

How do I help my child deal with Test Stress?

It is that time of the year, and no matter how much we try to underplay tests, they can feel overwhelming for children. It may be tricky to know how to support through this difficult time.



Here are some top tips from parents.actionforchildren.org.uk

Spot the signs of stress:

Common signs that your child is experiencing stress include:

- Upset stomach
- Headaches
- Disturbed sleep
- Loss of appetite
- Being irritable
- Low mood

Understand the source of stress

Messages of stress and pressure can come from many places. It might be from a well-meaning comment, news/social media or friends.

Take time to speak to and observe your child. It can help to:

- Ask them how they feel and what is making them feel that way
- Share any concerns you have for how they are; tell them what you have noticed
- Find ways to empathise and reflect on what pressure feels like, or ask how they are looking after themselves.

Do not feel you have to find solutions straight away. Making sure your child knows that you are listening and there to offer support can be a good start.

Encourage healthy habits

The amount of sleep your child gets makes a huge difference to their mental health and ability to learn. If your child is not sleeping well, see if there are any changes they could make to their bedtime routine to help them relax. This could include a bubble bath, reading, meditation or a walk. Make sure they find ways to exercise too.

Take a positive attitude

*Stay positive. Remind your child of their strengths and qualities. **Let them know you are proud of the efforts they have made, whatever the outcomes of the tests.** Do not feel tempted to offer incentives or 'bribe' them to do well; this can add further pressures and stress.*

Need extra support

If your child does not want to talk to you, try helping them identify a trusted friend or adult to check in with. At school, their class teacher is always the best place to start as they know your child the best. Children are also able to self-refer to talk to Miss Ashby, our lovely school mentor, or they can talk to Mrs Hodges or any of the safeguarding team.

Children in Year 6 upwards can also seek support from a trusted online mental wellbeing community via the 'Kooth app' where there are helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from the Kooth team, discussion boards, chat rooms and how to keep a daily journal to track feelings or emotions and reflect on them. [Click here for further details.](#)



working together to keep our children safe and happy.