

MILESTONE MOMENTS

A Collaboration by M.A.P and MindsHeart



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BYE BOOKS, HELLO BREAKS!

As the school year wraps up and the holidays begin, it's a time of mixed emotions for both students and parents. Exams are over, and results are in, bringing a blend of relief and reflection. This edition focuses on building resilience in our kids, helping them navigate the ups and downs of exam stress and the emotions that follow.

We'll explore ways to support children in developing a strong mindset, turning challenges into opportunities for growth. Whether celebrating successes or learning from setbacks, let's empower our young ones to thrive in the face of adversity.

In today's ever-changing education system, it's crucial to rethink how we view examinations and tests. We'll discuss new perspectives on assessments and how they fit into a modern learning environment.

Join us as we dive into strategies for fostering emotional well-being and resilience, ensuring a positive start to the holidays for everyone.

RETHINKING EDUCATION: SUPPORTING STUDENTS BEYOND RESULTS



BY MOSES WONG, FELICIA CHUA
M.A.P LEARNING AND CONSULTANCY

As we transition from the hustle of the academic year into the calm of school holidays, it's important to reflect on the journey our students have undertaken. The conclusion of exams often brings a mixed bag of emotions for both students and parents—joy for some, disappointment for others. This period serves as a reminder that **education has transformed significantly**, and both students and parents may struggle to adapt to these changes. **The misalignment of expectations often leads to disappointment, overshadowing the true purpose of assessments.**


WHAT WAS ONCE FAMILIAR TERRITORY HAS EVOLVED

Let us take a step back from the grade-centered approach and move forward with a child-centered one, ensuring that the true essence of education is never overshadowed by the pursuit of academic achievements alone.

Education has undergone significant changes over the years. What was once familiar territory has evolved, leaving expectations misaligned and, consequently, leading to disappointments. Amidst this, many have lost sight of the fundamental objective of tests and examinations - **Tests are meant to assess understanding and encourage learning, not define a student's worth or future success.**

The rise in cases of students facing emotional and mental health issues is a stark reminder that we need to **reevaluate how we view education, tests, and examinations.** Let us shift our focus to **nurturing well-rounded individuals who value learning and personal growth over mere numerical scores.** Together, we can redefine success and create a supportive environment where our children can thrive academically and emotionally.

EXAMS



THE TIMELESS CHALLENGE: ACADEMIC EXAMINATIONS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON FAMILIES



BY MOSES WONG, FELICIA CHUA
M.A.P LEARNING AND CONSULTANCY

▶▶▶ Throughout history, education systems across the globe have evolved, yet academic examinations have steadfastly remained a cornerstone of learning. In Singapore, known for its high-achieving schools, exams are a critical measure of student success. This is mirrored in many countries where, despite educational reforms, examinations continue to play a pivotal role.

▶▶▶ EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION SYSTEM

Singapore's journey from rote learning to a more holistic approach reflects a global trend towards developing well-rounded individuals. However, the **pressure of examinations persists**, with students facing a gauntlet of tests from primary school through to university entrance exams. **The impact of academic examinations on students and parents is profound and multifaceted, affecting them before, during, and after the exam period.**

BALANCING CHALLENGES AND GROWTH

Academic examinations have steadfastly remained a cornerstone of learning, yet the impact of academic examinations on students and parents is profound and multifaceted.

THE ENDURING EFFECTS OF EXAM STRESS

Preparation for exams often leads to increased stress for students, who may **experience anxiety and sleep disturbances. Parents, too, feel the pressure** as they strive to provide support, often juggling their own responsibilities with the demands of their children's study schedules.

The exam period itself can be intense, with **students experiencing heightened stress levels that can affect concentration and performance. Parents may also struggle during this time**, balancing the need to maintain a calm environment with managing their own concerns about their child's success.

The post-exam phase brings its own challenges as families await results. This can be a time of mixed emotions, with relief at the end of exams tempered by apprehension about the future.

