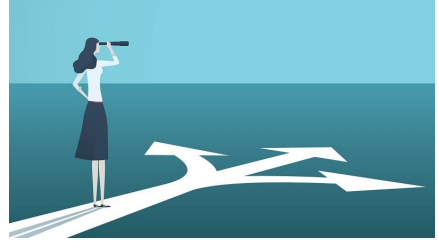


# EXAM RESULTS

## TIPS FOR HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ASD

**Exam results can cause a lot of stress for young people and their families. For young people with ASD this can be particularly stressful; exam results are unpredictable and may signify a number of significant life changes e.g. changing subjects in school, a new school or university, a change in career path, a different trajectory to friends etc.**



**Managing unpredictability and keeping grades in perspective can be helpful in supporting young people receiving exam results.**

**Below are some tips for supporting your young person during this time.**

**Remember: parental stress levels can have a big impact on young people, so it can be helpful to try out some of these strategies and look after yourself too!**

### Before Results Day

#### Visual Schedules

Planners with descriptions or pictures can be helpful in making the week feel more predictable. This will let your young person know when their results are coming out, but also remind them that more events are happening in the week so results don't take their full attention.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	Granny's House	Granny's House	Pancakes for Breakfast	<b>Exam Results</b>	Granny's House
Afternoon	Granny's House	Granny's House	Dog Walk at Agility Course	Family Bowling	Granny's House
Evening	Look at School Subjects with Mum & Dad	Youth Club	Board Game Night	Movie & Pizza Night	Swimming

Understanding the implications of results may also help your child manage their anxiety around results. Planning for good and bad outcomes can make disappointing grades feel less daunting as we still know what the future will look like.

<b>If I get the grades I need</b>	I will go out to celebrate all my hard work with Mum and Dad! I will register for course option 1 on August 30 <sup>th</sup> I will visit my campus on September 2 <sup>nd</sup> I will start my course on September 19 <sup>th</sup>  <b>I can contact the UCAS helpline any time I need to ask questions</b>
<b>If I do not get the grades I need</b>	I will go out to celebrate all my hard work with mum and dad! I will check my back up options with Mum and Dad the day after results My back up options are: (1) course option 2 (2) re-sit one of my subjects and apply for my courses next year  <b>I can contact the UCAS helpline any time I need to ask questions</b>

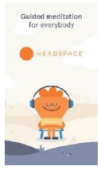
## Before Results Day (Continued)

### Relaxation Strategies

Try practicing these in the days leading up to results day, when your young person is feeling relaxed. When results day arrives, it may come in handy!

- ⇒ **Hand breathing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAldSdx-jps>
- ⇒ **Muscle tensing & releasing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbhUxg9eHDE>
- ⇒ **Left & right body breathing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHwiqovPrXY>
- ⇒ **Rhythm & butterfly breathing:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6z6TJ1wQDM>

### Try Some Calming Apps



Headspace

[www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com)



Calm

[www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com)



Smiling Mind (Mindfulness)

[www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app](http://www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app)

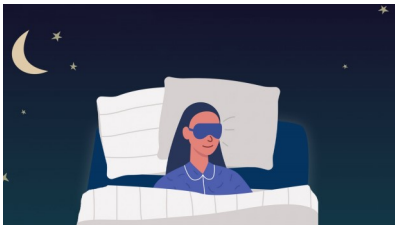
### Keep Busy

Do something fun the day before results—help to get their mind off of it, and encourage a good nights sleep. Here are some activities around Belfast:

- ⇒ **Visit Belfast:** <https://visitbelfast.com/whats-on/>
- ⇒ **Free Days Out:** <https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/whats-on/be/free-days-out-across-northern-20739947>
- ⇒ **National Trust:** <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/days-out>
- ⇒ **Tayto Park Queue Jump:** <https://taytopark.ie/visitor-information/additional-needs-policy>
- ⇒ **Airtastic ASD Friendly Sessions:** <https://www.facebook.com/AirtasticNI/posts/our-quiet-air-autism-friendly-session-runs-on-sundays-in-airtastic-belfast-and-c/1543844595784859/>
- ⇒ **Ulster Museums Free Entry:** <https://www.nmni.com/Ulster-Museum/Your-Visit.aspx>

### Sleep

Poor sleep can be a significant contributor to anxiety and having difficulty taking in new information. Some steps to support your young person getting a good nights sleep the night before results are:



- ⇒ Reduce screen time in the hour before bed
- ⇒ Run a hot bath or shower before bed
- ⇒ Use calming essential oils — whichever one they find relaxing
- ⇒ Buy them a new book or play a family board game to encourage a wind-down process before bed

## Results Day

### Visual Schedules

Visual schedules for results day can help put the grades into perspective—have enjoyable activities before and after results time. Ensure a celebration is planned regardless of what the grades are. Let your child know it is their hard work being celebrated, in a way they will enjoy.

RESULTS DAY!					
7am-9am	9am-11am	11am-1pm	1pm-3pm	3pm-5pm	5pm onward
Get Washed & Dressed Dog Walk	Use the Calm app <b>Log in to Check Results</b>	Family Brunch (your favourite homemade pancakes!)	Bowling	Ice Cream at the Beach	Pizza Takeaway & Movie (your choice!)

### Consider the Environment

Make adaptations to the environment where possible, for example, introduce noises, smells or textures that your young person finds comforting. Remove those that might be overstimulating or stressful.

### Soothing Strategies

Encourage use of sensory tools and/or stimming to reduce anxiety levels the morning before receiving results. This can help reduce stimulation levels so results time is more manageable.

Try relaxation methods such as:

- ⇒ Meditation (guided videos available on YouTube or Headspace app)
- ⇒ Mindfulness (e.g. colouring books)
- ⇒ Yoga and exercise (e.g. take the dog for a walk somewhere new)
- ⇒ Strategies from YouTube videos (above)

#### Celebrate!

The whole family has been through a lot to get to this day, regardless of the outcome.

Reward yourselves and celebrate the hard work and effort.

### Write a Letter

Write a letter to your young person to hand to them on results day. Help to remind them of the type of person they are, what they are good at, things they enjoy, things they have done well in the past or have done to make you proud, and other events or experiences they are looking forward to. This may help put things in perspective if the results are disappointing, or be a nice gift or keepsake if the day goes as they hope!

## Additional Support

### UCAS Exam Results Helpline

Call:

0800 100 900

### NI Direct Careers Advisors

Call:

0300 200 7820

Chat Online:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/news/help-and-support-students-and-parents-results-time](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/news/help-and-support-students-and-parents-results-time)