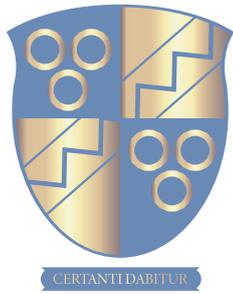


The Oldershaw School

Parent Guide to Exam Stress

Excellence Together

Pride ♦ Kindness ♦ Resilience



Dealing with Exam Stress

Exams are a stressful time for any young person

Mood swings & outbursts are more likely to occur during this period. Look out for other signs that your young person might be struggling, including poor sleep patterns/a change in appetite or behaviour. It's worth preparing ways of supporting your young person during exam weeks & thinking about how you will react & respond on the day if they don't get the result that they, or you, are hoping for.

Things that can help:

Work with them to find what revision style works best for them.

Make sure they are eating & drinking at regular intervals.

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

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

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

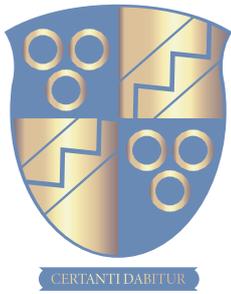
Encourage them to take revision breaks & find a balance between studying & doing things they find enjoyable & relaxing

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

Remain positive & hopeful!

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

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



Dealing with Exam Stress

How can School help?

Speak to their tutor/teacher(s) to find out what revision techniques they recommend.

If they have additional learning or developmental needs, speak to the School SENCO & establish what specialist provision they can put in place.

If they are struggling with a specific subject, talk to the relevant tutor/ teacher & explore whether they can provide additional help.

See if School can provide can help with any practical steps including revision timetables.

Useful Links

NHS Website - www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents



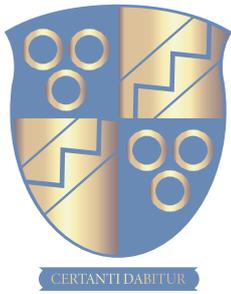
Family Lives - www.familylives.org.uk/advice/teenagers/school-learning/exam-stress/



Young Minds - www.youngminds.org.uk



Self soothe box - www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/blog/how-to-make-a-self-soothe-box/



Managing Disappointment

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

- ◆ If they are 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 back how they are feeling to show you have understood, for example, "I can see you're disappointed with the Math's result."
- ◆ Let them know you love them through highs & 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 & time to reflect.
- ◆ Ask the college to help your young person explore any possible next steps, such as re-takes, re-marking or alternative courses.
- ◆ If they are disappointed with their results, they might also be embarrassed. Agree with them on how they want their results discussed with family & friends, if at all.

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