

Learning Together, Stressing Less!

The Power of Peer Support in Managing Study Stress



Counsellor's Newsletter

“The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer someone else up.” – Mark Twain

WE RISE
BY LIFTING
OTHERS

<https://shorturl.at/f3OT8>

In today's demanding academic environment, many of our students face a continuous pressure: balancing assignments, tests, time management, extracurriculars, peer expectations, and personal life. This can lead to 'stress'—feelings of being overwhelmed, exhausted, unable to keep up, or unsure how to manage the load. The good news? One of the most accessible and maybe under-utilised strategies to help manage this stress is 'peer support'. When students help each other by sharing study tips, offering encouragement, and being someone to talk to, it not only eases stress but builds a stronger, healthier school community. Simply put, peer support means students helping and encouraging each other.

Academic pressures as well as social pressures can be stressful for many students, but one of the best ways to deal with this pressure is through peer support. An article in the New Indian Express on – ‘Lowering student stress with the help of peers’ says, ‘When someone who has gone through a similar situation shares their experience, it can make a huge difference. Talking to friends or seniors who have already faced exam stress can help you feel understood and less alone. They can share useful tips, study techniques, and ways to stay calm and confident. Sometimes, just knowing that someone else has been through the same thing and managed it well can give you hope and motivation’.

Peer support also helps build self-confidence and reduces the fear or embarrassment some students may feel about their struggles. It reminds us that it’s okay to ask for help and that everyone faces challenges at some point. For instance, before exams, when stress and confusion are at their peak, having a friend to talk to can bring clarity and peace of mind. Sharing feelings, discussing doubts, and cheering each other, can make a big difference in how students handle exam pressure. This also aligns with the National Education Policy of 2020, emphasising the interconnectedness of mental health and academic success.

Why does peer support matter?

1. Shared experience and empathy

Peers are in the same shoes: dealing with similar assignments, deadlines, exams, syllabus, and social pressures. That shared perspective allows for empathy and connection.

For example, a recent study found that when students receive peer support and engage in peer learning, they report lower levels of study-related exhaustion and improved self-regulation of learning.

2. Improved coping and regulation

Social support is a recognized resource when facing challenges. In the educational context, being able to rely on peers for discussion, clarification, and encouragement contributes to better coping.

3. Increased sense of belonging

When students feel they're part of a community where others care and support them it brings a sense of belonging.

4. Stress moderation and resilience

Peer support doesn't remove all stress, but it can moderate how stressful situations feel, and help build resilience- the capacity to bounce back and keep going when things are tough. A systematic review found that peer learning and mentoring showed positive, significant results for stress and anxiety outcomes in higher education settings.

5. Cost-effective and accessible

Unlike formal counselling services which are essential but may have limited capacity, peer support is something many students can help create and sustain. It encourages a culture of mutual support, reducing isolation.



<https://shorturl.at/GSgGu>



<https://shorturl.at/N4NTf>

Although many studies show positive signs, the evidence base is mixed and more rigorous research is needed to establish exactly how best to implement peer support programs. So, while peer support is promising, it works best when structured and supported well.

At DYPIS, we constantly encourage children to support and uplift one another. We reinforce this through discussions and engaging activities, helping students understand that peer support not only builds a positive classroom environment but also ensures everyone feels included, valued, and emotionally safe. In their wellness class, students took part in a session designed to help them recognize the true importance of peer support. During the session, they explored how simple acts like listening to a friend, working together, or offering encouragement, can make a big difference in reducing stress and building confidence.

We encourage them to build a culture where “we’re in this together” means something real. To open up spaces for peer friendship, collaboration, support, not just academically, but emotionally too. Because when we lift each other, we all rise.

What peer support looks like in real-life school practice. Here are ways we can put peer support into action in school:

- Be proactive: Don’t wait until you’re overwhelmed. Reach out to a fellow student: “Want to study together?” “What did you find difficult on this topic?”
- Set realistic, small goals together: e.g., “We’ll cover chapter 3 and make 5 quiz questions tonight.” Then check-in.
- Share coping strategies: “When I feel stuck I take five minutes to step away,” or “I colour-code my revision notes and share them with my buddy.”
- Listen as well as talk: Support isn’t only about getting help, it’s also about giving. The act of helping someone else builds your own confidence and resilience.
- Know when to escalate: Peer support is powerful, but if stress becomes too heavy, talk to a teacher, counsellor or parent.
- Balance study with rest, hobbies, social time, physical activity. Peer groups can incorporate fun or relaxation time too (e.g., study then short walk or chat).

The journey through school is not meant to be navigated alone. When we embrace peer support, we tap into a powerful resource. It doesn't replace the role of teachers, counselors, parents or self-care, but it strengthens them. When you feel stressed, overwhelmed or stuck, remember: there's a peer sitting in your class who might be feeling the same way, who might welcome a chat, a shared study session, a bit of encouragement.



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