



The Potters Bar Consortium

Pressure of exams hitting home?

The run up to the exam period for SATs*, GCSEs and A-Levels can be extremely stressful for everyone in the family, as most parents and carers know.

To help ease tensions charity Parentline Plus, which runs a free, 24-hour, confidential Parentline – 0808 800 2222, has put together some pointers for parents to help them cope and support their children during exam time.

Chief Executive of Parentline Plus, Jeremy Todd, said:

"This year, the pressure to succeed on our children is higher than ever. To get into college, university or to get a job is very tough in the current recession. We need to find ways to support them at a really intense period of their life."

"Callers to our Parentline have expressed concerns about finding a balance between wanting their children to do well in exams and not putting too much pressure on them."

He added:

"Parents tell us that the best way to get through it is to be as calm, positive and reassuring as possible. Try to also keep your sense of humour."

The good news for parents is that they can help their children at this time of year.

Pointers by parents for parents:

- You can help your teen revise by being a bit more flexible in your routine. Also be lenient about chores and untidiness.
- Expect lost tempers and moodiness over and above the norm. Keep a calm head, try not to nag too much and remind yourself that the exams will be over soon!
- Sort out a revision schedule with them or ask for the school's advice. Remember it's never too late to study or ask for help.
- Make sure they have a comfortable place to work. Some people CAN revise better with music or the TV on. You can also help by encouraging a healthy diet and early nights to aid their concentration.
- Don't go in for bribes. Encourage them to work for their own satisfaction and schedule small, frequent rewards for effort.
- Be calm, positive and reassuring and put the whole thing into perspective. They can always take an exam again.
- After each exam, encourage them to talk it through, this will be an opportunity for you to help re-focus them on the next exam and not dwell on something that can't be changed.
- Plan a family event to mark the end of exams, although be prepared to fit in with your kids social life – it could be something as simple as a meal together

Parents and carers wanting more information and/or support can call Parentline Plus' confidential free Parentline on 0808 800 22 22. for more tips and information, check out the website www.parentlineplus.org.uk