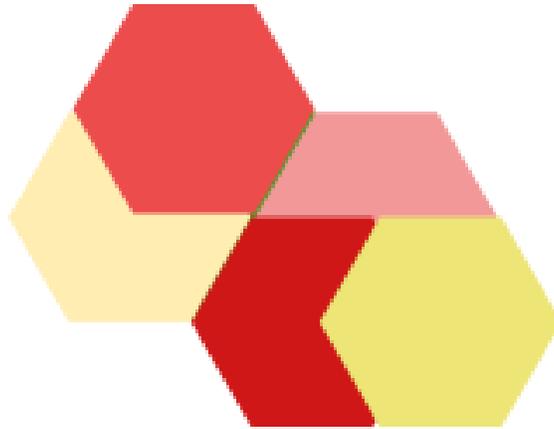


Project SOS

Written Report 2021

Group 4-059



SOS

Members

Isaac David Tan

Oh Rui Heng

Mark Russell Teo

Joshua Ng Tian Ian

Abstract

Project SOS is a resource development project that seeks to guide students through the many challenges they may face in their High School life, from managing one's time and commitments to understanding the various opportunities offered in Hwa Chong Institution.

Introduction

Singapore has always been known for its rigorous education system, and in this system, students are put through an environment that is full of opportunities yet one is both stressful and difficult to navigate for a student transitioning into High School life. Despite the support of well-meaning individuals, students still face many struggles in their daily lives, be it handling their commitments, understanding the programmes offered and balancing expectations that come with being in High School, often described as a huge step from Primary School that may be daunting for many. This can be seen in various reports conducted, as well as our needs analysis conducted amongst High School students. This has led to detrimental impacts on the mental health of students and their ability to gain the most from their High School journey.

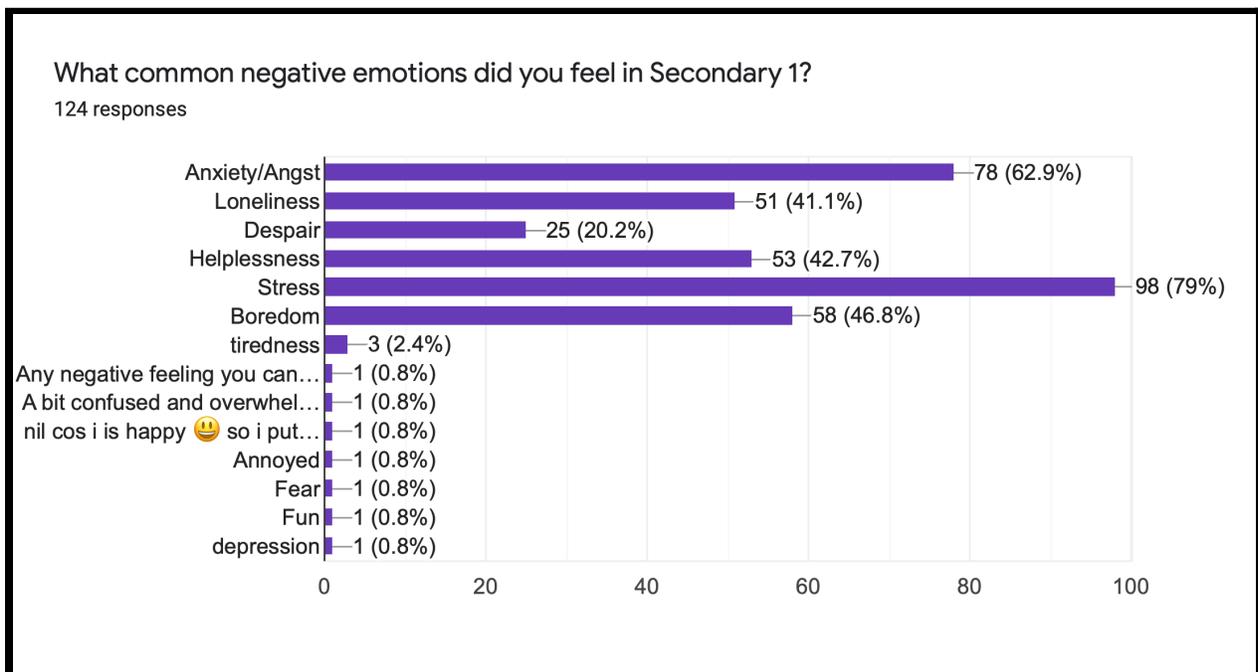
In the face of this prominent issue, we created this online package to guide Hwa Chong students, in particular Lower Secondary students, through these struggles based on our experiences as seniors and the knowledge we have acquired over our years in Hwa Chong.

