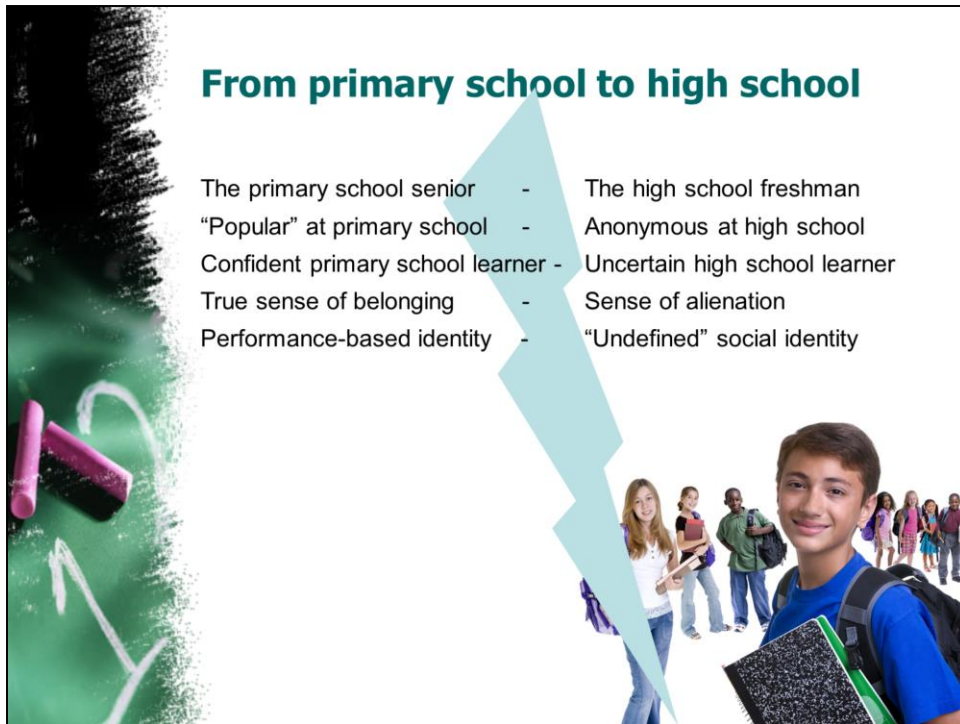




- Being 13 years old could probably be considered as a very poignant time in the life of the young adolescent.
- Going to high school is already a dramatic affair as being 13 years old.
- It could probably be called a time of transition, change or a time of “becoming”
- What's often most remembered by the child and observed by others, is the social and emotional changes that go with this period of discovery.
- 13 - 14 is a developmental stage that forms a whole, but is separated and set apart through the external context of progressing from grade 7 to grade 8.
- There are certain things that teachers should take cognisance of when you engage this child and guide her on her journey.



- Can you still remember the time when you were 13 years old?
- Everything that could happen to you, happened to you, whether you were ready or not.
- Encountering the **physical changes** was as scary as it was exciting.
- Being an early starter was as difficult as being a late bloomer.
- Dealing with all that and the **emotional impact** makes life just one big feeling.
- The excitement of their new social life and the confusion and often hurt just dealing with it.
- Self concept - how you express yourself to how you feel about the way they look, intelligence, goals and interests, values and norms.
- Self image - sense of self worth
- All these are being measures in the **social world** of the child
- Peer pressure and the ever-shaping identity.
- Handling the **delicate balance** is being complicated by his need for independence (on the one hand) and his need for nurturing and guidance from the parent (on the other hand).
- This could be a social and emotional roller-coaster he must ride.



- In this short and delicate period the child must negotiate the following:
- **Primary school senior** with strong social and emotional gains that impacts positively on his self, identity and self image
- Is lost the following year when he starts high school.
- The **popular young person** that every primary school child admires is now the anonymous and nameless person starting high school.
- **Confidence** drops to **uncertainty**
- His **performance-based identity** is now replaced by a **undefined social identity**.
- Going to high school for the first time is a very big affair especially for the child who finds himself there.

