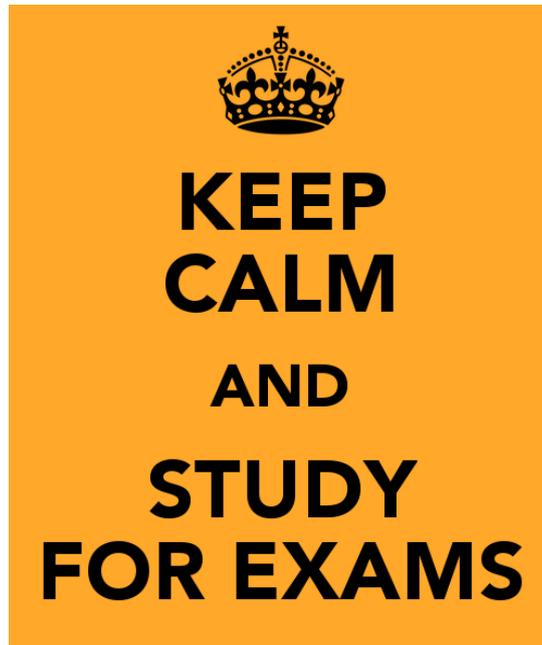




MANAGING EXAM STRESS

Tips and contacts for students, parents and carers



Managing Stress

Stress affects different people in different ways and it is important to recognise signs that you may be unduly stressed so you can take positive steps to minimise any potentially negative impact on you.

Spotting the signs of stress

Are you experiencing....

Difficulty getting to sleep or difficulty waking up in the morning?

Feeling guilty when you aren't working?

Getting frustrated or tearful easily?

Increased irritability with other people?

Eating too much or too little?

Recognising your Triggers

Any events which increase your stress?

Work not going to plan or getting done on time?

When work piles up?

When you start to worry about what other people think?

Thoughts that other people perform better than you?

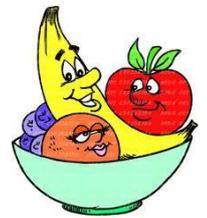
It is extremely normal to feel a little stressed around exam times. In fact stress can help you to perform better so is not always a bad thing, but it is important to recognise when it might be adversely affecting you and learning to let go a little through relaxation can help.

Everyone has their own preferences but the following pages show some ways you may consider as ways to help you relax by releasing stress and tension. Details of websites which you may find useful are also shown along with contacts who can support you and offer further advice.

Techniques that help decrease stress

Activities which can help you to relax:

- Get enough sleep. Your body needs 6-8 hours sleep per night for you to be rejuvenated
- Take regular breaks from your work
- Manage your time and be organised
- Exercise
- Eat well and drink lots of water, try to avoid junk food
- Make time to do things you enjoy and treat yourself
- Share how you are feeling with others
- Recognise negative thoughts and write them down
- Use your list of negative thoughts and write down the opposite positive thought to help challenge negative thinking
- Panic is often triggered by hyperventilating (i.e. quick, shallow breaths). So if you feel yourself becoming panicked during the exam, sit back for a moment and control your breathing. Take a deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth
- Whenever you sense panic, or perhaps obsession with negative thoughts, bring your focus gently back to your breathing.
- Don't compare yourself to others; you are your own person and what revision techniques work for you may not work for others
- Avoid comparing answers with others after you have taken an exam or handed in a piece of work



Things that can help keep children and young people mentally well include:

- being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
- having time and the freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
- being part of a family and/or circle of friends that gets along well most of the time
- going to a school that looks after the wellbeing of all its pupils
- taking part in local activities for young people

Other factors are also important, including:

- feeling loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe
- being interested in life and having opportunities to enjoy themselves
- being hopeful and optimistic
- being able to learn and having opportunities to succeed
- accepting who they are and recognising what they are good at
- having a sense of belonging in their family, friendship group, school and community
- feeling they have some control over their own life
- having the strength to cope when something is wrong (resilience) and the ability to solve problems

Useful Websites

<http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/SchoolCollege/Pages/exam-stress.aspx>

<http://www.thecalmzone.net/help/issues/exam-stress/?gclid=CMnTi-HZwLoCFXMRtAodLHMA0g>

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/resourcesforteachers/classroomresources/beatexamstress_wda56570.html

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/advice/factfile_az/exams_stress

http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents/worried_about_your_child/schoolwork_exam_stress

Support in School

Safeguarding Team

Lyndsey Christie, Rachael Brown

School Nurse

Maggie Eassom (students can self-refer by going to the drop in service in the Library between 12:15-13:00 every Monday. Alternatively please see a member of the Safeguarding Team who can make a referral for you).

Trainee Therapist

Our Trainee Therapists are studying at Derby University, they are in the process of completing a Master's Degree in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy and are currently undertaking a placement with us. To arrange an appointment please see a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Year 11 Mentor

Rachael Brown (works with year 11 Pupil Premium Students).

Head of Year and Tutor

Head of Year and Tutor are also available if you have any issues and feel more comfortable speaking with them.

Support Outside of School

GP (They can make referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) where appropriate, we are always happy to provide supporting information where there have already been concerns in school).

Safespeak - Counselling for 11-18 year olds

<http://www.safespeak.org.uk/index.html>