

Hindustan Times

Teens light up to see the end of Board exam tunnel

Illustration: ABHIMANYU

STUDENTS' PET STRESS BUSTERS

- Online chatting
- Smoking
- Drinking coffee
- Binging
- Missing meals
- Downing memory pills
- Daydreaming
- Sleeping less
- Fretting



Rhythmia Kaul
New Delhi, March 5

ALMOST ONE in 10 students in Delhi and the NCR starts smoking to bust examination stress, found a survey of 2,000 students studying in Classes IX to XII in over 20 private schools in and around the region.

The most popular relaxation activity, however, was going online, with almost 50 per cent reporting that surfing the Net and chatting online with friends was what they did to relax in between studying.

"This trend is worrying. Most students do not realise that going online can increase fatigue and reduce their ability to concentrate," said Dr Samir Parikh, who led the team of psychiatrists from the department of Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences at Max Healthcare.

Many students were under the impression that smoking helps one to relax and retain information. While 10 per cent students thought smoking helped bust stress, six per cent boys and three

per cent girls were completely convinced that smoking made them sharper.

The survey found that memory pills were also finding favour with students; who popped them to improve their memory and concentration. "It's a myth but most students strongly believe it works. Seven out of 100 boys and five out of 100 girls said they take medicines to enhance memory functioning during Board exams," said Parikh.

About 40 per cent had more caffeine than usual during examination time to help them stay up late. About 25 per cent boys and 23 per cent girls said they depended a lot on coffee, which indicated that they ignored their biological rhythm and did not get enough sleep.

Among the other exam-induced behavioural changes were skipping meals, daydreaming, sleeplessness, eating junk food and getting stressed about not being able to score well in the examinations.

"We did the survey to identify the problems that students face in dealing with stress, especially examination stress. These trends clearly indicate a lack of guidance among the adolescent population and a strong need to dispel the myths surrounding busting stress. Parents at home and teachers at school have a huge role to play in helping young minds cope," said Dr Parikh.

“ This trend is worrying. Most students do not realise that going online can increase fatigue and reduce their ability to concentrate. ”

—DR SAMIR PARIKH
Study leader from Max Healthcare

htreporters@hindustantimes.com