills down into specifics: what to say, how to say it, how not to say it, and the facial expression to show while saying it. The book hits on many of those tough social situations that leave adults struggling for words when it comes to advising their children. In my job as a school counselor, I reach for her material when trying to guide a middle school student (or parent of a middle-schooler) through a very trying and very real situation. Wes Calbreath, MED Middle School Counselor at Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System

In 2004, Michelle Icard launched Athena's Path, a curriculum that helps girls navigate the tricky middle school social scene. Shortly after, she added Hero's Pursuit for boys, and in 2011 launched her website about how to parent middle school children: [MichelleintheMiddle.com](http://MichelleintheMiddle.com). Athena's Path and Hero's Pursuit have been implemented in thirty schools, in five states, and have impacted over 10,000 students. More than 250 teachers have been trained to implement the programs in schools. Michelle is often a guest speaker at schools and parenting events, and she hosts Right in the

Middle, a conference for girls headed to middle school and their moms. Michelle also runs Moms Meet Up, a parent conversation and support group for parents of middle schoolers. She provides private coaching for parents and teens. Michelle has written curriculum for other national programs for adolescents, including Girlology and Girls Rock the House. In addition to her own blog, Michelle writes for "Your Teen Magazine," The Karina Chronicles blog, and Charlotte Smarty Pants. She is the mother of a 13-year-old daughter and an 11-year-old son.

I saw this book mentioned in an editorial in the Chicago Tribune. I decided to check it out and I am happy I did. The way the author writes is intelligent, yet fun to read. The advice given is excellent. Normally I can pick out one or two faults about a book. I can not find any with this book. I think for parenting books this book belongs in the same category as the "what to expect" books which were indispensable when my daughter was younger. Also, the price of the book is quite good. The kindle edition is only \$9.99 and a physical copy is under \$20. I may actually buy the physical copy to have.

I just started reading this book a few days ago & I'm almost done. I bought our 13 year old another book called "The Drama Years" written specifically for the young girl, and at first she didn't want to read it. But when she saw I was reading this one & I explained to her that it's always helpful to have outside help & other perspectives, she's more open to doing her own reading & inner reflection. Anyway this book has been a very easy read & truly insightful. I think it touches most topics we all face as parents of middle schoolers. I would recommend this book for anyone looking to better their relationship with their child, or keep it great as they enter these tough years.

I have two middle schoolers, one boy and one girl. This book has something for everybody. Plus, Michelle Icard is really funny and puts some of the things that freak us out (cami's, tight jeans & booty shorts being my favorite and most referred-to chapter) into perspective. I seriously need all the help I can get during these years and this book totally delivers excellent, common-sense advice. I'm keeping it on my bedside table because the author's guidelines about how to talk to your middle schooler are a huge help. (Plus she totally entertained me with her 'botox brow' comment.) I know it's important to keep those lines of communication open and I really want to do it right. GREAT BOOK. Would recommend it to ALL parents of kids ages 10-15. Easy to read. Easy to use.

Thank goodness this book is here! I have a daughter about to leave middle school and one about to

enter middle school next school year. I will be much better prepared in understanding my second daughter's journey through the middle school years, physically, emotionally, and socially. It is a whole different world today than it was when I was middle school, and the biggest change is technology and social media. Parenting is significantly more difficult now than it was when I was younger (my opinion), so I need all the help I can get. I enjoyed the author's style of writing, not preachy, but insightful and humorous! Easy to read, easy to go back and reread!

Our pediatrician recommended this book and I enjoyed reading it. It had some good perspectives and ideas -- some of which I've tried and are working/helping out. Sometimes you just need another perspective/set of ideas for dealing with your kids, esp as we enter the teen years.

My oldest just started her first year of middle school. This book has totally changed my outlook on this age for the better! She explains how that unique tween brain works, and the best ways to interact with your child. I know I will be referencing this book for years to come...I have 3 more kids that will be in middle school before I know it. Thanks Michelle!

This book is a must read for all parents of middle school aged children. "Middle School Makeover" gave me new perspective on social media and helped me revamp how I react to my over emotional middle schooler. Michelle Icard communicates in such a way that you don't want to put down the book. She had me laughing throughout the book and at times... gasping. She points out things we may not want to face but know we and our kids will. I plan to buy a few extra copies of this book for friends.

This book is at its strongest when it is giving specific advice about issues all middle schoolers face. But it's not "Nurture Shock" for tweens - more like a really well done Miss Manners. I don't have tweens yet (prepping for it!) but this will be incredibly handy when I get there.

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