



# Second Step Curriculum

## What is Second Step?

*Second Step* is a school-wide, research based comprehensive program that teaches life skills to students in grades 6 - 8. The goals of the *Second Step Middle* school program are to decrease aggression, bullying, and substance abuse and increase students' social skills and school success. The program meets its goals by teaching the following skills: Empathy and Communication, Bullying Prevention, Emotion Management, and Substance Abuse Prevention. Skill lessons are taught in class by guidance counselors, and teachers, twice a month.

In September, students were taught skills that contribute to successful group

work. In October, students were taught how to distinguish between disrespectful and respectful disagreement. The lessons taught in October included communicating one's own perspective, as well as considering the perspective of others. In November, students will be taught problem-solving steps, using strategies of negotiation and compromise (win-win strategies). In December, students will be taught when and how to go to an adult for help, and when to encourage friends to seek help from an adult.

*Second Step* has a strong family component, and we encourage you to check it out! Materials such as videos and take-home materials, encourage discus-

sion, thought, and communication between students, teachers, and families.

## Create an account.

If you have not done so already, please create your own *Second Step* account to follow along with our curriculum throughout the school year.

Go to [www.secondstep.org](http://www.secondstep.org). Create an account using the following activation codes (continued on page 2)



## Attendance

### Attention to attendance.

Simply showing up for school has a HUGE impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even in middle school when children are more inde-

pendent, families continue to play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why attendance is so important for success in school and on the job.

The Troy City School District has the goal to reduce

the current level of unexcused absences, tardiness and early departures through our district attendance policy. In an effort to be successful, we want to ensure our TMS families are aware of the policy, its purpose and the (continued on page 3).

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### Marking Period Dates: (for Troy Middle School)

- Marking period 2 ends December 27, 2016
- Marking period 3 ends April 7, 2017
- Marking period 4 ends June 16, 2017

## Second Step (continued from page 1)

### Create an account (continued...)

depending on your student's grade level:

Grade 6: SSP6 H1WH MU55

Grade 7: SSP7 45GL WNL6

Grade 8: SSP8 58D5 XRGP

(Our school is listed under our old name "W.K. Doyle Middle School".) If you have children in multiple grade levels, you can add each kit (grade) to your account.

Once your account is created, click on the "Families" section where you will find some great resources to use at home with your student. This includes an overview of lessons, homework, benefits of the curriculum and several downloads including:

- Homework
- Reflective Writing Activities
- Family Letters
- Action Steps Chart
- Follow-up Activities for Families

We encourage you to ask questions about

the skills your student is learning, such as:

- How do you show you are actively listening to someone?
- Why should you try to understand other people's perspective?
- What does it mean to have empathy, and how does it help you in school?
- What are the steps you use to negotiate and compromise?
- Why does it help to consider someone else's perspective when you negotiate and compromise?



## Teen Hygiene

The Middle School years are often called the "Raging Hormone" years. With puberty and middle school comes many changes physically, psychologically and socially. Sweat glands are more active and especially students involved in sports need to pay particular attention to hygiene after an athletic event. Parents can be a tremendous help to their child in explaining bodily changes that take place and how to practice proper hygiene.

The students at TMS in grades 6, 7, and 8 participate in physical education class every other day. Reminding them to make sure they bring a change of clothing and personal care items goes a long way. Other ways parents can help their children to practice good hygiene are to remind students of the following:

- Shower every day, giving equal attention to all body parts,
- Wear clean under and outer clothing,
- Carry personal hygiene items to use after gym, and
- Practice good oral hygiene and attend routine dentist visits.

and safe way to remove hair. Sometimes pets love to sleep on children's clothing or on their beds. This sometimes transfers pet odors to clean bedding and clothing.

*"Practicing good hygiene is being  
a good member of the TMS  
community"*

Students certainly want to "smell good". If your child is not practicing good hygiene, unfortunately they run the risk of another student letting them know, and getting a bad rap. That can be difficult to shake and very damaging to one's self esteem. Practicing good hygiene is also being a good member of the TMS community. Please be patient and empathetic with your child, as puberty and the changes it brings can be very confusing.



If your child is starting to shave, guide them in the proper

**Troy Middle School  
School Counselors**

grade 6  
Cathy Boice 328-5366  
boicec@troycsd.org

grade 7  
Sonya Shaw 328-5361  
shaws@troycsd.org

grade 8  
Ann Capobianco 328-5360  
capobiancoa@troycsd.org

**School Psychologist**  
grades 6 to 8  
Andrea Murray 328-5352  
murraya@troycsd.org

**School Social Worker**  
grades 6 to 8  
Elizabeth Tamburello 328-5469  
tamburelloe@troycsd.org

**Guidance Typist**  
grades 6 to 8  
Denise Walker 328-5365  
walkerd@troycsd.org

**We're on the Web!**  
**www.troycsd.org**



## Attendance (continued from page 1)

consequences of non-compliance.

Absences, tardies or early departures from school which are excused include reasons of: personal illness, illness or death in the family, religious observance, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, military obligations, or such other reasons as mentioned in the policy.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office within 24 hours of the absence and provide a written excuse upon the return to



school.

Consequences of excessive unexcused absences, tardies or early departures include contacting the parents to remind of the attendance policy, explain the ramifications of excessive absences, stress the importance of class attendance and discuss appropriate intervention strategies to correct the situation. Follow up will occur at appropriate intervals and will require varying degrees of responsibilities by the parent/guardian.

If your student is struggling with absences, tardies or early departures and you are unsure of what more you can do, please contact your grade level counselor for support!

### *Facts and tips on attendance.*

- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with school work, dealing with peer issues or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of *three signs* that a student may drop out of high school.
- Missing 10 percent, or about **18 days**, of the school year can drastically affect a student's academic success.
- Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.
- Talk to your student about the importance of attending school **every day**. Make it the expectation.
- Help your child maintain daily routines (for example, finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.)
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Find out if your child feels engaged by his classes and feels safe from bullies and other threats.

Make sure he/she is not missing class because of behavioral issues and school discipline policies. If any of these are problems, please make the support personnel at TMS aware!