DEALING WITH STRESS

Scott Gould, School Counsellor, NBHS – June 2012
OVERVIEW

“How to do the HSC” in 5 easy steps

1) Get Organised
2) Time Management
3) Family Management
4) Vulnerability
5) Stress Management
THE PURPOSE OF STRESS

- Physiological Model – Fight or Flight
- Long Term Effects of Stress
- Eustress and Distress
- Personal strategies to deal with stress-related hormones (cortisol)
  - Unhealthy – Adults Drinking and Smoking, Students Eating and Withdrawing
  - Healthy – Exercise, stretching, relaxing, socialising, talking
YERKES-DODSON CURVE

Stress Performance Connection
Step 1: ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

- Quiet space / Noisy space
- Desk
- Chair
- Light – Not too bright
- Bedroom or other location
- Tidy or Chaotic
Step 2: TIME MANAGEMENT

Timetable for all things

- Social time – friends, parties, study groups
- Personal – exercise, walks, bike rides
- Family – dinner, birthdays, weddings
- Employment – what is your job?
- Prioritising ALL activities
- Chunking off time for set activities
# Study Timetable

**Week:** 14th March 2011

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Step 3: FAMILY MANAGEMENT

- Role statement – HSC Candidate
- Expectations – be realistic
- Negotiation
- Mistakes
- Re-negotiation
- Try again
Step 4: VULNERABILITY

• Understand your threshold
• If your “threshold” is persistently exceeded, the chance of poor mental health outcomes increases.
• If steps are taken to increase your threshold (increase your resilience), better health outcomes will result.
• How do you increase your resilience?
SLEEP - How much is enough?

6.5 to 8.5

Adolescents need 8-9 hours
Sleep 11 pm - Wake 5:30-7:30 am

REFERENCE: Amanda Gamble PhD M ClinPsy MAPS
Woolcock Sleep Service
GLEBE PH: 9114 0478
Ditch the Busy Brain Before bed

“Wind down time” - 1 hour before sleep (after 10pm)

Avoid:

- Mentally demanding work (studying, homework)
- Stimulating TV
- Exciting books
- The Internet (facebook, twitter, youtube)
- Computer games, Wii, xBox
- Loud music
- Worrying

REFERENCE: Amanda Gamble PhD M ClinPsy MAPS Woolcock Sleep Service GLEBE PH: 9114 0478
Body Clock and Melatonin

- **Dark triggers sleep**
  - Melatonin is triggered by darkness
  - Melatonin lowers core body temperature and makes you feel sleepy

- **Light wakes you up**
  - Light suppresses melatonin
  - Body temperature increases and we feel alert and awake

REFERENCE: Amanda Gamble PhD M ClinPsy MAPS
Woolcock Sleep Service, GLEBE PH: 9114 0478
RELAXATION

• Endorphins are your friends
• Exercise and relaxation releases endorphins
• How to relax?
  – Breathing – deep and slow
  – Mindfulness – awareness of your breath
  – Positive self-talk
  – Counting slowly back from 50, with a deep in/out breath at every 10
Step 5: STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Return to Step 1
- Time out – Take a break, talk it over
- Sleep – Too much / too little
- Exercise – Too much / too little
- Diet – Under and over eating
- Friends – Zappers and Sappers
- Action Plan – Where are you now?
HOW TO STAY WELL

• Balance work, rest and play
  — Exercise - daily
  — Socialise with friends - have fun
  — Get enough sleep - Bedtime routine
  — Eat well - not alone, with family
  — Talk about how you are feeling
SUCCESS

• Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose.
  
  *Bill Gates*

• My favourite things in life don't cost any money. It's really clear that the most precious resource we all have is time.

  *Steve Jobs*