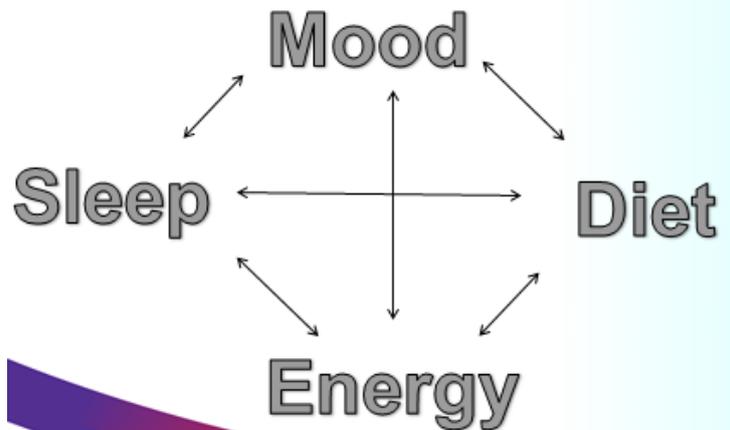


Pressure vs Stress

There can be a lot of pressure to succeed in exams and sometimes this can feel overwhelming. It's normal to feel pressure during exam season and if you can manage it you can keep stress away. Some thrive under pressure, it can motivate and help you to perform at your best. For others, it may feel the opposite - struggling with the pressure, beginning to feel as though you are unable to manage.

West Cheshire CAMHS

Exam Stress Training



What to look out for

Exam stress will affect 8 in 10 teens' behaviour, health or appearance this summer. Watch out for possible warning signs:

Struggling to sleep, Feeling more tired than usual

Forgetfulness, Struggle to focus and feeling overwhelmed

Unexplained aches and pains

Poor appetite, Suffering from regular stomach upsets

Loss of interest in activities

Increased anxiety, irritability and feeling as though your self-esteem is crumbling

Increased heart rate

Migraines/headaches, Blurred vision, Dizziness

Struggle to focus and feeling overwhelmed

Feel teary and more emotional than usual

Feeling run down

Begun to experience panic attacks

Look after the basics

Recommended sleep=8-9.5 hours

Wind down before bed

Limit caffeine

Eat right, fruit, veg, Carbohydrates, Protein, minerals, fats and vitamins

Have plenty of water

Exercise for stress relief

www.nhs.uk/Livewell



Good Habits

Preparation can be key, considering your routines so that you find a sense of balance can aid feelings of stress. Research suggests regular breaks can aid memory so fit them in.



- GIVING** Do things for others
- RELATING** Connect with people
- EXERCISING** Take care of your body
- AWARENESS** Live life mindfully
- TRYING OUT** Keep learning new things
- DIRECTION** Have goals to look forward to
- RESILIENCE** Find ways to bounce back
- EMOTIONS** Look for what's good
- ACCEPTANCE** Be comfortable with who you are
- MEANING** Be part of something bigger

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:30-9:00	Morning routines	Ensure you have a good breakfast	Could include some exercise	Or relaxation time		Lie in?	
9:00-10:30	School	Or if on study leave:	45 mins revision periods	Take regular breaks	Breaks could include:	Keep up the positive things	Put time aside for you!!!
10:30-12:00						Tidy room	Plan in revision time?
12:00-1:30	Get a good lunch				Relax	Hobbies, clubs, interests.	Get a good lunch
1:30-3:00	Drink plenty of water				Brief exercise?	Keep active, connect.	Drink plenty of water
3:00-4:30	Have regular ----- Healthy snacks				Do chores		Grab healthy snacks
4:30-6:00	Connect with friends	Be Creative, play	Take notice	Read for fun or to relax	Be active		
6:00-7:30	Grab a good dinner	If you wish to revise more	Squeeze another hour in?				
7:30-9:00	Connect with friends	Be Creative, play	Take notice	Read for fun or to relax	Be active		
9:00-10:30	Calming activities	Relax and wind down					





Mind Full, or Mindful?



Count 1 to 7
First, count from one to seven
on each "in" breath ...



Count 1 to 11
... then, counting at the same
rate, count from one to eleven
on each "out" breath

- 5 things I can see
- 4 things I can hear
- 3 things I can touch
- 2 things I can smell or like the smell of
- 1 slow and deep breath – then just focus on my breathing

Challenging Thoughts

Often when we feel stressed, low or worried, we tend to think negatively – we can jump to conclusions and we can think the worst, this in turn can create an ongoing negative cycle that makes life seem very overwhelming.

Recognising negative thoughts can be an important step, knowing that they are unhelpful thoughts and focusing on them will not help, instead try challenging such thoughts, consider a more balanced or positive views .

- ◇ That problem's don't last forever!
- ◇ Don't assume the worst!
- ◇ Don't take things personally!
- ◇ Be aware of jumping to conclusions!
- ◇ You cannot tell the future!
- ◇ What if's' don't help!!

Consider a mantra—a positive coping statement!!

Others top tips

"A break or a chat with someone who knows the pressure you're under can get things into perspective."

"Avoid comparing your abilities with your mates."

"Steer clear of the exam 'post-mortem'."

"Ultimately, don't lose sight of the fact that there is life after exams."

"Remember your best is good enough!"

"If you like to have music on, choose instrumental music."

Parents Top tips- Ask your child, how you can help them.

While it's important to keep an eye on dramatic changes in appetite, sleep patterns and behaviours, being overly anxious yourself can inflame the situation.

Being available when you're child needs you is important

The most detrimental things parents can do include confiscating technology, micromanaging revision calendars or saying things like 'shouldn't you be revising' or 'how can you think with that music on'.

Accept this is going to be a stressful time – expect outbursts and try to remain calm.

Encourage your child to have regular breaks, to do something they enjoy, even if it's just half an hour off for their favourite soap.

Offer healthy snacks regularly, and encourage drinking enough Water so they don't get dehydrated – you can always pop your head in to see how they are doing and bring them a drink.

Help your child revise by making sure they have somewhere comfortable to study—avoid studying in bed itself.

Remind your child that feeling nervous is normal. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams.

Don't add to exam pressure - Support group ChildLine says that many of the children who contact them feel that the greatest pressure at exam time comes from their family.

Check out:

- www.mymind.org.uk; www.startingwell.org.uk;
- www.youngminds.org.uk; www.anxietybc.org;
- www.childrensociety.org.uk;
- www.studentminds.org.uk; www.childline.org.uk

Apps: Smiling Mind, Mindshift, VirtualHopeBox,