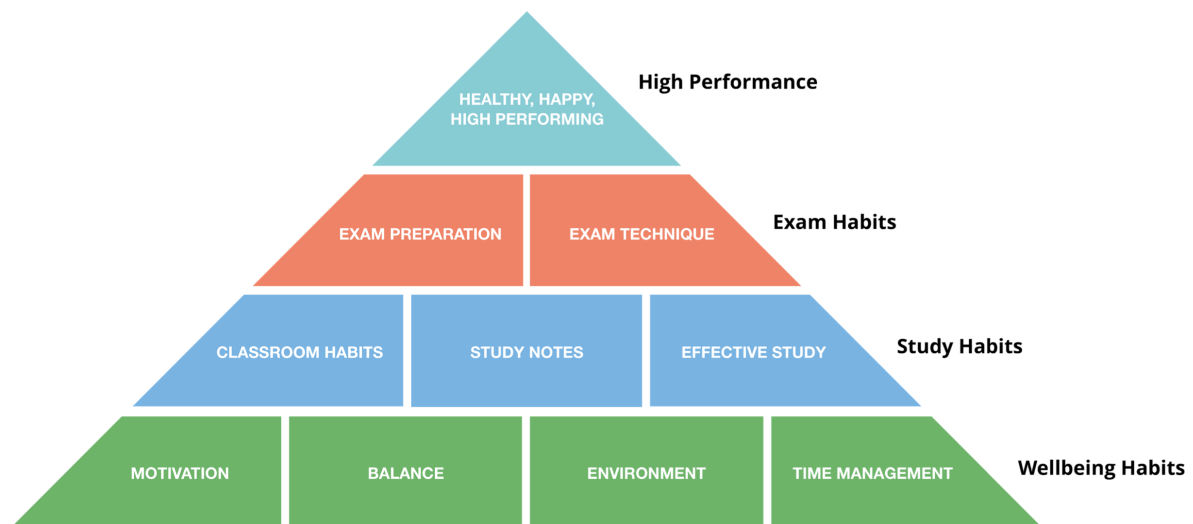


Key Take-Outs from Supporting Your Teen Through Year 11 & 12 Webinar

Over the last decade at [Art of Smart Education](#), we've conducted research with over 2,500+ students who have excelled academically at school, while also staying physically and mentally healthy.

From this research we've identified the High Performance Pyramid, which has 9 key habit areas across 3 distinct levels which students need to develop to achieve their personal best while maintaining their wellbeing.



Motivation

One of the key ways students motivate themselves is through a Personal Motto.

The voice we listen to most is our inner voice, and often it's not supportive and encouraging. When students are faced with the option of getting some study done, or procrastinating, often their inner voice will encourage them to stop, relax, do it later, or tell them they can't do it, aren't good enough etc.

Consistent motivation therefore is about changing that inner voice in response to the inevitable distractions and challenges that they will experience.

To do this, we recommend students create Personal Motto (e.g. Just keep swimming, No regrets) that they can call upon as a positive, encouraging inner voice. It can be inspired by their favourite song, a quote from a favourite book or movie, or just a phrase that inspires

them to do their best. This also changes the focus away from the competitiveness of the HSC to a focus on doing their best.

“I can safely say that a most significant factor which influenced and motivated me throughout high school and my secondary studies has been the overwhelming support I have received from my parents. They would always try to ease my anxiety or stress by constantly encouraging me and simply telling to just achieve my best, and not to focus so much on comparing myself/my marks to those of my classmates.”

- Natalie (97.05 ATAR)

It also enables you as a parent to then have more positive conversations with them around doing their best and reminding them of their personal motto.

Effective Study

The cost of a distraction is:



**23 minutes
and 15 seconds**

Distractions therefore significantly impact a student's ability to get effective study done.

The most common distractions are:

1. Phone
2. Internet
3. Gaming
4. Friends
5. Music

Relying on willpower is a poor way to minimise these distractions, especially when a number have been intentionally designed to trigger dopamine releases and habit loops. (E.g. phone).

