

## Help Ease A Child's Test Anxiety: The Parent Role

(NAPSA)—Sweaty palms, accelerated heart rate, and nausea are all common symptoms among students who suffer from test anxiety. The anxiety some students experience before an exam is so strong that it can lead to poor performance and disrupt their ability to learn.

Parents play an important role in helping their child ease test-taking anxiety by providing support, encouragement and a positive learning environment.

Dr. Andrea Pastorok, child psychologist for Kumon Math and Reading Centers, offers the following tips for parents to help children relax and approach exams with confidence:

- Encourage your children to space out their studying and homework assignments so they won't be forced to cram the night before the test. Daily practice is the key to mastering a subject.

- Provide a quiet, well-lit area with little distractions to help your child focus and study efficiently.

- Practice with your child to ensure comprehension and mastery of the concepts being tested. If your child doesn't understand a topic, seeing it on a test will increase anxiety.

- Encourage your child to do well, but don't add pressure or negative consequences tied to test results. It's important your child knows you'll be proud and offer support regardless of the outcome.

- Keep a positive attitude about tests. Test taking is a part of life, and the sooner a child can master the experience of testing the easier the process will become.

- Mark down test days on the calendar together so you and your child are aware of testing dates and can plan ahead.

- Make sure your child gets



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enough sleep the night before the test. Feeling alert and rested will help her performance.

- Prepare a healthy breakfast for your child the day of the exam. A heavy or high-sugar breakfast may cause your child to be groggy or hyper. Fuel your child's brain and body with a nutritious meal.

- Make sure your child gets up early enough to arrive on time to school. Rushing creates panic and increases anxiety.

- If your child continues to struggle on tests, talk to him about it and meet with his teacher to learn new ways to help.

- Praise and reward your child for her hard work preparing for the test. Positive reinforcement encourages a child to keep up the good work.

Remember, easing test anxiety is a process and there is no quick fix. Be patient with your child and help him or her gain the skills needed to overcome this challenge. Doing well on a test is important, but not as important as helping your child gain confidence, life skills and character.

For more tips and information, visit [www.kumon.com](http://www.kumon.com).