

→ WELCOME



Central and
North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

HILLINGDON MHST EXAM SUPPORT

***Supporting your child's
emotional wellbeing
during exams***



What is anxiety?

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future.

As well as making us feel worried and think anxious thoughts, anxiety causes physical sensations in our bodies, such as a racing heart, fast breathing, and sweating.



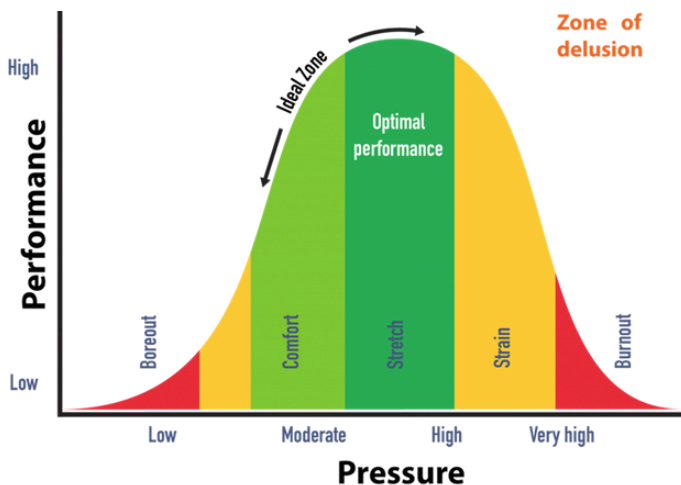
The stress bucket:

We all experience stress in our lives especially around exams. If we don't manage the stress, our bucket can "overflow" and cause unhelpful thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

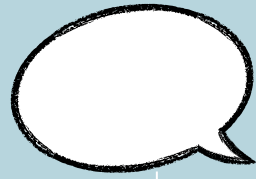
Sometimes we can release stress by 'turning on the taps' and allowing us to feel relaxed.

We have "normal" anxiety and unhelpful anxiety.

In terms of exams, normal anxiety is feeling a little nervous before the exam, That is normal and can actually be helpful in us achieving our best. But sometimes we can have unhelpful anxiety, and this is when we are so nervous that we cant concentrate, or so worried that it is the only think we think about
This type of anxiety is what we want to be conscious about and try to work on.



The importance of talking



Creating a safe space for children to speak openly and honestly about their feelings

Asking open questions

- How do they feel about the exams? Are there positives? What are their concerns?
- How do they want to approach their revision? They are the ones that are going to be completing the exam papers, so they need to have control and choice of their approach to the exams.
- What are their main revision strategies?
- Is there a quiet space at home they can use which is comfortable and has no distractions? Research suggests that it is not conducive to sleep in the same room they revise in as revision materials can cause anxiety.
- What time of day do they prefer to revise?
- Do they prefer to study alone, or do they sometimes want to work with friends?
- What resources will they need? i.e apps, books etc
- What role would they like you to play in their revision (if at all)? Can you test them? Would they like to teach you something? Will they be attending extra revision sessions at college?

**Be there to listen and offer encouragement,
especially if they're trying hard.
Try to not lecture, allow them to feel like they can
offload**



REVISION TECHNIQUES TO DISCUSS AND ENCOURAGE

What works for me? 

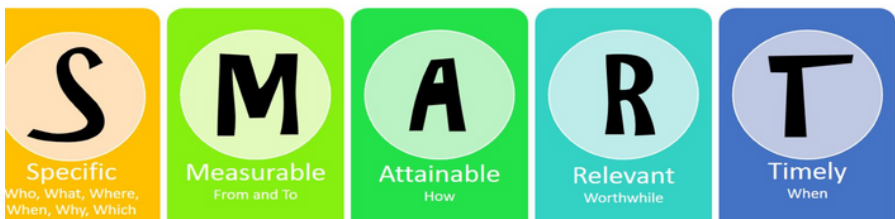
What time of day?	Where?
How?	Anything else you need?

- Managing time and expectations:
- CREATING A MONTHLY PLANNER WHICH INCLUDES FUN ACTIVITIES
 - HOW LONG THEY CAN CONCENTRATE FOR
 - WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO LEAST IMPORTANT
 - SPLIT THE DAY INTO STUDY AND BREAKS

2023							MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT							
			1	2	3	4							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11							
12	13	14	15	16	17	18							
19	20	21	22	23	24	25							
26	27	28	29	30	31								

It is really important to have SMART goals when revising.

