

## Help Your Child Do Better on Tests

Teachers are continually testing students to ensure that they are learning. From quizzes to college entrance exams, tests are a part of school. They evaluate skills, affect grades and determine academic placement. Without strong test taking skills a person can be severely limited. The ability to test well is important! It not only helps one succeed in school, it helps one throughout life in such things as obtaining a driver's license, getting a job, or qualifying to play sports.

While it is important to learn how to take tests and do one's best, it is not good to get "test anxiety." Test anxiety is defined as excessive worry about doing well on tests. Students who suffer from test anxiety worry themselves into a poor performance. Instead of feeling challenged they feel afraid and become so anxious that they feel incompetent.

As a parent, you can help your child reduce "test anxiety." First of all, make sure your child is physically ready for the test. Aside from studying, the next best preparation for a test is a nourishing breakfast and a good night's sleep before the test. Be sure your child wears appropriate clothing -there is nothing worse than being too cold or too hot.

### Share the following tips with your child:

- **Don't cram.** Cramming increases anxiety and interferes with clear thinking. The less pressure you have the more you will remember.
- **Read directions carefully.** If you don't understand them, ask the teacher.
- **Skim the test carefully.** By skimming you will know what to expect and can pace yourself.
- **If you don't know the answer to a question, skip it and go on.** Don't waste time worrying about it. If you have time at the end of the exam go back to the unanswered question.

### Remind your child that:

- **Good test scores are not everything.** Attendance, attitude, homework and daily grades count, too.
- **One test score -good or bad - is just one test score.** If your grades in general show that you understand a subject, one low test score will not be a disaster.
- **No matter what the test score is your love will never fail.** A test may measure certain knowledge and abilities, but no test can ever measure a child's worth.

Supporting your child and sharing these strategies will help your child to approach a test with more confidence and demonstrate achievement to the best of his/her ability.

