

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR CHILDS MENTAL HEALTH DURING REVISION AND EXAMS



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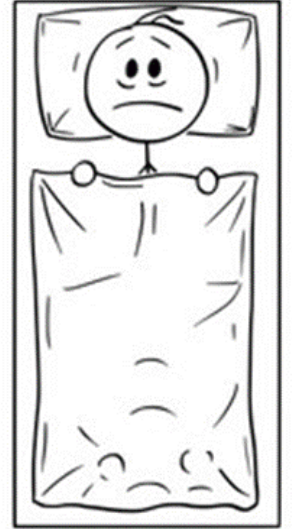
As exam time approaches, your child might be feeling pressure to succeed in their exams. Pressure to do well can be overwhelming and affect their mental health. Although it is normal to feel stress around exams, the constant insistence of family and friends telling you to revise, can often become too much. While this is an important time in their life, your child's mental health is just as significant. To achieve their best, they have to mentally believe they can achieve their best.

This booklet aims to provide some support and advice to parents and carers, to help get you support your child through their revision and exams



Exams are a stressful time for any young person

Mood swings and outbursts are more likely to occur during this period. Look out for other signs that your child may be struggling, including poor sleep patterns or a change in appetite or behaviour.



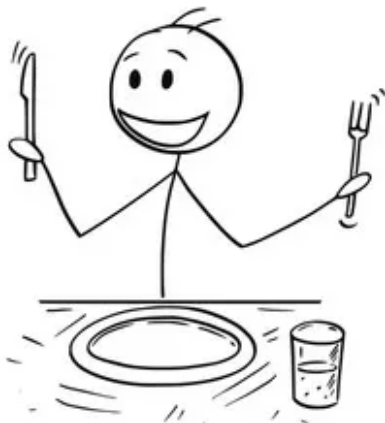
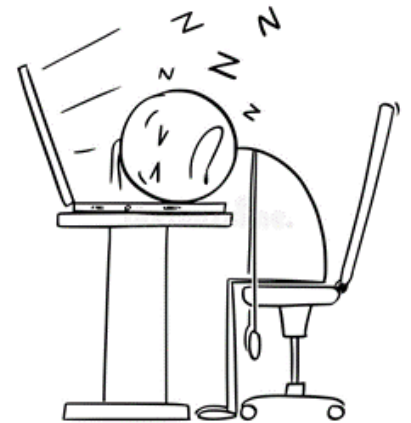
It's worth preparing ways of supporting your child during exam period and thinking about how you will react and respond on the day if they don't get the result that they, or you, are hoping for.



Things that can really help

Work with your child to find what revision style works for them.

Encourage your child to take revision breaks and find a balance between studying and doing things they find enjoyable and relaxing.



Make sure they are eating and drinking at regular intervals.

Encourage them to take some time after revising to wind down.

Remain positive and hopeful!

Reassure them – reinforce that you are and will be proud of them no matter what happens.



Let them know their feelings are valid and normal, but also offer support and solutions where possible



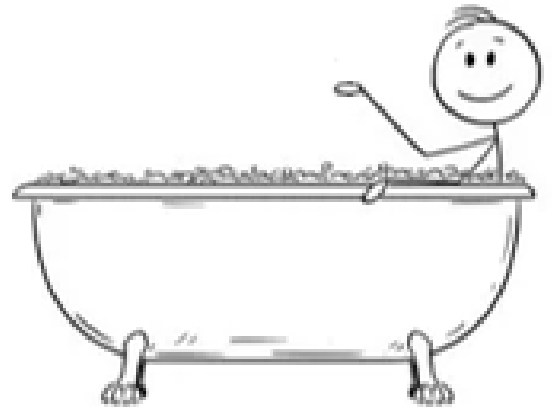
Plan a treat or an activity together to mark the end of the exams.

Work with them to develop relaxation techniques



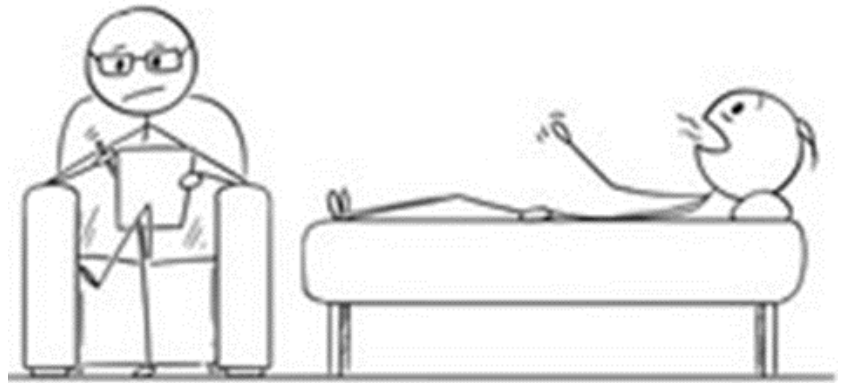
Staying calm yourself can help. Remember, exams do not last forever.

Anxiety is often worst at night, and this means it is useful to encourage a good bedtime routine.



Be flexible around exam time. When your child is revising all day, do not worry about household jobs left undone or untidy bedrooms.

Set aside one to one time so that they can talk to you about any worries.



If anxiety and stress start impacting their day-to-day life, seek help from your GP.

How can the school help?

Speak to your child's teacher to find out what revision techniques they recommend.

If your child is struggling with a specific subject, talk to their class teacher and explore whether they can provide additional help like supported study

If your child has additional support needs, speak to your child's class teacher, and find out what provision they can put in place.



How to manage 'disappointing' results

If your child is unhappy with their exam results it can be tough to deal with. Here are some things that can help:

If your child is happy to show you their results statement, you might find it helpful to have a look, just in case they have misread or misunderstood, or overlooked something.



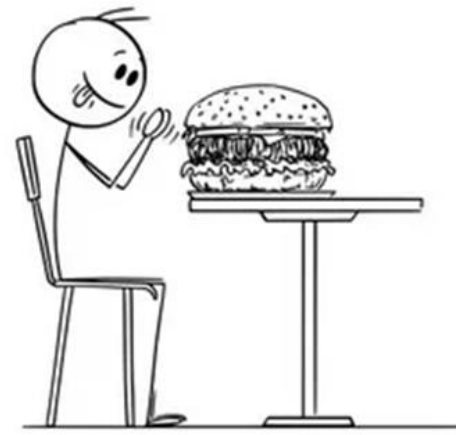
Accept their feelings, whatever they are – disappointment, anger, embarrassment, bravado. Their feelings are neither right nor wrong, they just are. Don't offer immediate judgement, or solutions, or even reassurance – there will be plenty of time for conversations later.

Reflect how they are feeling to show you have understood, for example, "I can see you're disappointed with the Maths result."

Let them know you love them through highs and lows. Big hugs are good (although probably very embarrassing in public).



Show you're on their side - it could be something small like getting their favourite snack.



Give yourself some breathing space and time to reflect.

Ask the school to help your child explore any possible next steps, such as re-takes, re-marking, or alternative courses.

If your child is disappointed with their results, they might also be embarrassed. Agree with your child how they want their results discussed with family and friends, if at all.



Although exams can help them take the next step in their academic or professional career – reassure your child that results are not the only measure of success. Exams are only a small part of a big picture and don't define who we are.



You got this!