By having set goals you have more of a plan and it is easier to work towards



REVISION TECHNIQUES

THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE®

A SIMPLE METHOD TO BALANCE FOCUS WITH DELIBERATE BREAKS



1 PLAN YOUR TASKS
How many pomodoros might you need?

2 DO 1 POMODORO
Time for 25 mins then take a 5 min break

NO SNEAKY WORKING!

PROTECT YOUR POMODORO!



3 REPEAT X 4 POMODOROS
Then take a longer break



Active recall is a way of revising that involves retrieving information from memory through testing at every stage of the revision process.

Can support with practice questions

CHECK YOU CHILD HAS EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO REVISE

Move around during breaks
have a suitable place to revise

TITLE	DATE
BLURTING WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING YOU CAN RECALL ABOUT THE TOPIC FROM MEMORY	
WHAT DID YOU FORGET? KEY INFORMATION THAT YOU FORGOT (WRITE IN A DIFFERENT COLOUR)	PRACTICE Q'S QUESTIONS TO TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXAM TECHNIQUE



4. Simplify your explanations and create analogies

THE FEYNMAN TECHNIQUE

2. Teach it to yourself or someone else

3. Return to the source material if you get stuck

Encourage children to help you learn about their topics

SELF CARE AND SUPPORTING GOOD HABITS

Good sleep is extremely important. Lack of sleep can increase stress. May want to establish a wind down pattern and revising in a separate room

Remind them of support within school and extra opportunities to revise

Plan something nice for when they finish

Exercise and activities to take their mind off revision and exams

Encourage breaks and help them stick to their revision plan

Healthy eating and suitable food; gut hormones produced in the brain influence cognitive abilities

Food including:
eggs, broccoli, leafy greens, bone broth, salmon, dark chocolate and vitamins



THE NIGHT BEFORE

- Remind them how hard they have worked during their time at college and how proud you are of them, regardless of results. There IS life after exams and there are ALWAYS options.
- Try to avoid last minute revision. Encourage them to review the work they have done and then relax and take a break
- Make sure their bag is ready the night before which has all the relevant equipment needed
- How are they getting to school on the day?
- Encourage them to relax. They may like listening to music, podcasts etc.
- If possible, make sure they have something to eat before the exams, or give them snacks to take with them. Make sure they have bottled water (with no label)

AFTER:

- Do not bombard them with questions after the exam. Give them time and space. They will tell you what it was like in their own time. On the other hand, the exam may be the only thing they want to talk about when they see you. Let them - it will help to ground them and release their feelings.
- Do not dwell on the exam once it is finished. Congratulate them for completing it and tell them how proud you are then move forward to the next one. Be there to support them and let them know you love them and are proud of them irrespective of results.
- Prepare their favourite meal for them / have their favourite snacks.
- Let them relax and engage in hobbies they enjoy as they will probably be tired.

Additional support and signs of anxiety

What anxiety might look like at home:

- A change in their 'normal' pattern of behaviour (can be a subtle or major change), e.g., they may change from being outgoing, to uncharacteristically quiet.
- May stay in their room more than usual.
- Changes in appetite (eating less or eating more, particularly junk food)
- Not sleeping
- Difficulty getting them out of bed in the morning.
- Not socialising with friends (either online or meeting up with them)
- Going out more with friends and avoiding college work
- Using social media more
- Difficulty getting them to focus on college work.
- Mood swings
- Constantly talking about exams or not wanting to talk about them.
- Self-injury



Kooth is a free and anonymous online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people. There are no waiting lists or referral systems. Counsellors are available weekdays from 12 noon to 10pm and from 6pm to 10pm on weekends
search: [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)



Shout is a free, confidential, anonymous service for anyone in the UK, and it won't appear on your phone bill. Trained volunteers are there for you 24/7 to listen and support you to get to a calmer and safe place.
text: SHOUT to 85258



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Hillingdon MHST- contact
cnwl.admin@hillingdonmhstcamhs.nhs.net. We
operate weekdays between 9am-5pm. For urgent
our out of hours support please contact the
Urgent Crisis Line on: 0800 0234650