

YOUNG MiNDS



**Coping with
pressure at school**

“My teenage years have been stressful for a number of reasons, but A levels were the final straw. There was pressure to be a high achiever, but most of the pressure was from myself.”



Worried about school?

It takes up five days a week and there are all the pressures of schoolwork, homework, making friends and taking exams.

It can seem scary.

But we all have bad days (even if we don't show it!) and on the whole, school is great with lots of new experiences and new friends.

In this booklet you'll find advice for dealing with the tough bits and handling the odd bad day so you can focus on the good ones.

Struggling with the work?

You might take a lot of subjects at school and it can be daunting to have to get through the whole day AND your homework in the evening too.

Homework can be a big challenge, especially as you have to motivate yourself to do it when you're not in the classroom. Sometimes, there's no quiet place to work either, and there are so many distractions whether it's your TV, phone, parents, brother or sister or your friends. And sometimes it seems to take too long – so long that you don't feel you've got time for anything fun.

That's all normal – nobody wants to do homework!

But if you're struggling, raise it with a teacher you trust. They would rather you talked to them about it than fall behind or say you simply didn't do it – if you raise it early they'll be able to help you find a solution.



Exams and Tests

Exams always come with pressure. Sometimes, the pressure is so much you just can't face the revision.

Here are some tips to help you get through it:

- **Check with your teacher** what you need to revise
- **Work out a revision timetable** and break things up into chunks – try and break it up with things you enjoy too
- **Keep active** – playing sports and doing exercise keeps your mind fresh and healthy
- **Eat healthily** – try to have 3 meals a day and a balanced diet
- **Try and have a regular sleep pattern**
- **Don't worry about what your classmates are doing** – everyone will have a different way of revising and some will even say they haven't revised when really, they've been working hard.

Making friends

Everyone worries about making friends at school. They also worry when they fall out with their friends too.

But when you worry too much, you can start to feel lonely and think nobody likes you. But remember, everyone else is just the same – they're all worried about making friends!

When you feel lonely, it can seem like everyone has friends apart from you. Why not try some of these ideas to make friends:

- **Talk to someone** you don't normally talk to or invite them to sit with you
- **Join a school club** – you might find people who enjoy all the same things as you if you do
- **Join a youth club** – this can help you make friends outside of school too so you have a wider friendship group

Peer Pressure

Making friends is hard and sometimes, you try to fit in by doing what they want. Usually that's things like supporting the same football team, buying similar clothes or listening to similar music. But sometimes, you might feel pressured into joining in or doing things you don't want to or can't do, like:

- Picking on someone else
- Messing about in lessons
- Skipping school or lessons
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs
- Getting involved in activities that you don't feel comfortable doing

But remember – what you want and what your friends want are sometimes different. That's fine, and they shouldn't stop being your friend just because you don't join in. If some people don't respect your decisions there will be lots of other people out there who will.

How to cope with peer pressure

If your friends want you to do something you don't want to, there are ways to deal with it. Here are some ideas:

- **Say what you feel.** It may not always come out the way you want it, but by making clear what you want, you'll feel much more confident
- **Prepare some reasons** so you can explain why you don't want to do something
- **Talk to someone** else and explain how you feel. That could be a friend, a teacher, school counsellor or relative.



Bullying

Being bullied is a horrible feeling. It can take many different forms from name calling and teasing to threats, attacks and spreading rumours. Remember, **bullying is always wrong**, it is not your fault and your friends, family and teachers are there to help.

- It's never wrong to tell on someone for bullying
- Try not to be on your own – stick to a group of friends where you're safe from bullies
- Keep a diary of any bullying
- Tell your friends or an adult
- Keep asking for help until it stops – it sometimes takes a couple of times to get the bullies to stop

If you're being bullied, the most important thing is to talk to someone you trust like your parents, a brother or sister or a teacher or counsellor at school. If you can't talk to them, you can call one of the helplines listed at the back of this booklet.

1 million

young people are affected by
bullying every week





youngminds.org.uk/school-pressure

Don't want to go to school?

We all have days where we don't want to go to school. There's usually a reason, for example you might have problems with other kids at school or you might find the work too hard.

It may even be that you don't get on with one of your teachers.

Whatever is causing it, **make sure you talk to someone about it.**

Unless you tell someone, they won't be able to help and the problem probably won't go away on its own.

You can tell anyone you trust – for example a teacher you like, your parents or a friend – or you can call one of the helplines at the back of this booklet.

Who can help?

If you're struggling at school, there are plenty of people who can help. These organisations all speak to hundreds of children and young people who want help or advice every day.

bullying.co.uk

Practical information and advice, working with schools, youth organisations, police forces and health trusts.

youthaccess.org.uk

Information and advice on counselling services for people aged 12–25. *Visit the website and click 'Find a service'.*



childline.org.uk

The UK's free helpline for children and young people – it's a confidential service and provides telephone counselling for any child with a problem.

Helpline: 0800 1111

Textphone: 0800 400 222

Mon-Fri 9:30am-9:30pm | Sat and Sun: 11am-8pm

themix.org.uk

Offers free support and advice for under 25s through a confidential helpline, online chat and discussion boards.

Helpline: 0808 808 4994

7 days a week 2pm – 11pm





YoungMinds
Suite 11 Baden Place
Crosby Row
London SE1 1YW
Telephone 020 7089 5050

yemenquiries@youngminds.org.uk

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