

Life Talk® News 19

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CONTENTS:

- STRESS SYMPTOMS

- STRESS BEATERS / TIPS

- BOOK SPECIAL

- VIDEOS

- NEWS 1-18

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EXAM STRESS: SYMPTOMS & TIPS

Many parents have asked us for tips on helping their children to cope during exam time. We're hearing increasing reports of children turning to alcohol, drugs or over-the-counter medication, so here's a summary of some of the symptoms and helpful tips.

IS YOUR CHILD SHOWING SYMPTOMS OF STRESS?

Based on the feedback we've had, some of the signs that your child might be stressing about exams include:

1. Difficulty sleeping.
2. Anxiety, irritability, anger
3. Depression or despair
4. Self-medicating with alcohol, drugs or medicines
5. Nausea
6. Unable to function
7. Constantly tired
8. Headaches and/or migraines
9. Trembling
10. Nail-biting or fidgeting
11. Going blank when revising
12. Feeling inadequate or hopeless

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD?

Some of the tips provided by educators, counsellors and parents include being supportive and helping children to identify ways of reducing stress by encouraging them to:

- a. Eat nutritious meals.
 - A good breakfast is key.
 - Avoid junk foods that raise blood sugar temporarily.
 - Eat a fruit or other healthy snack ahead of studying. (It's hard to study if hungry)
 - Drink plenty of water.
- b. Get a good night's sleep. Get up and go to bed at approximately the same time every night. Have some quiet 'own' time before bed (listen to music, have a bath with mind-calming aromatherapy oils, read a book). Avoid last minute all-night study sessions.
- c. Have a quiet place to study, away from noisy family members. Hang a 'do not disturb' sign if necessary.
- d. Switch off cell phones and computers (unless required for research) whilst studying, to ensure no interruptions or distractions.
- e. If listening to music, select classical and calm instead of fast rhythm and lyrics.
- f. Be organized and manage time by drawing a timeline for each exam and marking the number of hours allocated to studying for each.
- g. Highlight text in colour or draw funny shapes next to important points, to help recall.
- h. Read notes, reread and read again.
- i. Get some exercise every day, even if it's only a 20-minute jog or brisk walk.

- j. Take regular short breaks eg 10 minutes every hour of studying. Ideally do something physical (walk around the garden, play with the dog, skip etc).
- k. Avoid smoking, drinking alcohol and using drugs of any kind.
- l. See a counselor if stress levels won't reduce.
- m. Avoid having a 'post mortem' after the exam. You can't go back and change your answers so don't stress about it – just focus all your energy on the next one.

SPECIAL ON LIFE TALK BOOKS!

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Life Talk for a Daughter, Life Talk for a Son and Life Talk for Parents now have 15 new chapters and topics covering many of the latest issues being faced by teens and young adults. (So even if you have the original version it's worth getting a new copy!)

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The Tug-of-Life is also available on Kindle (www.amazon.com)

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR VIDEOS ON www.lifetalk.co.za ?

Following huge demand for Life Talk's information and talks, the videos address many of the key issues and challenges being faced by teens, young adults and parents. We upload a new video every two weeks, so click on our website regularly to see the latest tips.

NEWSLETTERS 1 – 18 COVER: Alcohol and the teen brain; huffing; clubs; Facebook guide for parents; drugs; cell phones; pocket money; hubbly bubbly; chewing tobacco; fake IDs; communication; discipline & boundaries; depression; Grade 8 hiccups; promiscuity; self-mutilation; eating disorders; self-esteem; bullying; abuse; ADHD; EMO; subject choices; MXit; divorce; ice-spiking with 'eye drops', head injuries; cults; chat-rooms; child-trafficking; cyberbullying, choking games and many others. (Downloaded for free: www.lifetalk.co.za)

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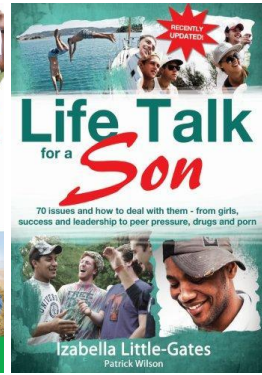
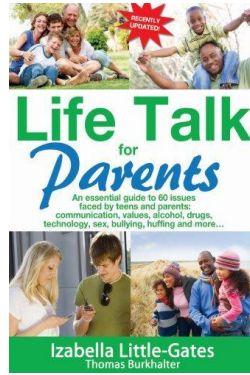
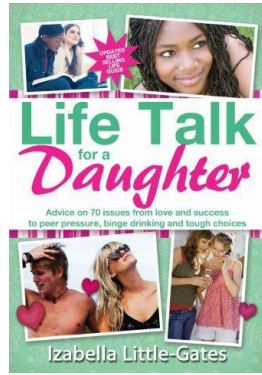
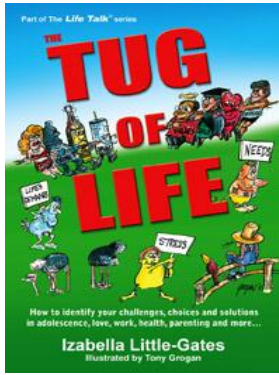
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FORWARD TO ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED ☺



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