Literature Review

From February to March, we organised a survey among 124 Hwa Chong students, with 50% of our respondents being Secondary One. These are some key statistics from our survey:

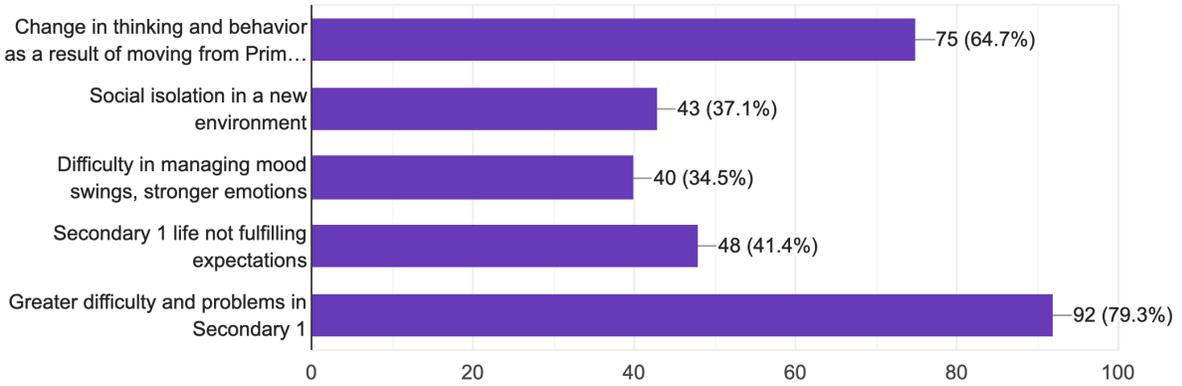
- 1) **62.9%** of respondents experienced emotions of anxiety in Secondary One, while **79.0%** of respondents reported experiencing higher levels of stress.

- 2) **79.0%** of respondents attributed this to greater difficulties and problems in Secondary One when transitioning from the more relaxed pace of Primary School life to a more rigorous, demanding environment
- 3) An overwhelming **82%** of respondents have highlighted heavy workloads as a main issue of concern for them in their High School journey, with a further **70.7%** struggling with time management
- 4) **55.9%** and **50.5%** of respondents reported frequently facing burnout and lacking outlets for stress and anxiety, respectively



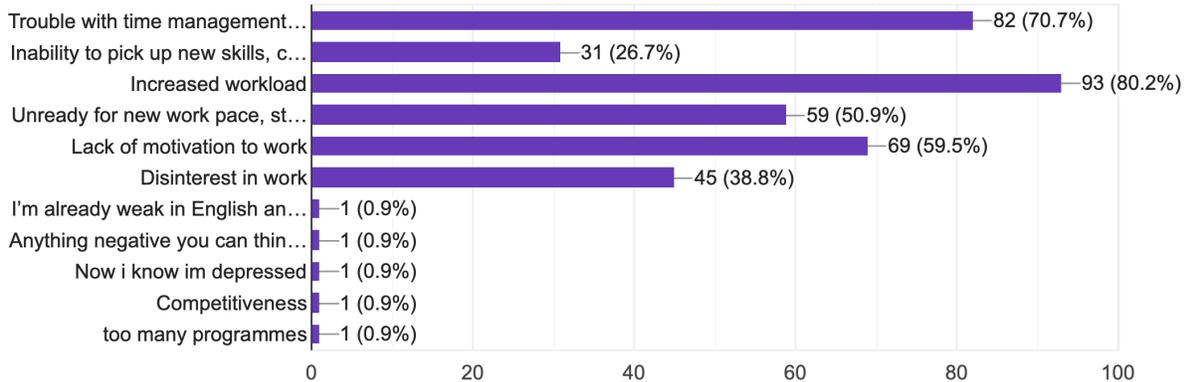
What are possible reasons for the negative emotions you may have felt?

