

Advice for Parents

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Keeping the motivation up

Your child needs to find the right balance between work and relaxation. Focusing on positive thoughts and visualizing goals reduces nervous exam feelings and gives motivation.

Visualizations can have a great influence on learners' thoughts and minds, and goal-orientated thoughts make them feel good.

So, one way to remind them what they are working towards, is for them to create a "vision board" of important goals and dreams.

A vision board is a collage of positive images, words, photos, and phrases that can motivate your son/ daughter. The board represents the outcome of what they are trying to achieve.

The 4 steps to create a vision board:

1. write down the goals.
2. add visuals related to the goals.
3. add positive and motivational statements.
4. put the vision board up in the room.

Getting ready for revision/ Healthy studying

Eating well

Your son or daughter's general health has an impact on his or her studying and revision. When it comes to learning, a healthy, well rested and well-nourished body usually feels better and provides more energy and stamina to a student.



An unhealthy diet can contribute to anxiety and even depression. Skipping meals lead to a low blood sugar level, which can make students lethargic and slow. Meanwhile, energy drinks, sweets, and snacks are often full of sugar and can raise the blood sugar levels, making students feel jittery and anxious.

To keep blood sugar stable, your son/ daughter should eat regular, healthy meals that include complex carbohydrates such as vegetables and proteins such as eggs. Also, make sure they drink lots of water to keep hydrated.

Comfort food - this can be a time when young people might value some of their favourite family meals. Making them their preferred meal can be an easy and effective way of showing them your support.

Remembering to exercise and considering the benefits of being outdoors

Exercising regularly is important because it increases fitness, improving the efficiency of the heart and lungs and helps reduce stress and tension. In addition, getting some fresh air when taking a break from studying will also help to keep the body in balance.

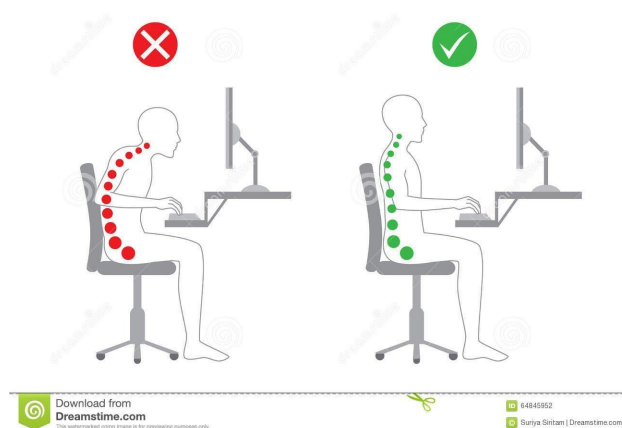


Research suggests that spending time outside and being active is beneficial to both adults and children for the following reasons:

- Sunlight can help prevent myopia in children.
- Being outside helps with mental health, experiencing more positive emotions.
- Moderate to vigorous activity and time outdoors correlates to better academic performance.
- Nature helps reduce stress levels and has a calming effect.
- Being in nature improves physical health and increases feelings of happiness.

Studying in comfort

Healthy studying also involves adopting the right posture when studying - if seated on a chair at a desk, it is important to sit up straight against the back of a chair, with feet flat on the floor and elbows close to the body. The right posture does not put any extra strain on the spine, shoulders, neck, and arms, and helps to avoid any tension and/ or pain.



The room should have a pleasant room temperature, with some fresh air (perhaps from an open window).

Know when and where to seek help

There may be times when some young people can feel a little overwhelmed by the task of preparing for exams and may need some additional help to manage.

If feeling under pressure, start by trying some stress-relief strategies, such as taking regular breaks, spending some time outdoors, using breathing techniques or using a stress ball. Alternatively, learners can share any worries with close friends and family members, for support and guidance.

Sharing worries can help to reduce them. Friends may also have worries to share - support each other.



Who to talk to

Class teachers are very helpful and supportive. They might be able to offer solutions, recommend study support groups, etc.

Guidance teachers and/or Additional Support for Learning can also offer advice towards finding a more relaxed approach.

Assess stress levels and use coping strategies

■ Have a group hug

For some, the physical contact of a hug reduces stress and has a relaxing effect. A group hug with family or with friends is a technique that some find soothing.

■ Create a worry box

Whenever your son/ daughter feels worried about something, he/ she should write it down on a piece of paper and put it into the box. Once it is written down, they no longer have to think about it. Then, once in a while, they can take out the box, put each worry under scrutiny, and take a reality check. It is good to do this with a trusted friend or family member who can help the learner to change his or her perspective.

■ A sign of strength

Learners should keep a record of bad days. After more than two weeks of high anxiety, seek help. There is no shame in doing this. On the contrary, it is brave and a sign of strength to do what is necessary to get better.