

NEWSLETTER FOR FEBRUARY, 2015

Dear Parents,

With examinations around the corner, students are obviously burning the midnight oil and putting in their best efforts to ensure good results. It is at this time of the year that we, as school counsellors, have a sudden surge in the number of students approaching us, for assistance with study schedules, routines and suggestions for better performance.

As parents, we are sure that you too would want to be of greatest assistance to your child, and we wish to address this issue here.

It is imperative for all of us, as parents, to realise that each child is unique, with his or her own levels of intelligence, ability and perseverance. It is but natural for a parent to want to "dream big" for the child, to desire "only the best" for his or her offspring, and in doing so, to expect that the child will become what the parent wants him or her to become.

While this is a subject for another article, what we wish to address here is the term "expectation". In expecting a child to achieve, are we expecting the child to fulfil our own unfulfilled wishes and desires? Am I expecting my young son or daughter to become what I could not? This is the first point of dissent and discord between a lot of students and their parents, and if, as a parent, you wish to help your child achieve, then please do try to "stop expecting".

Easier said than done!! But remember, it will make for easier rapport between you and your child. It will also allow him or her to grow and develop and learn, according to his or her own ability, without having to deal with the burden of anyone's expectations, except, of course, their own!!

Once the hurdle of expectations is crossed, you will find that there are a few other things you can do to make exam time a bit more comfortable for your child –

1. Rest is essential at this stressful time- Ensure the child gets at least 5-6 hours of sleep at night
2. Ensure she/he eats regular meals. This is a cause for much concern during the exams, but does not worry- even if the child refuses to eat regular and / or large meals, make sure that you supplement the diet with other easy- to- consume foods- like milk, fruit juices or fruits, sandwiches or foods which the child likes to eat. You may provide your child with baked crisps, soya sticks and nutrition bars as well, for a quick munch when they feel hungry.
3. Ensure that the child has covered at least 75-80 % of the curriculum. In this way, they will be prepared to answer at least half of the questions given.
4. Ensure that the child has started revisions at least two weeks before the examinations.
5. Do not allow him or her to do any last minute studying- what the child has not managed to learn all through the year, he will not be able to grasp or recall in the last 5-10 minutes before the exam.
6. Give the child some practice before the examinations by giving him mock tests or making him write answers to questions.
7. Ensure that the child follows a routine of some kind, which should definitely allow for some leisure and relaxation.

8. Try to give her/him a few small breaks between prolonged periods of study- this will refresh him / her and make them more alert and attentive when they return to their books.
9. Encourage the child to take a walk or go out for some fresh air. This not only relaxes the child but provides some form of exercise which is beneficial to his overall wellbeing, including an increase in the ability to concentrate.
10. Try to cut out distractions – let’s be practical here- which child would be able to study when he or she can hear a television blaring in the background with a favourite serial or cricket / football game in progress? They might still make the effort, but they would be hard-pressed to sustain attention and concentration.
11. When your child returns from school, please do not sit down to conduct an analytical deconstruction of “how did the exam go”? What is done, cannot be undone and there is no use in going over it. Take a brief feedback, and allow the child to rest for a while. Then encourage him to take up the next day’s revision.

Finally, just as your child is leaving home for the examination, give her/him a hug and your blessings. More often than not, this is the only emotional boost they actually need to help them give their examinations in a more confident manner.

We wish all our students all the very best for their examinations!!

With regards,
School Counsellors
La Martiniere for Boys – 40406612/6613/6629
La Martiniere for Girls - 40406662/6663

(Please contact the numbers given above if you wish to meet the school counsellors. Kindly note that these numbers are operative **only on weekdays, during school hours**. The counsellors will meet you only by appointment.)