116 responses



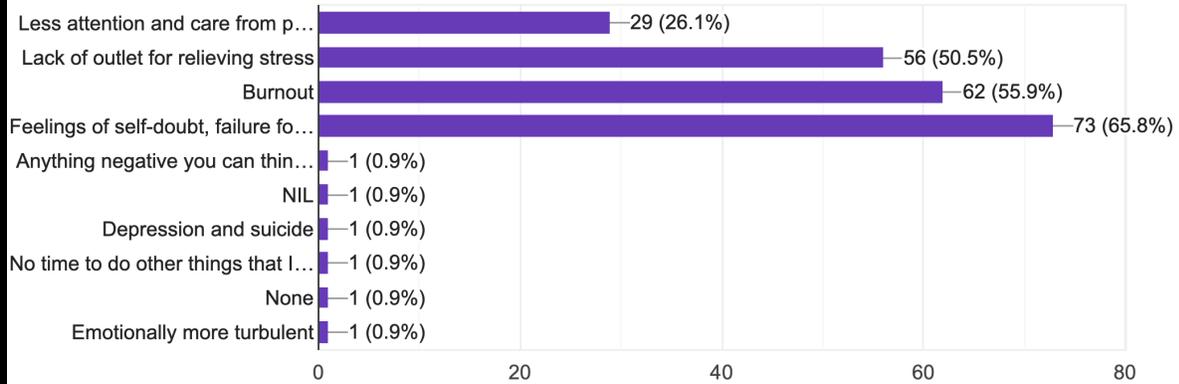
What are issues that you faced with your academics?

116 responses



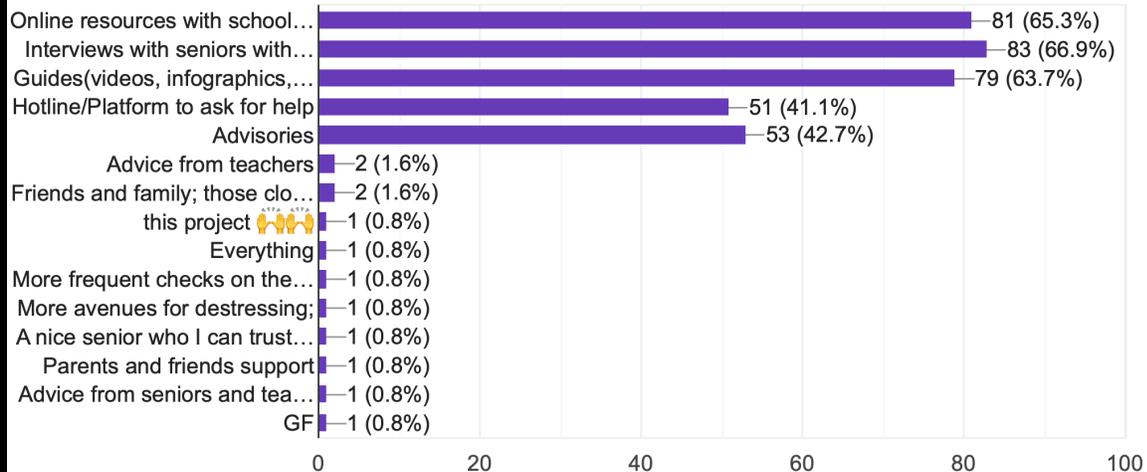
What issues did you face with regards to your personal wellbeing?

