

Yes, it's true that Upper School can be an exciting time for most students, filled with new people, activities, courses, and opportunities. But it's also true that anything new involves some degree of change, and change may be stressful whether it is positive or negative. Following are some commonly held beliefs about life in Upper School. Are they true or false?

- **Upper School is just like Middle School, only bigger.**
TRUE & FALSE! Yes, most of the students from Middle School move to Upper School, but there are approximately 40 new 9th graders each year. Yes, you still take English, history, science, math, foreign language, and arts, but each year the course choices increase in scope. In Upper School you may also have free periods during the week instead of study halls, and you may use them to do homework, meet with teachers, socialize, relax, or even go off campus as an upperclassman.
- **In Upper School you're on your own, making your own decisions about classes, work, and, activities.**
TRUE & FALSE! As you get older you may want to make more and more of your important decisions independently. If you want assistance with these choices, however, there are many resources at school to assist you. In fact, asking for support is often a sign of maturity. You will still have an advisor as well as a House Head, the Head of Upper School, and other faculty and family members available to help with any decisions.
- **It feels great to finally be in high school.**
TRUE & FALSE! Yes, this step may be exciting and exhilarating for some, but it may also be highly demanding and taxing for others because it is all new.
- **Upper School is a very stressful place.**
TRUE & FALSE! The high school years are filled with challenges, intense workloads, competing demands, and changes in your bodies, minds, and emotions. By definition, this type of environment may be stressful for some students. But the important question is not 'how stressful is school?' but rather 'how does one manage these stresses?'
- **Successful Upper Schoolers are able to manage on their own.**
TRUE & FALSE! GA has a wide variety of helpful resources to meet the varied needs of all types of students. From faculty members to the school counselors, there are many sources of help and support.
- **Counseling is only for people with serious emotional problems.**
FALSE! While it is true that counseling is helpful to those with serious difficulties, it is also very useful for discussions about any issues on your mind. The school counselors are trained to offer confidential assistance for a wide variety of personal, social, family, friendship, or other issues.