

EMOTIONAL
HEALTH CLINIC

*Lifespan Health and
Wellbeing Research Centre*



MACQUARIE
University

**STUDY
WITHOUT
STRESS**

THE PROGRAM



Study Without Stress

THE PROGRAM

The Study Without Stress (SWoS) program was developed in 2007 to address significant levels of stress and anxiety that were apparent in senior school students presenting at the Emotional Health Clinic in the lead up to their end of year examinations.

The Program has undergone a number of informal and formal evaluations with feedback informing further development of the Program in the skills taught, the format of the workbooks and the training approaches used to train facilitators.

SWoS has been designed to provide early intervention to support students in coping with the stress during their final years of secondary school. The Program has its theoretical basis in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), teaching students psychological skills to manage stress related to school work.

It equips students with knowledge and practical tips on how to overcome academic stress. The Program can be beneficial at any time, however students are encouraged to participate in the Program in the months prior to peak stressful periods, such as trials or final exams.

HOW IS IT DELIVERED?

The Program can be delivered on an individual or group basis and can be delivered by a trained facilitator. School counsellors, psychologists, teachers and other school personnel can be trained to administer the Program through our eTraining course.

There are two session formats for facilitating this Program, an 8 x 1-hour session option and a 6 x 1.5-hour option. These flexible options have been developed to assist with the Program delivery both within, and outside of, school timetables.

WHAT HAPPENS IN EACH SESSION?

Each session is designed to provide the basis for skills taught to be practised and used outside of the session with all students being encouraged to try the different skills taught throughout the Program. Once a skill has been taught, it continues to be applied during the Program, allowing the student to seek help with implementation of these skills and achieve a level of mastery.

Homework review is conducted at the start of all sessions to allow the students to review the skills taught and implement and problem solve methods to adapt the skills to their personal circumstances.

WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED IN THE PROGRAM?

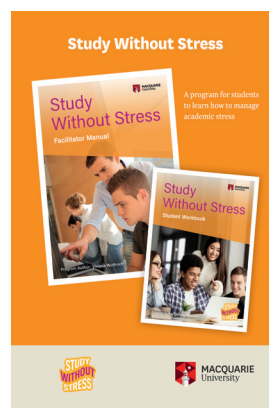
The Program covers the following topics:

- Understanding stress
- Goal setting
- Managing exam expectations and beliefs
- Creating effective timetables
- Learning how thorough can affect academic performance
- Challenging negative or unhelpful thinking patterns
- Understanding procrastination and perfectionism
- Tips to deal with work avoidance
- Procedures for problem solving
- Exam preparation

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

To learn more about our research, please visit our webpage: mq.edu.au/about/study-without-stress.

- In an implementation trial (Jagiello et al. 2022; <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12460>) the program was administered to all students entering Year 12. The findings indicated successful implementation by the school with prevention of stress for the cohort, and significantly reduced stress in highly distressed students, from pre to post and 3 month follow-up.
- Our longitudinal study (Wuthrich et al., 2021; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2021.07.004>) is the largest in the world to track senior student stress over time. The study found stress fluctuated over the school year, and higher stress was associated with female gender, higher baseline stress and anxiety proneness, and lower self-efficacy and peer connectedness. Our study examined the role of teacher fear appeals on student stress (Belcher et al., 2022; <http://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12467>).



FIND OUT MORE

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