A GLOBAL DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE

It is imperative that education systems and families work together to mitigate stress and promote well-being. By fostering resilience and emotional intelligence, we can help students navigate the pressures of exams while maintaining healthy family dynamics.

COMMONALITIES ACROSS BORDERS

Despite cultural and educational differences, certain experiences are universal:

- **Stress and Mental Health:** The link between exam stress and mental health issues is a concern worldwide, with many students feeling overwhelmed by the expectations placed upon them.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents globally grapple with how best to support their children, often feeling the weight of responsibility for their success.
- **Coping Strategies:** Over time, there has been an increased focus on the importance of mental health and coping mechanisms, with schools and parents recognizing the need for balance.



NAVIGATING THE EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION: A REFLECTION FROM AN EDUCATOR'S LENS



BY MOSES WONG, FELICIA CHUA
M.A.P LEARNING AND CONSULTANCY

As educators with over a decade of experience, we've witnessed firsthand the remarkable journey of our education system. From the rigorous, content-heavy curricula of yesteryears to **today's dynamic and skill-focused learning environments**, both Singapore and the world have embraced change in ways that are shaping our current and future generations.

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

So, as adults, **have we paused to consider the true weight of expectations we place on our children's shoulders?** We yearn for our children to soar, but **often projecting our own aspirations onto their unique journeys.** But **when does our encouragement transform into undue pressure?** When do **the dreams we harbor for them overshadow their own?** Each test score becomes **a reflection of our parenting and a measure of their worth in our eyes.** Why do we let societal norms dictate the pace of their learning, rather than nurturing their intrinsic curiosity and the joy of discovery?

We're preparing our students not just for exams, but for life.

PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

As we stand in the classrooms of today, we see a different picture—one where **creativity** buzzes and **critical thinking is the norm.** Our young minds are now being groomed to **navigate a digital landscape, think on their feet, and solve complex problems.** This shift is not just educational reform; **it's a response to a world where technology evolves at breakneck speed, and job descriptions transform overnight.** We're preparing our students not just for exams, but for life.





»» A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

In this evolving scenario, we believe it's time to recalibrate our perspective. **Exams remain a valuable tool, but they're not the be-all and end-all.**

When we adopt a more balanced outlook on exams, we **mitigate the overwhelming pressure associated with academic performance**, making a world of difference in reducing anxiety. More importantly, it can **ignite a passion for learning that is curiosity-driven** and unabated by the rigid confines of curriculum.

Instead of obsessing over grades as the sole measure of success, families can **focus on holistic development to develop resilience and a positive attitude toward challenges**. In environments where children are **encouraged for their efforts and strategies**, they are more likely to celebrate progress and effort, **fostering a more nurturing and supportive home culture**.

At a societal level, the purpose and value of exams paves the way for **producing innovators and problem-solvers**. It emphasizes **the need for individuals who can apply knowledge creatively and who possess the soft skills necessary to adapt in a rapidly shifting global context**. This perspective cultivates a generation **equipped with the resourcefulness and critical thinking required to navigate complex issues**.

In essence, embracing the evolution of our education system is about leading the charge towards a brighter, more adaptable future. After all, **education is not just about creating scholars; it's about empowering the architects of tomorrow**.

THE RIGHT MINDSET TOWARDS RESULTS



BY GERALD BOH

CLINICAL DIRECTOR, MINDSHEART LLP

In 2016, an 11-year-old boy in Singapore tragically took his own life after experiencing exam failure for the first time (The Straits Times, 2016). His mother, who had a standard of 70 percent in place, would lightly cane his palm for each mark below that score, saying to him, **"I only ask for 70 marks; I don't expect you to get 80 marks."** This heartbreaking case reminds us of the pressures children can feel when their self-worth seems to be measured solely by their academic achievements. As parents, **fostering a supportive, balanced approach to academics is essential for nurturing both resilience and emotional well-being.**

➤➤➤ FOCUS ON LEARNING, NOT JUST GRADES

View exams as an opportunity for children to identify areas of improvement and to grow academically, rather than merely as assessments of their worth or potential. This helps children develop a positive and resilient approach to learning and encourages them to see exams as a journey, not an endpoint.

