

10 ways to help your child prepare for tests and exams

1. Getting stressed usually limits how well we do in tests, so practise relaxation and keep things in perspective.
2. Tests are a chance to find out what is going well and what needs a little more work. Say this!
3. Find out what any test is on (eg, a whole unit, one topic or a mock exam) before you start to help.
4. Agree how much time should be spent revising for the test and when these times should be. Our minds work best when there is a good balance between work and relaxation.
5. Little and often revision is better than hours on end.
6. Concentration span for a child in their teens is about 20-30 minutes, so try to stick to this amount of time, have a short break and then start again or on a different topic.
7. Encourage your child to organise the information to be learned in a way that she enjoys using (diagrams, memory maps, time lines, voice recordings are all great ways). She is revising when she is sorting and organising this information.
8. Quality revision usually involves doing something with the information rather than just reading it (eg writing and checking, redrawing diagrams, trying out a question and checking it, talking it through).
9. Encourage your child to talk to you about the information they have to learn, explaining it out loud often makes it clearer and easier to remember.
10. Keep calm! Avoid making revision a battle ground. Build confidence by reminding your child that he is a good thinker and has been learning the topic - he will be able to produce an answer if he gives everything a go!