

Appreciating the things parents do during exam season

17 MAY 2026, 16:01 PM OFF CAMPUS

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E Elma Tabassum



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As admission exams are underway, previous survivors can be found reminiscing on social media. Some mentioned how their fathers took time off work to accompany them to their out-of-district exam centres, and some thanked their mothers for calling from home every day while they prepared rigorously in the city. These posts pointed out the importance of the immense support we require from our parents during all examinations, not just admissions, as they are arguably the most overwhelming and difficult parts of our student lives.

Here are some things we really appreciate our parents doing for us while we are put through the usual academic wringer.



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Keeping us fed and hydrated

It painted a funny picture when I heard my college classmates tell me that their mothers had spent the morning of the exam coaxing them to eat, hand-feeding them when their kids were practically shackled to their desks.

In an attempt to take advantage of every last second, likely, we'll either forget to keep ourselves fed or simply just not prioritise it when trying to time block three months of work into three days—and so, not having to worry about food and hydration can be a literal lifesaver. Our parents have been preventing hunger-and-stress-induced fainting spells, one plate of cut-up fruit at a time.

In addition to making sure we are well fed, many parents go the extra mile during exam season by providing small comforts that make a big difference. From surprise snacks to favourite treats, these gestures help lift our mood and ease some of the stress that comes with revision.



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A few words of appreciation for our mothers

A room of one's own

While having tiny, feral cousins ransack our rooms during visits is manageable on regular days, it has the potential to be practically catastrophic for our study plans during exams. It's an underrated gift that our parents are mindful of our exam days before planning to have guests over. Nothing can compare to the sorrow of having to sit with trigonometry worksheets while everyone is having a blast in the next room over. A quiet space can work wonders for our concentration.

Similarly, travelling to go somewhere can derail our progress so much that it's impossible to get on track. Having access to our dedicated study spaces can be crucial during our exams; being able to see the familiar coffee stains on our desks, remnants of late-night study sessions over the year, and being in a familiar space can motivate us to stick it out until the end. We appreciate our parents for keeping these considerations in mind.

Relaxed rules

Staying up late every night definitely isn't good for us; exam season is likely not the time that we will be able to fix that. While watching out to make sure we don't pull too many all-nighters, honestly, it's the best feeling to know that we don't have to worry about our parents being mad at us for staying up late while we frantically read through chapter summaries at 2 AM.

There's also a matter of chores – when exam season means no more dishes to do, at least for a week, it makes one contemplate if exams are the evil we make them out to be. Having our usual daily responsibilities taken off our shoulders during tests lightens both our workloads and our guilt at not being able to contribute to the home as much and helps us focus more on studying.

Being there for us during mental breakdowns

In times of distress, our parents are the ones we call out to, while, as babies, we learn how to react to different situations by looking to see how our parents react. We never quite grow out of needing that support (my mother could attest to that).

Exam stress can drag some people to the lowest of lows, blurring our visions of a successful future and blotting out any hope they have along with it. We may look calm outside, but likely, we are just desperately trying to keep our anxiety at bay to avoid worrying our parents too much.

In these times, we rely on our parents. Having their support and their words of reassurance, comfort and motivation during possibly the most harrowing experience in our academic lives can be crucial in keeping us sane. When our parents believe in us, even the darkest of days can seem not so dark.