

What can I do to help my child with revision?

You can't do the revision, but there is plenty you can do to help your child to get organised, stay motivated and keep calm.

Getting organised

1. Help your child to draw up a revision timetable. This should list dates, details of the subject and topics to revise and what she'd like to finish by when. The timeline can have a checklist, so tasks can be ticked off as your child goes along. You can download revision planners from the following website:



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/onelife/education/revision/planners.shtml>
(on line revision planners)

These can be adapted to suit the needs of your child.

2. Make sure that their social life/ job is not interfering with their studying. They need rest and sleep to make sure that their brains are active and open to learning.



3. Work with your child. Set goals you both think are realistic in a particular time. Ticks on the timetable will show success. Do try to keep up to date with how he/ she's getting on.

4. If certain goals are not met, don't be negative with your child - try to figure out together what went wrong and help him / her to get back on track.

Getting motivated

Getting started on a big job like revision is tough for many people, but you can help your child get motivated. Praise and rewards work well.

Use the revision timetable to plan out small rewards when a certain number of targets have been met. These might include watching a favourite TV programme, calling a friend or having an afternoon off.

Help your child to see beyond the revision, too. Remind her / him how rewarding it will be to know s/he did her best. A bigger final reward, such as a pair of trainers, a holiday or a local visit somewhere exciting will give them something to look forward to when it's all over.



Staying calm

As far as possible, try to make sure that revision time is quiet time in the house. A healthy diet and regular exercise are also especially important when your child is under pressure.

If your child is highly motivated, it's important to make sure that she doesn't overwork. Breaks are essential. Remind your child that even a short 15-20 minute break every 90 minutes will refresh her mind. Making a drink, playing some sport, listening to some music or watching a TV programme are all good ways to help relax before the next revision session.

Talk to your child about what the subjects and exams are about, what they have to do in them, what they feel confident/ less confident about etc. etc. Talking to you about their learning will help them to think about their learning needs. If they have any worries, encourage them to see their teacher, or you can contact the teacher concerned.

Studying in a group can be helpful, too, although sometimes more chatting gets done than work! Children can pick up new ideas, talk about exam stress and help each other with areas they're finding difficult.

If your child is completely stuck on a topic, remember you can always contact the school. It is usually possible for your child to arrange a short meeting with her teacher, who can offer a little extra help and advice.

Help your child to reduce stress

Stress - what is it?

Stress is the body's normal response to a challenge, threat or excitement. During revision and exams, anxiety and stress are common problems for pupils, even for those who appear confident and calm. While small stress levels can make pupils alert and focused, too much can reduce concentration and confidence.



Just being present is a great start to help your child reduce stress during revisions and exams. Here are some tips for managing stress:

- Encourage your son or daughter to get enough sleep. Tiredness promotes anxiety.
- Remind them to avoid large doses of caffeine - it can cause tension and anxiety.
- Help them not to dwell on previous exams. This can also increase anxiety about later papers.
- Encourage them to try relaxation exercises. They can reduce anxiety levels and cope with panicky feelings.

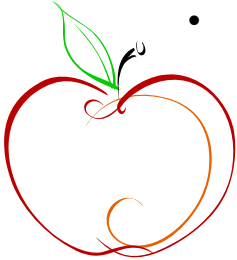
Healthy Body = Healthy Mind

Food for thought

Encourage your child to eat regular, healthy meals.

Brain Fuel *(Advice for students)*

- Bread, pasta, cereals and potatoes are filling and packed with starchy carbohydrates, which release energy slowly, meaning you can keep going for longer.
- Fruit and vegetables give you essential vitamins and minerals. Aim for at least five portions a day.
 - Food like pasties, chips and crisps are high in fat. Unless you want to emerge from your room looking like Jabba the Hut, keep them for treats.
 - Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydrated brains don't think clearly and water is healthier than sweet, fizzy drinks.
- Meat, fish, pulses, milk and dairy foods are good sources of protein. Moderate amounts are essential for a healthy diet.
- Make sure you eat breakfast on the day of an exam.
- If you're not getting enough iron then you'll damage your ability to concentrate for long periods of time and your energy levels will begin to drop. If hour long sessions of revision are proving too much, try eating more red meat, eggs and leafy green vegetables like spinach.



Exercise

Although it is essential to use revision time effectively, a bit of the great outdoors can blow the cobwebs away and help your child relax. If they can't get out, at least encourage them to get up and out of their chair for a stretch and a wander whilst revising.



Coursework

Support them with their coursework, by talking through with them what they have to do. Please note, support does not mean doing it for them or correcting the work!

Help your child to revise

Helping your child to revise for exams will improve their chances of success. Here are a few tips that can help with revision.

- Encourage your child to eat healthy food and proper meals.
- Offer to help with testing and any subjects they are finding to difficult to revise.
- Make sure they read thoroughly former or mock exam papers.

- Know their revision timetable. Encourage them to tell you about what they are studying.
- Know the date, time and location for each exam and incorporate this into a revision plan.



Encourage your child to use revision web sites, for example: <http://gcsrevision.blogspot.com/> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/revision/>

- Encourage your child to attend revision classes.
- Encourage your child to use a variety of appropriate revision methods and equipment e.g. highlighter pens, tape recordings, post-it notes. Discuss with them how these methods work, and help them choose the best one for their learning style. Suggestions are in the booklet given to students.
- Get your child to 'teach' you something, as research shows that, while we learn only 10% of what we read, we learn 95% of what we teach to someone else.
- When your child is revising, encourage them to drink water, listen to (quiet) music and to take regular breaks.
- When your child is on study leave expect at least 4 hours of productive, active revision but don't expect them to revise all day and all evening.

On exam days

You can do a lot to help your child prepare for exam days.

- Make sure the alarm is set so they're not rushing and have time to eat breakfast.
- Encourage them to take five minutes to check they have everything they need, like extra pens and pencils, calculators and maths equipment. If they have a mobile phone, remind them not to take it with them into exam room
- Say: "Don't panic, don't worry - just do your best." Tell them to say it to themselves during an exam.

