

Newsletter content

The content below can be copied and pasted into your school newsletter to help students and families improve their wellbeing.

[For students] ReachOut's top tips for beating stress

Everyone experiences stress at some point, but there are heaps of simple ways to minimise its impact on your life. Right now is a great time of the year to work on stress management skills and be ready for when the stress-deluge comes (exams).

Stress can be mild or intense, and it can make people feel frustrated, anxious and even hostile. Ever been grumpy because of stress? There you go. Stress can get in the way of sleep, cause headaches and change your appetite. It can also reduce your ability to concentrate and make it harder to remember course content.

ReachOut has lots of fact sheets and practical tools for beating stress. Here are a few:

- ▶ All work and no play? Bad idea. Make time every week to completely forget about study and do something you enjoy, like playing sport, hanging out with friends or watching TV. Taking regular breaks and 'me-time' to clear your head will also help you study more productively: au.reachout.com/taking-regular-me-time
- ▶ Feel like you're not achieving what you're capable of? Sit down and set goals at the beginning of each term. Define your goal, set sub-goals and make a plan of action. Then you'll know what you're aiming for and it'll be easier to stay focused: au.reachout.com/how-to-set-goals
- ▶ When you're feeling stressed, it helps to have a proven strategy lined up to help you deal with it. It could be something like reducing the number of commitments you have, telling a close friend you're stressed and talking through it, or even using positive self-talk strategies: au.reachout.com/building-better-coping-skills

Sometimes it might feel like stress is unbeatable, but it's definitely manageable. For more info on keeping it in control, check out these fact sheets on ReachOut.com:

- ▶ Tips on managing stress: au.reachout.com/im-always-stressed
- ▶ Helping someone with stress: au.reachout.com/helping-a-friend-with-stress
- ▶ Ways to relax: au.reachout.com/ways-to-relax
- ▶ Tips for problem solving: au.reachout.com/all-about-problem-solving
- ▶ Information on anxiety: au.reachout.com/how-to-manage-anxiety

Information for parents

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting their teenager through exam time. However it can be difficult to know how to best support a teenager to manage their stress. It's important to let parents know of the tools and support available to them to help them help their teenager.

We've developed newsletter copy to engage parents in student wellbeing throughout exam time. You can include this copy in your school newsletter, social media channels and website. You can also help parents by printing the fact sheets from the links below and circulating them at school events where parents are in attendance.

[For parents] Help your teenager to beat exam stress

It's normal for teenagers to feel stressed out in the lead up to exams, particularly those teenagers in year 12. Your teenager may only get stressed about just one or two exams or it may be every exam leads to increased stress.

Stress around exam time can not only impact on a young person's general wellbeing, but it can also be difficult for the whole family. It's important to learn how to support your teenager during exam time to help them manage their stress and reduce tension at home.

ReachOut Parents has over 140 fact sheets and practical tools. Here are a few that will help you support your teenager with exam stress:

- ▶ Tips on helping your teenager manage exam stress: parents.au.reachout.com/Common-concerns/Everyday-issues/Things-to-try-stress/Help-my-teenager-manage-exam-stress
- ▶ Help your child develop coping skills for stress: parents.au.reachout.com/Common-concerns/Everyday-issues/Things-to-try-stress/Help-your-child-develop-coping-skills-for-stress
- ▶ Manage stress with relaxation: parents.au.reachout.com/Common-concerns/Everyday-issues/Things-to-try-stress/Manage-stress-with-relaxation
- ▶ Reduce stress with activity, good food and sleep: parents.au.reachout.com/Common-concerns/Everyday-issues/Things-to-try-stress/Reduce-stress-with-activity-good-food-and-sleep

For more evidence-based practical support and tips on mental health and wellbeing issues for parents head on over to ReachOut.com/Parents. The service also provides an online community forum so that parents can connect with each other to share experiences in an anonymous, supportive space.

How to write a study timetable

Every study guide on the planet will say 'organise your time' and 'make a study timetable'. But what the flip does this actually look like and how do you do it?

Check this out if:

- ▶ you want to see what an effective study timetable looks like
- ▶ you want steps for making a study timetable.

Step-by-step plan

1. START EARLY.

In one term or semester, you cover a lot of material. Start your timetable waaaaaay in advance so you have enough time to revise everything. You might even need to make a few different timetables.

2. ASSIGN EACH SUBJECT A COLOUR.

It will be easier to navigate your timetable this way and you will be able to see more easily if you have a fair balance between all of your subjects. Also it looks fancy,

3. PLAN FIRST.

Don't just dive straight into it. Think things through first.

4. BREAK IT DOWN.

On a separate piece of paper, under each subject list all of the things that you need to know. This might be all the topic areas for that subject, what you covered each week in class or the different sections of the exam.

5. BE PRECISE.

What exactly do you need to do in order to feel confident in all of the areas you listed in step 3? For example, if one of the topic areas is 'trigonometry,' list the exact page numbers and exercises that you will do to practice trigonometry. Then think about how excellent it will feel when you reach the end of your timetable and you never have to do trigonometry ever again.

6. START WITH FILLING IN ONE SUBJECT AT A TIME.

This way you can be sure you've covered everything. Take all of the information from step 4 and start to slot it into the timetable making sure that you are realistic with how long each exercise is going to take.

7. FACTOR IN TIME FOR BREAKS.

And other fairly important things like food and sleep. Everyone works differently but generally speaking, a five minute-break every hour is a good amount. Give yourself the night off every once in a while as well.

8. PRACTICE EXAMS PROBABLY SHOULDN'T GO RIGHT AT THE START OF THE TIMETABLE.

The idea is that when you do the practice exams, you have already revised everything. This way you will get a realistic idea of how you can expect to perform in the real exam, and the areas that need further practice. That said, don't do the practice exam the day before the real exam because you may not have enough time to revise the areas that need work.

9. MIX IT UP.

No one likes studying maths for 6 straight hours. Give yourself a mix of subjects each day so that you decrease your chances of losing interest really quickly. Most people are more productive in the morning, so try mixing up the time of day you tackle different subjects as well.

10. MAKE ALTERATIONS AS YOU GO.

A study timetable is not set in stone. You might find ways to improve it as you go. Be flexible with what you've written and be prepared to move things around if you find that your estimations of time were a bit off. It's a good idea to use pencil ...

You got this. Good luck.

au.reachout.com/how-to-write-a-study-timetable