The most effective pathway therefore is making environmental change.

1. **Phone** - A no phone zone while studying. Have a clear bucket or bowl which students can place their phone in during their study times.
2. **Internet** - Using internet blocking sites such as Cold Turkey (PC), or Self Control (Mac).
3. **Gaming** - Specific times restricted to only. E.g. Friday evenings, or Saturday nights.
4. **Friends** - Identify specific times to check-in, and use it as an accountability buddy.
5. **Music** - Avoid listening to music while working on writing tasks. Only listen to instrumental music. Avoid changing tracks and have a predetermined playlist.

From all of our research with high performing students, we identified that their study routines followed the below set of guidelines:

Specific non-negotiable
Pre-determined breaks
Outcome focused
Removal of distractions
Time bound

Practically, this looked as simple as:

(S) 5-7 PM Daily
(P) 1 Hour / 5 Min Break
(O) Driven by To-Do List
(R) Studied at the local library
(T) Specific End Time

Where most students particularly struggle is on:

- Not having clearly defined break times and lengths
- Not having a clear end time on their study
- Not using a daily to do list.

These would be the key three areas as a starting point we'd recommend as a parent you work with your teen to implement to support them developing a more effective study routine.

Healthy Life Balance

While it might appear counterintuitive, we found that:

Top students maintained their commitments to work, sport, and socially.

In fact, this was critical over 2 year period for their mental health and it also improved their time management.

In maintaining extracurriculars the key however was in the relationship between them and study. Most students often will have the fun first - e.g. come home and relax and watch Netflix and then tell themselves they will study. The reality is that they end up procrastinating and not getting study done.

We found top performing students inverted this relationship so that study came first, and they would then earn the fun time.



**EARN THE
FUN**

This culminated in a commitment like, No Study, No Phone, or No Study No Gym. Our recommendation therefore is to sit down with your teen and support them identify what their commitment will be.



**NO STUDY
NO...**

When it comes to the most effective ways to study, we found that students shared:

TEACHING OTHERS = MOST EFFECTIVE STUDY METHOD

As a parent, you can play a key role in supporting your teen utilise this study method:

“My parents also supported me by asking me to talk about what I had been studying. Although I did not always like to talk about school, especially after a long day, I found that verbally formulating and explaining what I had learned to be very beneficial in that it exposed gaps in knowledge, I became more interested in and stimulated by the subject and naturally sought out answers, which helped my overall understanding.”

– Con (99.4 ATAR)

Ideal times to implement this strategy is over dinner, or while you are driving your teen places - you've got a captive audience :)

To help you have the conversation, we'd suggest some of these prompt questions:

PROMPT QUESTIONS

Start with just asking them what topics they are studying for their subjects – start one subject at a time.

As they explain the topics and you become familiar with them, slowly begin asking 'clarifying questions' like...

- Tell me more about the topic?
- How does that work?
- What's the hardest part of the topic?
- How does that work?
- What's the important/key point you need to know for it?
- How is it usually examined?

Dealing with Exam Stress

One of the biggest challenges for students is dealing with time pressures during exams. One of the best things that students can do to get comfortable with this is to complete practice exams with 10% less time. This way they get overexposed to the time constraints which helps them build their confidence when they get into the actual exam itself.



Additional Resources

Access our blog with over 600+ free articles and resources for students & parents here:

<https://artofsmart.com.au/hsc-resources/>

Access the largest free video resource for Year 11 and 12 in NSW here:

<https://artofsmart.com.au/hsc-together/start-learning/>

For regular videos with tips and advice on how to healthily navigate the Year 11 and 12 journey, subscribe to our Youtube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/artofsmarttv>

About Art of Smart Education

Art of Smart Education is an award winning provider of tutoring, mentoring and workshops for students and families from K-12. Recognising that excelling at school takes more than a focus on the syllabus, over the last 10 years Art of Smart has built a reputation for our holistic approach to helping students develop both strong academic foundations, and critical study, exam and life skills.

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