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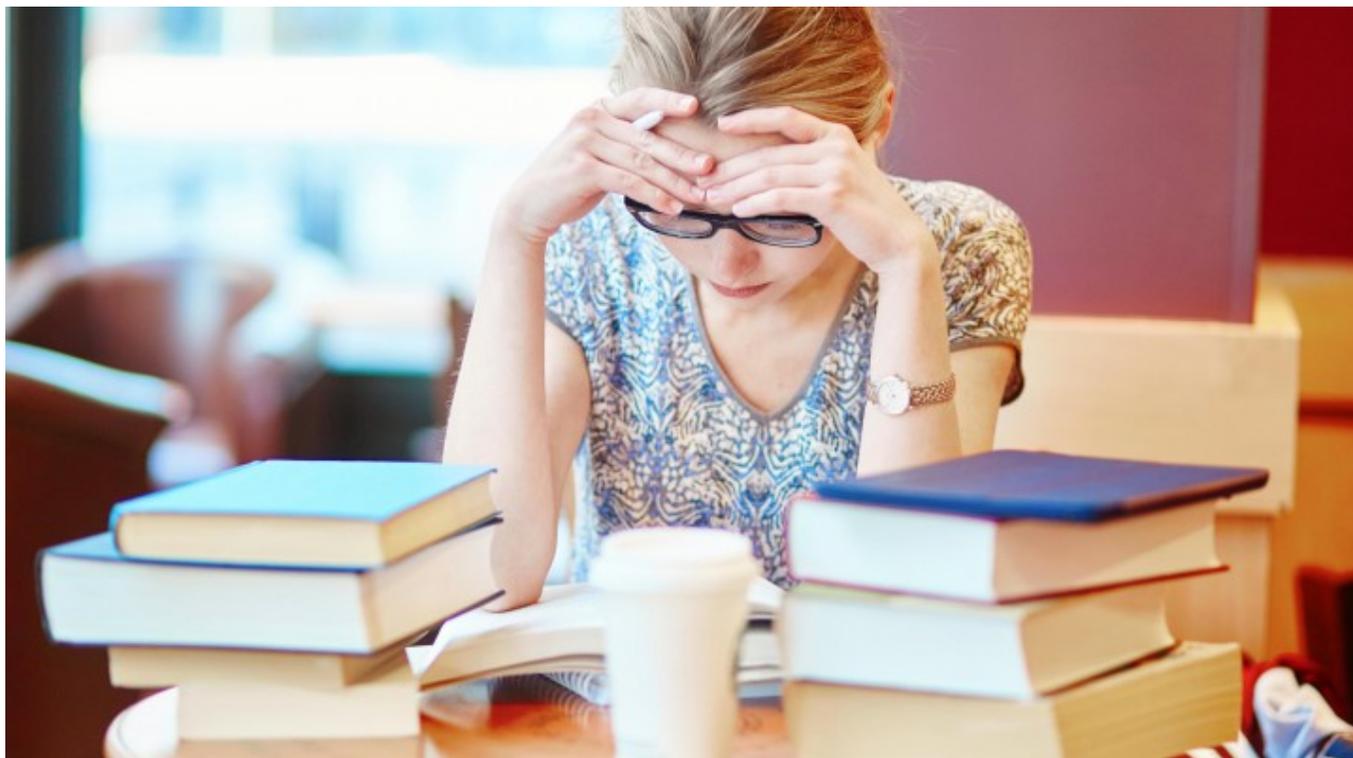
FOR PARENTS

CALCULATORS

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR TEEN DURING THE SATS AND ACTS

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Taking the SAT or ACT tests during one’s junior and senior years of high school is a rite of passage, but it can also be stressful for students — and for parents. More than a third of students **polled this year by The Princeton Review** said that taking standardized tests is the toughest part of the college admissions process, a view shared by 28 percent of parents.



It may be tough, but resist the urge to voice your concerns to your child, because this could only increase their anxiety level. Instead, stay calm and be the voice of reason when your child is stressed out and needs your help to stay focused. Here are a few tips on how you can help.

Keep the tests in perspective.

Yes, the SATs and ACTs are important, but they're not the only factor that colleges consider. While a good score can certainly help your chances of admission to a school, many schools are de-emphasizing their significance in the admissions process.

More than 800 schools make the test optional entirely or require it only for some students, such as those coming from out of state or those who don't meet a minimum GPA or class rank. Among them are some big name colleges like Wesleyan College, George Washington University, and Wake Forest University.

Help with test prep.

Whether you've chosen to enroll your child in a prep class or not, there are several other resources available to help study for the tests, including a new, **free online program** offered by the College Board via Khan Academy. As a parent, you can get involved by reviewing vocabulary, quizzing them on the **Question of the Day**, and making study time a regular part of your student's routine.

In addition to studying up on test questions, it's important for students to experience the process of taking the exams. Make sure that your child takes practice exams in a timed environment without distractions like their cell phones.

Be there the night before and morning of.

The importance of getting a good night's sleep and a decent breakfast on the day of the test can't be understated and is an area where parents can help. Feed your test-taker a hearty dinner the night before and a healthy meal in the morning before the test. Also, be sure that they get a solid night of sleep in between.

Make sure they have a bag packed with everything they need, including required documentation and photo ID, necessary supplies like Number 2 pencils and a calculator, and a few snacks to keep up their energy during the break.

Expect multiple tests.

Students can (and in most cases should) take the test more than once. If your child goes in knowing that this is not their only shot at the exam, it will relieve some of the pressure. Plus, it could yield a better score: more than half of juniors who retook the test as seniors improved their scores, [according to the College Board](#).

Don't compare to siblings or peers.

Once you receive the results, resist the urge to compare your child's performance to others. Everyone learns differently, and some simply perform better on standardized tests. Your child has the opportunity to take the tests again if needed.

Author: Beth Braverman

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