111 responses



What resources could help you in your Secondary 1 journey?

124 responses

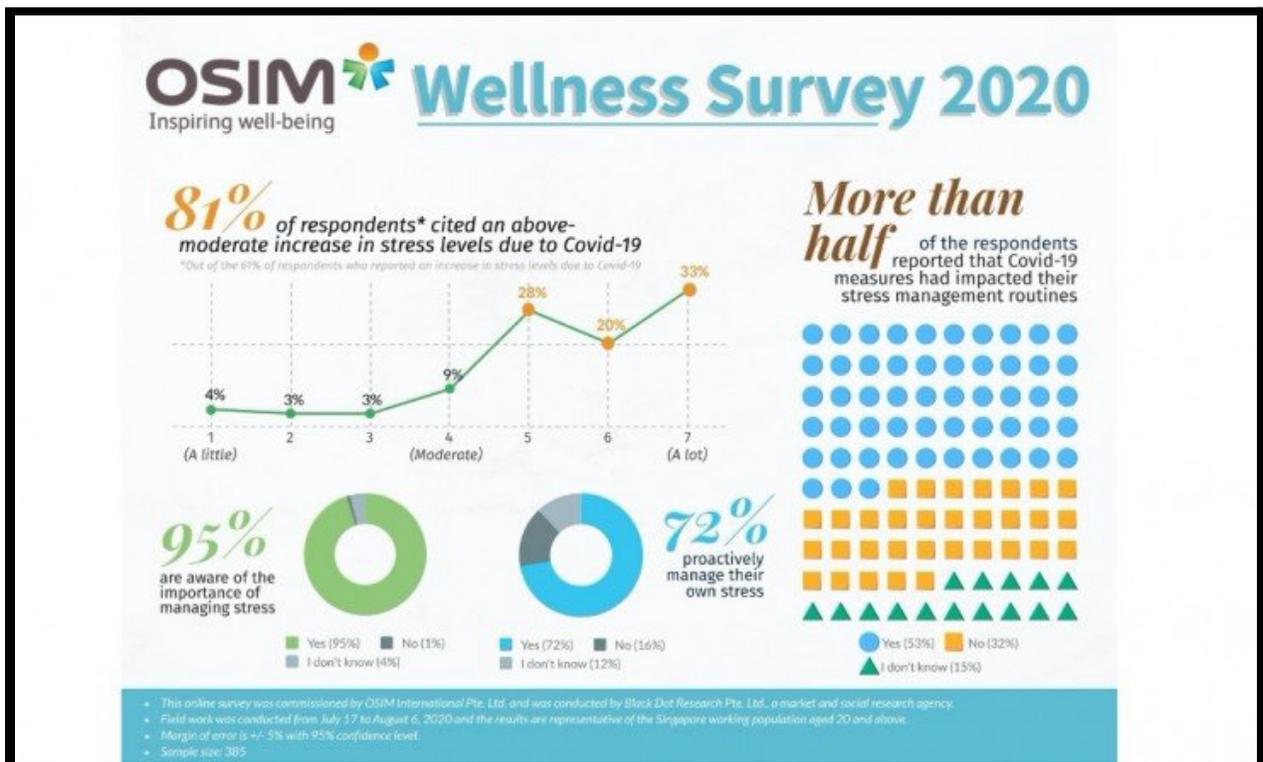


Beyond that, think-tanks and organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have all reported alarmingly high levels of stress and anxiety among students, with Singapore ranking extremely high in every possible indicator in the study.

All of this has suggested that there is an underlying problem of students not knowing how to handle the workload and expectations that comes with the Hwa Chong experience.

The advent of COVID-19 has only worsened this. According to the Singapore Business Review, an online wellness survey conducted by healthcare company OSIM International reported a whopping 81% of respondents citing an above-moderate increase in stress levels during COVID-19, with a similar trend observed amongst students.

