Middle School Parent Book Suggestions

Listed below are some books which have been recommended by some of our middle level professionals to support parents. Please note that the Upper School website is inclusive of some excellent books which will help with our students’ transition from Middle School to Upper School.

*Smart but Scattered* by Dr. Peg Dawson and Dr. Richard Guare

There’s nothing more frustrating than watching your bright, talented son or daughter struggle with everyday tasks like finishing homework, putting away toys, or following instructions at school. Your "smart but scattered" 4- to 13-year-old might also have trouble coping with disappointment or managing anger. Drs. Peg Dawson and Richard Guare have great news: there’s a lot you can do to help. The latest research in child development shows that many kids who have the brain and heart to succeed lack or lag behind in crucial "executive skills"—the fundamental habits of mind required for getting organized, staying focused, and controlling impulses and emotions. Learn easy-to-follow steps to identify your child’s strengths and weaknesses, use activities and techniques proven to boost specific skills, and problem-solve daily routines. Helpful worksheets and forms can be downloaded and printed in a convenient 8 1/2" x 11" size. Small changes can add up to big improvements—this empowering book shows how.

Talent is Overrated by George Colvin

Asked to explain why a few people truly excel, most people offer one of two answers. The first is hard work. Yet we all know plenty of hard workers who have been doing the same job for years or decades without becoming great. The other possibility is that the elite possess an innate talent for excelling in their field. We assume that Mozart was born with an astounding gift for music, and Warren Buffett carries a gene for brilliant investing. The trouble is, scientific evidence doesn't support the notion that specific natural talents make great performers.

According to distinguished journalist Geoff Colvin, both the hard work and natural talent camps are wrong. What really makes the difference is a highly specific kind of effort—"deliberate practice"—that few of us pursue when we're practicing golf or piano or stockpicking. Based on scientific research, Talent is Overrated shares the secrets of extraordinary performance and shows how to apply these principles. It features the stories of people who achieved world-class greatness through deliberate practice—including Benjamin Franklin, comedian Chris Rock, football star Jerry Rice, and top CEOs Jeffrey Immelt and Steven Ballmer.

http://www.amazon.com/Talent-Overrated-Separates-World-Class-Performers/dp/1591842948
The Narcissism Epidemic By Dr. Jean Twenge

Narcissism—an inflated view of the self—is everywhere. Public figures say it’s what makes them stray from their wives. Parents teach it by dressing children in T-shirts that say "Princess." Teenagers and young adults hone it on Facebook, and celebrity newsmakers have elevated it to an art form. And it’s what’s making people depressed, lonely, and buried under piles of debt.

Jean Twenge’s influential first book, Generation Me, spurred a national debate with its depiction of the challenges twenty- and thirty-somethings face in today’s world—and the fallout these issues create for educators and employers. Now, Dr. Twenge turns her focus to the pernicious spread of narcissism in today’s culture, which has repercussions for every age group and class. Dr. Twenge joins forces with W. Keith Campbell, Ph.D., a nationally recognized expert on narcissism, to explore this new plague in The Narcissism Epidemic, their eye-opening exposition of the alarming rise of narcissism and its catastrophic effects at every level of society. Even the world economy has been damaged by risky, unrealistic overconfidence. Drawing on their own extensive research as well as decades of other experts’ studies, Drs. Twenge and Campbell show us how to identify narcissism, minimize the forces that sustain and transmit it, and treat it or manage it where we find it. Filled with arresting, alarming, and even amusing stories of vanity gone off the tracks (would you like to hire your own personal paparazzi?), The Narcissism Epidemic is at once a riveting window into the consequences of narcissism, a prescription to combat the widespread problems it causes, and a probing analysis of the culture at large.
Susan Cain sparked a worldwide conversation when she published *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking*. With her inspiring book, she permanently changed the way we see introverts and the way introverts see themselves.

The original book focused on the workplace, and Susan realized that a version for and about kids was also badly needed. This book is all about kids’ world—school, extracurriculars, family life, and friendship. You’ll read about actual kids who have tackled the challenges of not being extroverted and who have made a mark in their own quiet way. You’ll hear Susan Cain’s own story, and you’ll be able to make use of the tips at the end of each chapter. There’s even a guide at the end of the book for parents and teachers.

This insightful, accessible, and empowering book, illustrated with amusing comic-style art, will be eye-opening to extroverts and introverts alike.

