

## **Parents! Keep exam stress away from your child.**

'Testing' times are here again for children and parents alike. While some kids perform better under pressure, others totter when their poor nerves are stretched to the limit. Yes, too much stress can prove really counter-productive for them. But timely parental intervention can have a cooling effect on the child and save the situation from going out of hand. Here are some tips given by examination experts for the parents.

- **Talk**

Do you often talk to your child about the status of his exam preparation or, more importantly, does he share with you the vital details? If no, this is the right time to sit down with him and discuss where his preparation stands. You need to do your homework before this discussion which would involve going through his textbooks to get a broad idea of the syllabus. Discuss with the motive to chart out an action plan for the coming days. The idea is not at all to criticize his preparation so far. Sort the chapters into three categories. Well prepared, half prepared and unprepared. And prepare the to-do list accordingly. Please take care that he should not feel that you are taking control of his preparations; just make sure that he understands that he can easily bank on you.

- **Make a to-do list**

A to-do list is an action plan that the student can follow for the coming days to prepare for his exam in a systematic manner. While charting a to-do list it should be borne in mind that every action is to be marked with a realistic but challenging timeline. The priority should be assigned to half prepared chapters and mastering them before moving to the unprepared chapters. Take care that you have sufficient time to practice model papers once all chapters are well prepared.

- **Revision style**

According to Howard Gardner, there are many different ways in which an individual learns, which he calls multiple intelligence. It is vital that you

should know your child's dominant learning style. Most of the students very well know their revision style. Some do it by reading aloud, some by writing, while others do it by drawing mind maps, etc.

### **Past exams & model papers**

Once the child has prepared each chapter well he should at least practice 10-15 model test papers. The first half of the tests should be practiced without setting any time cap and the last 3-4 tests should be done with a time cap in mind. Purchase or download only those tests which have a detailed marking scheme as per the Board pattern.

- **Give regular breaks**

Make adequate provision for short and long breaks during revision. The attention span of a student while learning theory is initially about an hour and as the hours progress it reduces to half- an- hour It is essential to give them along break and absorb them in recreational activity for about an hour after a stretch of around 3-4 hours of study. However when the child is doing math or numerical problems, the attention span is longer.

- **Incentive achievements**

A productive day in studies or good marks scored in a test calls for a family celebration. This will keep them motivated and focused to achieve more and make the routine fun for them. There is no harm in treating them to a movie after a strenuous task.

- **Be Positive**

Always talk positive with your child. Never blame or unduly criticize him. Always lend a helping hand and assure him that you are always with him in any crisis situation. As a parent, you have to give your child your best. Children sometimes feel down in the dumps on not getting expected results. It is critical that you show them the value of positive attitude. Instead of just giving a sobbing shoulder, parents should discuss with their child on how to overcome the issues which are cropping up. It is only you who can bail him

out of such pressure cooker situations. Just cajole him and make him feel that he CAN do better next time but keeping your expectations bar at same height.

- **Nutrition wise**

Never permit your child to skip breakfasts. Breakfast is vital for a healthy mind. A good breakfast would be a mixture of carbohydrate sources. Protein is essential for good brain functioning. Multi-vitamins also help. If you are anemic please note that iron deficiency reduces concentration. Avoid stimulants like caffeine and keep your child away from junk food and fizzy drinks.