➤➤➤ ACKNOWLEDGE EFFORT OVER OUTCOME

Research has shown that children who receive praise for their effort rather than their results develop greater motivation and perseverance. Acknowledging hard work, discipline, and the progress a child has made encourages them to take pride in their efforts and build a strong internal motivation for learning.



As parents, fostering a supportive, balanced approach to academics is essential for nurturing both resilience and emotional well-being.



➤➤➤ **MODEL CALM AND SUPPORTIVE REACTION**

Children often mirror their parents' responses to setbacks. Parents can teach children to approach challenges calmly and thoughtfully. Take a moment to reflect before responding, and focus on encouragement rather than judgment.

➤➤➤ **COMMUNICATE AND LISTEN**

Start by asking how they feel about their performance, and acknowledge any disappointment they may have. This teaches them that it's okay to have mixed emotions about achievements and setbacks and reinforces that they are valued and understood.

➤➤➤ **REINFORCE SELF-WORTH**

Help children understand that they are valued for more than just their grades. Celebrate their unique talents and abilities, whether in sports, the arts, or other areas! These qualities foster a sense of self-worth that doesn't rely solely on academic achievements.

➤➤➤ **COLLABORATE ON SOLUTIONS**

If exam results fall below expectations, focus on constructive solutions. Work together to identify practical steps for improvement, like new study techniques or setting manageable goals. This collaborative approach strengthens problem-solving skills and involves children in the process of setting and achieving goals.

➤➤➤ **FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET**

Teaching children that abilities can grow with time and effort helps them approach challenges with confidence. A growth mindset helps them understand that setbacks are a natural part of the learning journey.

➤➤➤ **SEEK SUPPORT WHEN NEEDED**

If exam stress or low self-esteem appears overwhelming, consider consulting a school counsellor or mental health professional. Professional support can provide valuable tools for managing academic pressure and reinforcing positive mental health.



Handling exam results with empathy, understanding, and a growth mindset creates a supportive environment where children feel encouraged to keep growing. By focusing on their holistic well-being, parents can help them develop the resilience, confidence, and self-worth they need to thrive well beyond the classroom.

TEACHER, HELP!!!

My son didn't do very well for his exams this round. I think he's too lazy and doesn't try hard enough. What should I do?

Mrs. L

I'm sorry to hear that your son's exam results weren't what you were hoping for. It's natural to feel disappointed and frustrated in these situations, but it's also important to approach this as an opportunity for growth and learning—for both you and your son.

Reflect on how your reactions and emotions might be perceived by your son. The pressure to perform can sometimes lead to avoidance behaviors that can be mistaken for laziness. **Try to understand the root cause of what appears to be laziness.** Is there a lack of interest, a feeling of being overwhelmed, or something else?

Share how you feel in a way that invites collaboration without placing blame. For example, "I've noticed you're struggling with your exams, and I'm worried because I know you're capable of so much. How can we work together to improve this?" **Sit down with your son to set goals together.** This helps him take ownership of his academic journey and understand that you're a team.

You may even offer to study with him or be available for questions, showing your commitment to his success.

Model the behavior you want to see. Show dedication and hard work in your own tasks. Children often emulate their parents' habits.

It's important to **manage your expectations and set realistic goals.** Not every student excels at every subject, and that's okay. Always focus on progress rather than perfection!

SEND US YOUR
QUESTIONS!

- Email us [here!](#)
- Drop us a [Whatsapp DM!](#)

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DECEMBER



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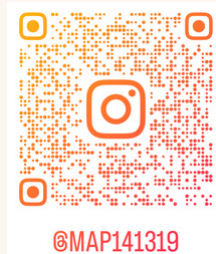
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Contact Us! (M.A.P Learning)

- + 65-97457687 (Moses)
- admin@map141319.com
- map141319.notion.site

MINDSHEART



Contact Us! (MindsHeart)

- + 65-85745152
- hello@mindsheart.com
- www.mindsheart.com