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0803740603/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_dp_ss_1?pf_rd_p=1944687662&pf_rd_s=lpo-top-stripe-1&pf_rd_t=201&pf_rd_i=0307352153&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_r=0W9FZGKA7DXT08SREJWQ](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0803740603/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_dp_ss_1?pf_rd_p=1944687662&pf_rd_s=lpo-top-stripe-1&pf_rd_t=201&pf_rd_i=0307352153&pf_rd_m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&pf_rd_r=0W9FZGKA7DXT08SREJWQ)

*Raising a Self-Disciplined Child* by Dr. Robert Brooks and Dr. Sam Goldstein
Drs. Brooks and Goldstein describe a positive approach to discipline that helps children to develop self-discipline, respect, responsibility, and resilience rather than resentment and anger. They discuss the importance of self-discipline in a child’s life, offering many realistic, practical strategies, and sample scenarios that will assist parents as well as professionals who work with children to use constructive forms of discipline that nurture a child’s self-control, self-reliance, and self-assurance.


_Brainstorm_ by Dr. Daniel Siegel
In this *New York Times*–bestselling book, Dr. Daniel Siegel shows parents how to turn one of the most challenging developmental periods in their children’s lives into one of the most rewarding.

Between the ages of 12 and 24, the brain changes in important, and oftentimes maddening, ways. It’s no wonder that many parents approach their child’s adolescence with fear and trepidation. According to renowned neuropsychiatrist Daniel Siegel’s *New York Times* bestseller Brainstorm, if parents and teens can work together to form a deeper understanding of the brain science behind all the tumult, they will be able to turn conflict into connection and form a deeper understanding of one another.

In Brainstorm, Siegel illuminates how brain development impacts teenagers’ behavior and relationships. Drawing on important new research in the field of interpersonal neurobiology, he explores exciting ways in which understanding how the teenage brain functions can help parents make what is in fact an incredibly positive period of growth, change, and experimentation in their children’s lives less lonely and distressing on both sides of the generational divide.

*Brainstorm is a current nominee for a Books for a Better Life award.*


*Queen Bees and Wannabes: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and the New Realities of Girl World* by Rosalind Wiseman
When Rosalind Wiseman first published *Queen Bees & Wannabes*, she fundamentally changed the way adults look at girls’ friendships and conflicts—from how they choose their best friends, how they express their anger, their boundaries with boys, and their relationships with parents. Wiseman showed how girls of every background are profoundly influenced by their interactions with one another.

Now, Wiseman has revised and updated her groundbreaking book for a new generation of girls and explores:

• How girls’ experiences before adolescence impact their teen years, future relationships, and overall success
• The different roles girls play in and outside of cliques as Queen Bees, Targets, and Bystanders, and how this defines how they and others are treated
• Girls’ power plays—from fake apologies to fights over IM and text messages
• Where boys fit into the equation of girl conflicts and how you can help your daughter better hold her own with the opposite sex
• Checking your baggage—recognizing how your experiences impact the way you parent, and how to be sanely involved in your daughter’s difficult, yet common social conflicts

Packed with insights about technology’s impact on Girl World and enlivened with the experiences of girls, boys, and parents, the book that inspired the hit movie *Mean Girls* offers concrete strategies to help you empower your daughter to be socially competent and treat herself with dignity.

*Masterminds and Wingman* by Rosalind Wiseman
Here is a landmark book that reveals the way boys think and that shows parents, educators and coaches how to reach out and help boys overcome their most common yet difficult challenges -- by the bestselling author who changed our conception of adolescent girls.

Do you constantly struggle to pull information from your son, student, or athlete, only to encounter mumbling or evasive assurances such as “It’s nothing” or “I’m good?” Do you sense that the boy you care about is being bullied, but that he’ll do anything to avoid your “help?” Have you repeatedly reminded him that schoolwork and chores come before video games only to spy him reaching for the controller as soon as you leave the room? Have you watched with frustration as your boy flounders with girls?

Welcome to Boy World. It’s a place where asking for help or showing emotional pain often feels impossible. Where sports and video games can mean everything, but working hard in school frequently earns ridicule from “the guys” even as they ask to copy assignments. Where “masterminds” dominate and friends ruthlessly insult each other but can never object when someone steps over the line. Where hiding problems from adults is the ironclad rule because their involvement only makes situations worse.

Boy world is governed by social hierarchies and a powerful set of unwritten rules that have huge implications for your boy’s relationships, his interactions with you, and the man he’ll become. If you want what’s best for him, you need to know what these rules are and how to work with them effectively.
What you’ll find in *Masterminds and Wingmen* is critically important for every parent – or anyone who cares about boys – to know. Collaborating with a large team of middle- and high-school-age editors, Rosalind Wiseman has created an unprecedented guide to the life your boy is *actually* experiencing – his on-the-ground reality. Not only does Wiseman challenge you to examine your assumptions, she offers innovative coping strategies aimed at helping your boy develop a positive, authentic, and strong sense of self.