

Transfer Tests

Supporting your child with their results



Transfer test results day can be just as daunting as the test days themselves. For some families, the results received won't be what was hoped for and, as much we might try to hide our feelings, most children will be aware that the results will have consequences, such as:

- where they go to school later this year,
- whether they're going to the same school as their friends,
- if they will have to travel further to go to a different school outside of their hometown.

They will also be aware that they put work and effort into a test(s) and have been hoping to achieve a good score.

This guide will help you navigate those first hours and days, whether the results received were good or not so good.

Please remember, even if your child doesn't seem to be upset or reacting in anyway, it doesn't mean that they are feeling okay – children can be good at hiding their feelings, they could be having a delayed reaction or they could just be putting on a brave face!



Your Words Matter

If a child looks up to you then the words you use now will be very impactful. The same goes for your reactions, including body language.

Your words carry a heavy weight. Pick your words carefully and don't use any negative wording. Focus on using positive language that reaffirms your love and support and provide reassurance about their future.

Create opportunities for your child to discuss how they're feeling with you. Use open ended questions, like: "how are you feeling?", rather than: "are you feeling sad?". Do this several times over the course of the days and weeks ahead to allow time for your child to process and reflect.



Make Plans like a Proud Parent

Whatever the transfer test results score, have some fun activities planned for the hours and even days after the results are received.

Doing a special activity will help reiterate that you're proud of them for all their hard work, regardless of the result, and that you still love and value them. The activity may also create a space in which the child feels like they can open up and talk to you about anything they might be feeling.



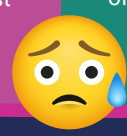
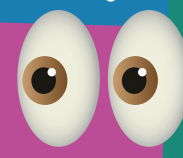
Pressure Beyond the Playground

Although a child receiving their transfer test results isn't old enough to meet age requirements on social media, there have been plenty of incidents of children at this age using social media regardless. Children may also be talking to each other while playing online games. There may be extra feelings of pressure and comparison due to other people posting or chatting about their results, as well as potentially becoming a victim of cyberbullying.

Pressure in the Playground

Even if a child seems content with their transfer test score, it's important to note that there may be conversations that happen in school that can change this.

Whether it's comparing scores with their friends or being bullied for receiving a certain score, the influence of peers can affect how a child is feeling about their results. This is not just for children who have scored low – a child who scores a high result can likewise be targeted for being a 'nerd' etc.



Key Advice to Remember

- Remind the child in your care that you love and support them.
- Encourage them to talk about their feelings with you. If your child has siblings, they may prefer to chat to them about how they're feeling, write them down or draw a picture.
- Watch out for signs that a child is struggling, such as new behaviours like difficulty eating, sleeping or emotional outbursts.
- If you're worried about changes in their behaviour, seek further support from organisations such as Childline who can provide advice online or on the phone on 0800 1111.



- Keep encouraging your child to talk about how they're feeling, not just on results day!
- Ask questions about how their school day was and playground conversations that might have taken place about results.
- Find further resources on supporting the children in your care in the Health and Wellbeing section of your Safer Schools NI App.
- Download the Safer Schools NI App today on the App Store and the Google Play Store.

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