

# **Helping your son/daughter through their examinations**

## **Assisting with revision**

The secret to doing well in examinations is planning. You can help your child to create a clear revision plan and method of studying that will make them feel in control of their work.

Tips for revision planning:

- work out a revision timetable for each subject
- break revision time into small chunks - hour-long sessions with short breaks at the end of each session often work well
- make sure your child has all the essential books and materials
- buy new stationery, highlighters and pens to make revision more interesting
- go through school notes with your child or listen while they revise a topic
- time your child's attempts at practice papers as examination technique is as important as learning information
- there is no single correct way to revise and encourage your child to use different techniques and resources. There is some excellent web-based revision available such as GCSE Bitesize.

## **Providing all-round support**

The best way to support your child during the stress of revision and exams is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. It helps if other members of the household are aware that your child may be under pressure and that allowances should be made for this.

Make sure there are plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and try to provide good, nutritious food at regular intervals.

Encourage your child to join family meals, even if it's a busy revision day. It's important to have a change of scene and get away from the books and computer for a while. Also encourage your child to take regular exercise. A brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session.

Accept that your child will need time to relax and unwind away from revision and examinations. A simple guide for the weekends is to divide each day into three sessions, morning, noon and evening. Allow them Friday evening free and two of the other six sessions to unwind over the weekend. For example, Saturday evening free to socialise with friends

Try not to nag or make too many demands on your child during exam time. Arguments are counter-productive and will only add unnecessary stress and distract from revision. Show that you care how well they do, but that you will support them irrespective of their performance. This will hopefully help to reduce stress.

Encourage your child to do well for his or her own sake rather than to please you. Explain that examinations aren't an end in themselves but a gateway to the next stage of life - A levels, university, college and eventual work.

It's important to get a good night's sleep before examinations, so discourage your child from staying up late to cram.

Ensure he or she eats a good breakfast on the morning of the examination and drinks plenty of fluid.

If an examination has not gone well, discuss what they can learn from it briefly and then focus on the next one rather than dwell on what has happened. Sometimes, a short break from revision and your company is actually helpful to them at such times so they regain a sense of perspective.