Parent Conversation Guide for Board Exam Year

How to support your child through board exams without adding pressure.

1. Try saying this, instead of that

Instead of…	Try…
“How much did you score?”	“What went well today?”
“Look at your cousin — 95%!”	“I can see how hard you’re working.”
“You must get into a top college.”	“There are many good paths. Let’s focus on this week.”
“Why are you on your phone?”	“Want to take a break together? Let’s go for a walk.”
“Don’t be stressed, just study.”	“It sounds like a lot. What would help right now?”
(saying nothing about results)	“We’ll be proud of your effort, whatever the result.”

2. Conversation starters

- What’s the hardest subject right now, and what would make it easier?
- Is there anything at school or with friends that’s bothering you?
- How are you sleeping these days?
- What would you like the house to be like during the exams?
- Is there anything you want me to stop doing or asking?

3. What helps at home

Do	Avoid
Keep regular family meals and a calm home	Comparing with siblings, cousins or classmates
Protect sleep — discourage all-nighters	Constant reminders about marks and ranks
Encourage short breaks and daily movement	Many visitors and exam talk in the final weeks
Celebrate effort and small wins	Talking about results in front of relatives
Agree screen-time rules together	Taking away every break or hobby

4. Signs to take seriously

Some stress is normal. Talk to your child and consider professional support if, for more than a week or two, you notice: big changes in sleep or appetite; withdrawal from family and friends; frequent crying or irritability; loss of interest in things they enjoy; or talk of hopelessness. If your child mentions self-harm, stay with them, listen calmly and seek help the same day.

5. Free support

Support	Contact	Notes
CBSE psycho-social counselling	1800-11-8004 (toll-free)	Recorded guidance in Hindi and English round the clock; tele-counselling on weekdays 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. in the 2025-26 cycle. Check cbse.gov.in for 2027 dates (usually from January).
Tele-MANAS (Government of India)	14416 or 1-800-891-4416	Free mental health helpline, several languages.
School counsellor / class teacher	At school	A good first person to talk to.