The goals the child in grade 7 need to master

- Independent thinking and behaviour
- Positive leadership
- Responsible choices
- Autonomous decision-making
- Competence
- Positive self image

All these gains made with direct support from teachers and parents. The relationship between teacher and parent strongly defined.




- The GET senior phase requires the learner to develop his independent thinking skills that gets demonstrated in his behaviour.
- Being a senior places the grade 7 learner in a positive leadership position.
- Making responsible choices
- Autonomous decision-making in real life situations
- Competence
- Positive Self image
- Strong sense of belonging that developed over 7 years with the guidance of both parents and teachers.
- Many primary school teachers would concur that the majority of their learners would have such a sense of belonging.
- Measure this to the regular visits they receive from learners who have since left for high school.



The goals the High School child need to master

- *All the gains acquired in Grade 7 are not retained in the equation*
- *Mastering physical, personal and social changes*
- *No seniority at high school anymore.*
- *Little independence allowed in freshman year.*
- *Responsibility is not the same as experienced in primary school.*
- *Anonymous identity*
- *Bigger classes with less individual attention*
- *“Blend” and to “make a friend”.*
- *Happens with intense pressure and internal conflict.*
- *Relationships, sexuality and social pressure*
- *Relationship between teacher and parent distant.*
- *Establishing a new sense of belonging.*


- Unfortunately going to high school causes many of these gains to be lost in transition.
- Continuing the mastery of physical, personal and social changes is made more challenging due to the adaptation to the new circumstances.
- Losing seniority to anonymity
- Sense of independence diminished and clouded by uncertainty.
- The responsibility the learner experienced in primary school not being continued.
- The goal of identity formation confronted with an anonymous identity
- Bigger classes, with less individual attention.
- Need to “blend” and the need to “make a friend” - the fear of not being able to do achieve this social goal.
- Happens with intense pressure and internal conflict.
- Forming new relationships, personal sexuality - girls become aware of the keen interest shown to them by older learners of the opposite sex, goes with great pressure and adjustment to social image.
- The relationship between parents and teacher more distant.
- The goal to establish a new sense of belonging.



The "Difficulty"

The behaviour of the new grade 8 learner reflects the internal conflict

- The unconscious goals of "mis" behaviour
- The need for power and control of life situations
- The need for attention and identity.
- Observed behaviour:
 - Withdrawal
 - Disruptive
 - Clowning
 - Fighting
 - Negative "blending" and "befriending"
 - Attempts to achieve the unconscious goal to belong.



- Understanding the behaviour of grade 8 learners requires an understanding of their new worldview.
- The unconscious goals of "mis" behaviour based on their need to
 - Power & Control
 - Attention and Identity
- Behaviour of the grade 8 learner observed
 - Withdrawal - experiencing threat (hide)
 - Disruptive - emotional turmoil / feeling unsafe
 - Clowning - diverting / camouflaging behaviour of insecurity
 - Fighting - need for control and power to determine
 - Causes negative "blending"
 - And the danger of "befriending" groups where belonging can be found.
 - The need for Belonging is the most essential need to ensure effective integration into high school culture.

high school
Getting ready for the challenge

Primary School

Preparing the child for:

- Independence
- The natural changes of child's experiences
- Study techniques / structure / culture.
- Homework culture
- Assignments
- Belonging established after 7 years.

- Primary schools have the responsibility to prepare grade 7 learners for the high school challenge.
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Getting ready for the challenge



- The child is not a clean slate when he arrives at high school.
- Utilise the gains he made at Primary School to create the new sense of belonging.
- Children arriving at high school have a strong homework culture - build on it.
- Create a new belonging by removing the anonymous profile
- Orientation programme
- Mentoring programme



**We build too many walls and
not enough bridges.**

Sir Isaac Newton

Thank You