



April is Autism Awareness month and over the course of the next two weeks we will be raising awareness of the condition through our DigiBriefing and Learning for Life sessions.

Over the last few months, we have seen an increase in young people within Newham and beyond sharing inappropriate images online. Sometimes this has been with the consent of the person within the video but at other times the recording of the images has not been agreed to nor has the sharing of that image / video. We have already spent time with learners re internet safety and we have been disappointed to note that some of our young people have not taken this advice on board. It is worth noting what the law says on this. The [Online Safety Act 2023](#) means that the tech companies that run social networking sites or search engines, must promote online safety by tackling illegal material and content that is harmful to children and properly enforcing age limits. In addition, it is now an offence for an intimate image to be shared without their consent and there is now an offence called “cyberflashing” which criminalises sending an explicit image for the purpose of sexual gratification or to cause the recipient humiliation, alarm or distress.

However, for anyone under the age of 18 “sexting” – creating or sharing sexual images or videos of a child or young person under 18, is illegal. By sending explicit images, according to the law, a young person is producing and distributing indecent images of children. This means that they could be prosecuted for it even if permission was given for the image to be taken and shared. This could mean being placed on the Sex Offenders Register and then being barred from certain jobs and travelling abroad. You can find more information here [Sexting - Victim Support](#) which has been written for young people. For adults you can find information and support here [Sexting - The Hidden Dangers - Safeguarding Hub](#)

April is also [Stress Awareness Month](#) and as we are now on the run up to final exams, we thought it would be useful to share with parents how to support your young people.

Stress is a perfectly normal human reaction caused by a difficult situation. Everyone will experience stress to some degree and at various points in life. A useful description can be found here [Stress | Mental Health Foundation](#) alongside some signs to look out for and how to deal with stress. Self-care is definitely helpful and Anna Freud has put together a number of strategies identified by 11 – 25 year olds, which you can find here [Self-care | Anna Freud](#).

Place 2 Be has put together a number of resources to support learners with exam stress [Navigating exam season resources - Place2Be](#) including some top tips for parents/carers. YoungMinds has also produced resources to support learners [Exam Stress | How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#). These will be shared with learners over the course of the next few weeks through our DigiBriefing. In addition, the NHS has put together a document for parents / carers [Help your child beat exam stress - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).

It is worth making clear that whilst exams are important, they are a means to an end. Learners need to do the best they can do in order to prepare themselves for their next steps whether Sixth Form, university, apprenticeship or the work place. As always if you have any concerns, please contact your child’s Head of Year in the first instance.

# Small Actions To Make Big Changes



## CONNECT WITH SOMEONE

Are they okay? · Are you okay? · Check in with your support network · Connect with someone new · A sense of belonging and community can help reduce feelings of loneliness.

## PRIORITISE SLEEP

Take small steps to improve your bedtime routine. Wind down before bed by minimizing your screen time · Make your bedroom a 'tech-free' zone · Create a clean and restful sleep environment · Jot down what's on your mind and set it aside for tomorrow · Avoid caffeine after 4pm.



## MOVE IN YOUR OWN WAY

Get moving the way you want to. This could be walking, running, yoga, stretches, doing some gardening. Move in a way you'll enjoy, get those endorphins flowing and let off some steam.

## SPEND TIME IN NATURE

Take some time out of your day to step outside, get some fresh air and spend time in nature. This could be eating your lunch outside, or taking a short work after work. Simulate your senses and look at the beauty of nature



## BREATHE DEEP

Your breath is a powerful tool to help with stress reduction and relaxation. Short, shallow breaths can heighten anxiety so being conscious and taking time to breathe deep helps us shift into a relaxation mode.

## PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Practicing mindfulness allows you to focus on the here and now. It aids self-awareness, helps you practice emotional regulation and control. You can actively practice during a designated mindfulness session or be mindful of your all five of your sense whilst participating in an activity, such as a nature walk.



**#LittleByLittle**



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators MANAGING EXAM STRESS

At some point in their education, children are almost certain to encounter exam stress, which can cast a shadow over their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. Mental health charity YoungMinds estimate that a staggering 87% of pupils suffer from exam stress – highlighting the urgent need to minimise its impact on children's health and happiness.

## 1 PRACTISE WORKLOAD WISDOM

The build up to exam season is such a busy and pressurised time in a child's education that it can be difficult for youngsters to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Encourage them to consider whether their current workload is realistic and allows them sufficient time to relax and recharge. Work with them in crafting a revision timetable that's manageable and includes breaks and occasional days off.

## 2 ADVISE CLEARING THE CLUTTER

A disorganised work environment is proven to negatively effect our ability to focus, as well as our emotional state. Encourage children to keep their desk, notes and revision materials tidy – creating a dedicated, well-kept study space to promote maximum focus. Foster their creativity by suggesting they incorporate vibrant colours, mind maps and even quirky drawings into their revision notes.

## 3 MASTER THE MATERIALS TOGETHER

Revision seems far harder when a child is uncertain where to begin or what sources to consult. Support them in confirming revision materials with their various teachers – emphasising the importance of gathering a range of resources to get a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. Feeling more prepared should nurture the child's confidence and help to dispel some of their anxiety.

## 4 RECOMMEND CREATIVE NOTE-TAKING

Writing out notes in full – rather than simply bullet pointing – can be a strong start to a child's revision. Reinforce this idea, encouraging the use of flashcards (featuring shorter versions of previously taken notes) for effective repetition and memorisation. Discuss the power of regularly reviewing notes to help them stay in the child's memory.

## 5 USE VISUAL AIDS AND MNEMONICS

Encourage the use of visual aids like videos and sticky notes to enhance learning. Some children find these resources far more useful than simply reading their notes as written. Explore creating mnemonics for a fun and effective study approach – and it's also worth noting that the strategic use of colours is a proven means of triggering recall during exams.

## 6 GATHER A 'TECH TOOLKIT'

Technology can be a huge advantage in exam prep. Educational YouTube channels and revision websites like BBC Bitesize can be immensely powerful resources for helping children to expand and retain their knowledge. You could also recommend the use of flashcard apps and educational podcasts for revision and reminders when young people are on the go.

## 7 KEEP IT FUN

Revision tends to go far more smoothly if children are having fun in the process. Injecting some humour into their notes, for instance, can make details more memorable – as can relating information to their real-life experiences. Try to encourage a variety of study methods, such as incorporating physical activity (even simply taking a walk) into their revision routine.

## 8 SUGGEST ACTIVE REVISION STRATEGIES

Make sure children are aware of different study techniques. You could emphasise the effectiveness of spaced repetition by reviewing material regularly over time to reinforce learning and improve retention. Discuss the benefits of active recall methods – such as self-testing or explaining a concept aloud – in identifying where their strengths and weaknesses lie.

## 9 ENCOURAGE A POSITIVE MINDSET

It can be easy for children's thoughts to fall into a downward spiral when they're stressed about exams. Try to foster a growth mindset by emphasising the importance of giving it their all rather than aiming for complete perfection. Positive self-talk and the use of affirmations can build confidence and reduce anxiety, while visualising success and setting realistic goals can help them stay motivated and focused.

## 10 HELP THEM TO SEIZE THE DAY

There are lots of things children can do on the day of their exam to reduce stress and increase their focus. Talk them through some helpful exam-day strategies – such as arriving early, reading the instructions and the questions carefully, and pacing themselves during the test. Suggest some relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or visualisation, to help them manage any nerves before and during the exam.


## Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of the Social Enterprise UK: 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School.



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