All of this shows a dire need to address this issue swiftly, and also suggests that higher stress and anxiety levels as well as an inability to cope with the intensity of the school environment can be attributed to the factors we highlighted in our survey.



As for potential solutions to alleviate these circumstances, **66.9%** of our respondents opted for interviews with seniors and relevant school staff to shed light on their concerns

and dilemmas, while **65.3%** favoured an online resource containing useful infographics and simple guides to overcoming these barriers. These two suggestions formed the crux of our resource and research.

Methodology

After brainstorming throughout the December Holidays, our team carried out our needs analysis during February to identify specific needs of students in Hwa Chong, as shown above. Following that, we decided to craft our online package as such:

1) Inculcating Good Habits & Practices

- a) As students were adapting to a new way of life, the 2 commonly identified problems were time management and stress relief.
- b) In order to provide bite-sized, easily-digestible nuggets of suggestions and guides to help students overcome these difficulties, we created the 100s Video series

2) Identifying and Sharing the available Special Programmes from a student's point of view

- a) Although there are currently talks on Special Programmes as well as teachers explaining what the Programmes are like, there has been a lack of student-centric resources to explain what exactly life as a student was like in a Special Programme which made it difficult for students to identify which programme suited them the most
- b) To guide Secondary Two Students when making that penultimate choice at the end of Secondary Two, we crafted interviews with prominent students from each programme through collating Frequently Asked Questions about the programme amongst students. The programmes we have covered include:
 - i) Chinese Literature Elective Programme (CLEP)
 - ii) Humanities Programme (HP)

- iii) Bicultural Studies Programme (BSP)
- iv) Science & Math Talent Programme (SMTP)

3) Providing a fresh perspective of what a day in the shoes of a Secondary One Hwa Chong student looks like

- a) Through discussions and interactions with Secondary One students, one key factor that contributed to the struggle to adapt in High School was a lack of understanding of what the High School life really looked like, resulting in a misalignment of expectations
- b) To bridge this gap, we collaborated with several Secondary One students to create a vlog titled, “*A Day In The Life of a Secondary One*” over the span of a few weeks which detailed what a normal day of school was like for a Hwa Chong Secondary One student.
- c) This vlog was also shared on the school’s official website during Hwa Chong Institution’s Open House

