

Stressed Out

TREND TASK

Approach: One to one*Level:* Year 8*Focus:* Understanding and handling stress.*Resources:* None.*Questions/instructions:*

1. Sometimes people say they are “stressed out”.
What do you think being “stressed” means?

PROMPT: How might someone feel when they are stressed?

[not marked]

After the student has answered, say:

When a person is stressed they often feel very anxious or uptight, and they can't always think clearly or do things as calmly and sensibly as they might like. When the stress is really serious and keeps on going, it can be very harmful to a person's health.

2. What are some of the things that might **cause** someone to get stressed?

Causes of stress mentioned:

	% responses 2002 ('98) year 8
serious errors/failures (e.g. crime, legal problems)	2 (2)
general anxiety about things	13 (17)
too many things to do	55 (55)
unemployment	4 (6)
poor health	14 (22)
too little money or belongings	10 (5)
housing or transport problems	3 (3)
mistreatment by or disagreement with others	8 (11)
lack of people who love/support person	2 (3)
problems arising from behaviour of others	61 (60)
big life changes	13 (6)

3. Imagine that a friend was feeling really stressed because they had so much to do, everything seemed to be going wrong, and things just didn't seem to be getting any better.
How could you help this friend?

Try to tell me three things that you would suggest to your friend to help them deal with their stress. I'll write down your ideas as you think of them.

As the student says each idea, record it and read it aloud. Where 2 or more ideas are given as one, suggest that they be written separately.

Ways of helping:

	% responses 2002 ('98) year 8
timeout/relaxation/recreation	70 (64)
giving help with tasks	37 (53)
talking and encouraging	51 (51)
making choices/managing time better	27 (28)
getting professional help	15 (22)

4. Of these ideas, which one do you think might be the most helpful?

Tick the chosen idea.

not marked

5. Why do you think that would be most helpful?

Justification of choice of most helpful idea:

strong	24 (20)
moderate	63 (67)
weak	13 (13)
Total score: 8-18	6 (6)
6-7	30 (35)
4-5	48 (43)
0-3	16 (16)

Commentary:

Students saw the main causes of stress to be work overload and problems arising from the behaviour of other people. The preferred solutions were relaxation and verbal encouragement. There was little change between 1998 and 2002.