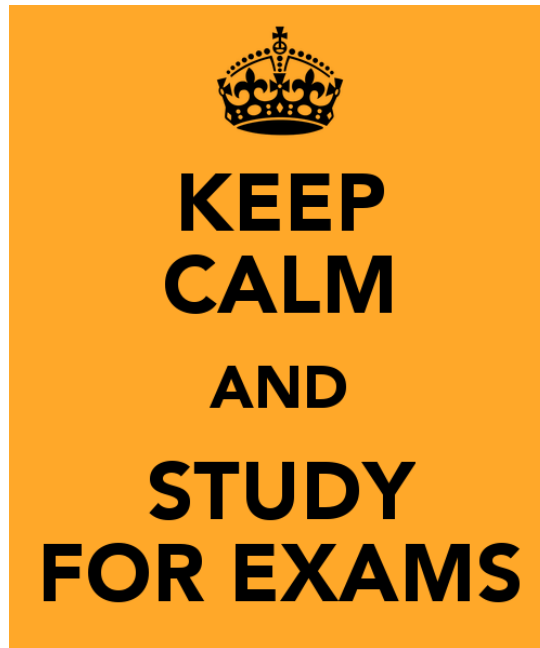




MANAGING EXAM STRESS

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?

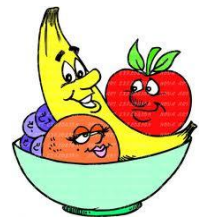
It is extremely normal to feel a little stressed around exam times. In fact stress can help you to perform better so is not always a bad thing, but it is important to recognise when it might be adversely affecting you and learning to let go a little through relaxation can help.

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

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

<https://www.thecalmzone.net/guides/exam-stress>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/feelings-and-experiences/exam-stress/>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/exam-stress/>

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Parents

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-beat-exam-stress/>

Support in School

Safeguarding Team

Rachael Brown and Kate Moon

School Nurse

Georgia Sellors and Tammy Heath - Students can be referred to the School Nurse, please see a member of the Safeguarding Team who can make a referral for you.

Mentors

Rachael Brown and Kate Moon

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).

Build Sound Minds – Emotional Well-being Service

Parents can self-refer to this service or alternatively please contact the Safeguarding Team who can refer to this service on behalf of the student.

Derwent Rural Counselling

Parents and Young People can self-refer to this service and they are based in Belper

<https://dracs.org.uk>

Kooth

Kooth is an online mental health and wellbeing service for children and young people. Here are some things to remember about Kooth:

- It's free to use
- You're completely anonymous
- No bullying or discrimination can take place
- You don't need any kind of referral to join Signing up and getting started only takes a few minutes
- Nothing is too big or small What you'll find on Kooth includes:
 - Live text-based chat sessions with a member Kooth's team
 - Support from an online community of young people.
 - A range of self-help tools and activities
 - Helpful content written by other young people and the Kooth team

To stay up to date with Kooth and find helpful information and tips, you can follow them on their Instagram here [@kooth_uk](#) How to join Kooth:

Whatever you're going through, you don't have to face it alone. You can sign up for free today and talk to Kooth about anything, anonymously go.kooth.com/xgKD