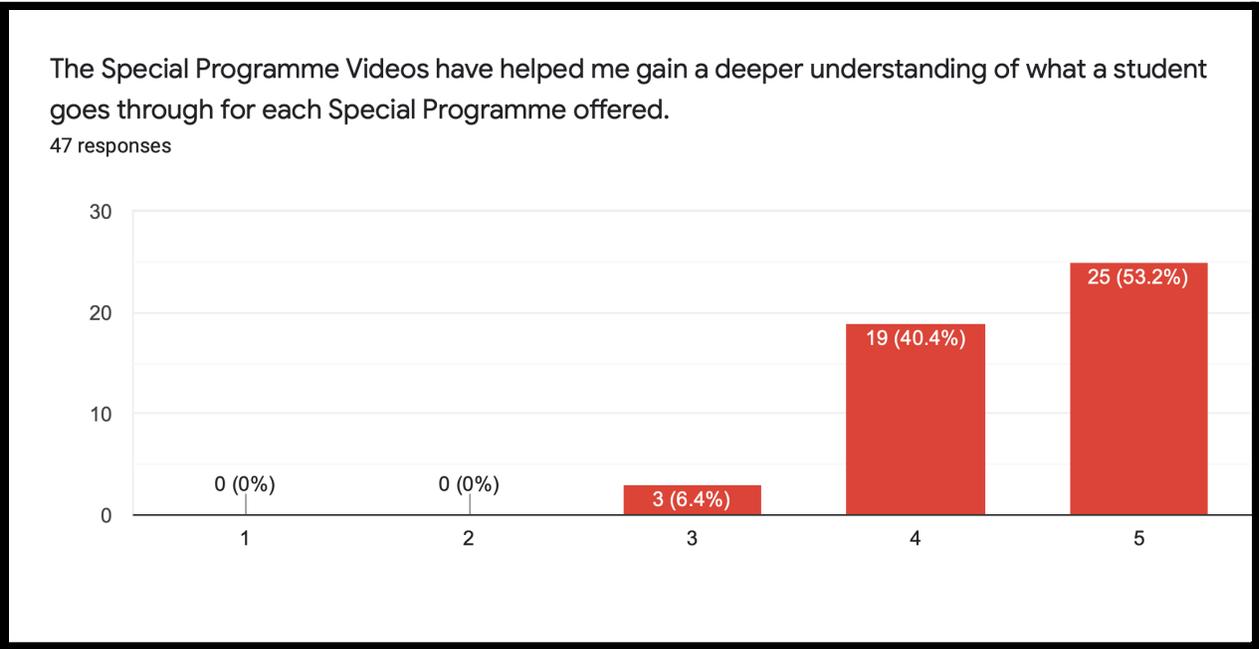


All of these resources were compiled in the form of an easily accessible website, and were created between February to July 2021, with constant modifications and vetting among Secondary One students throughout.

During our resource creation, some students requested a holiday-centric section to our resource to highlight how they could use their holidays wisely, as it was an issue many of them struggled with. As such, based on these suggestions we also filmed a vlog titled “Happy Holidays” in June, highlighting how we use our time in the holidays and the various tips we have to offer in a light-hearted, simple manner.

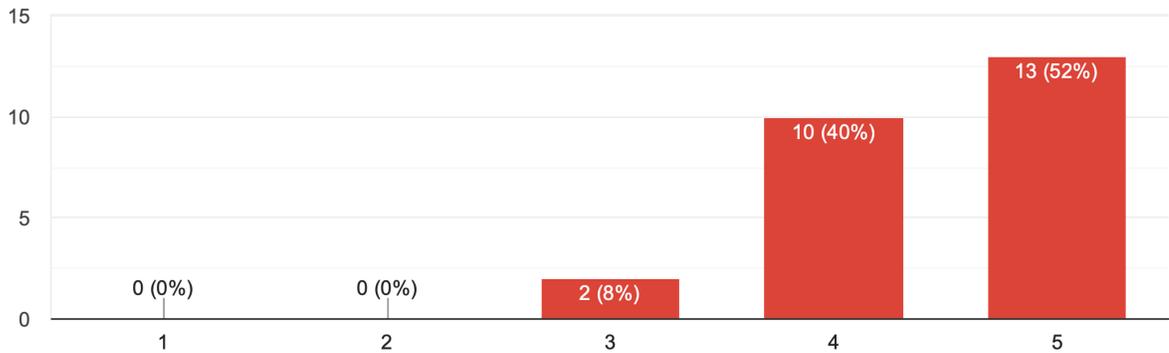
Below are statistics obtained from our final pilot test.

Special Programmes



(Only Applicable to Upper Secondary Students) Retrospectively, this resource would have enabled me to make a more informed choice when choosing whether or not to join a Special Programme.

25 responses

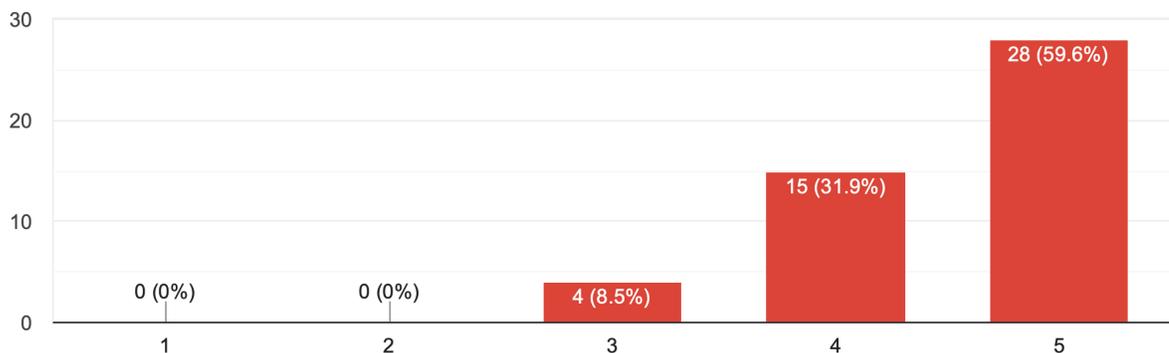


93.6% of students felt that the Special Programme videos helped them better understand Special Programmes being offered, with **92.0%** expressing that retrospectively, this would have helped them in choosing their subject combinations.

#100s Video Series

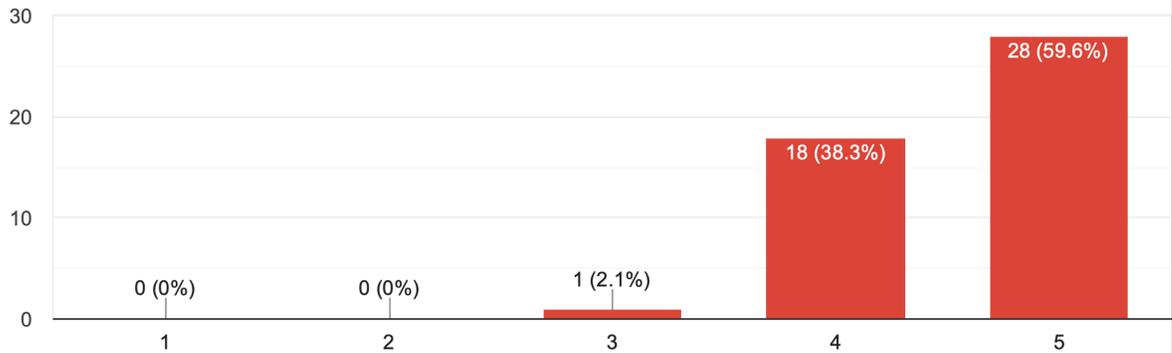
The #100s Videos are fun and enjoyable to watch!

47 responses



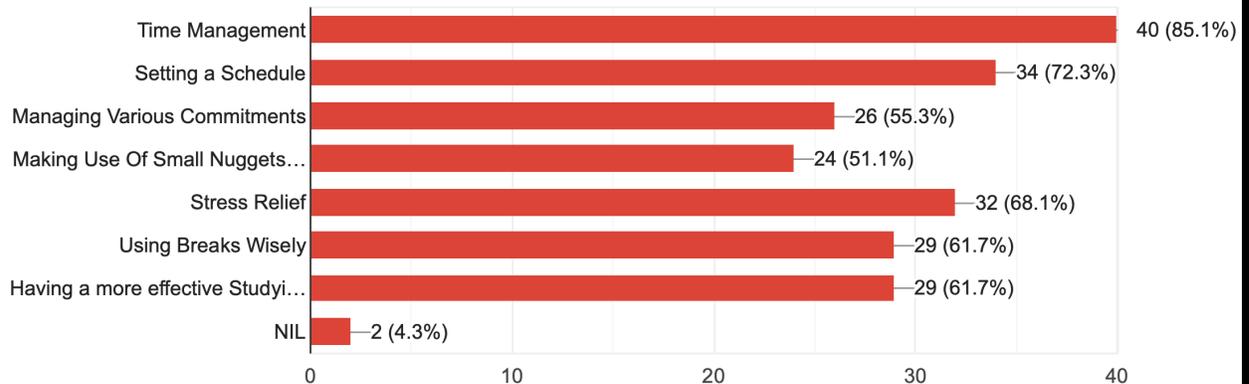
The #100s Video Series has provided useful, applicable tips for Time Management, Stress Relief and Scheduling.

47 responses



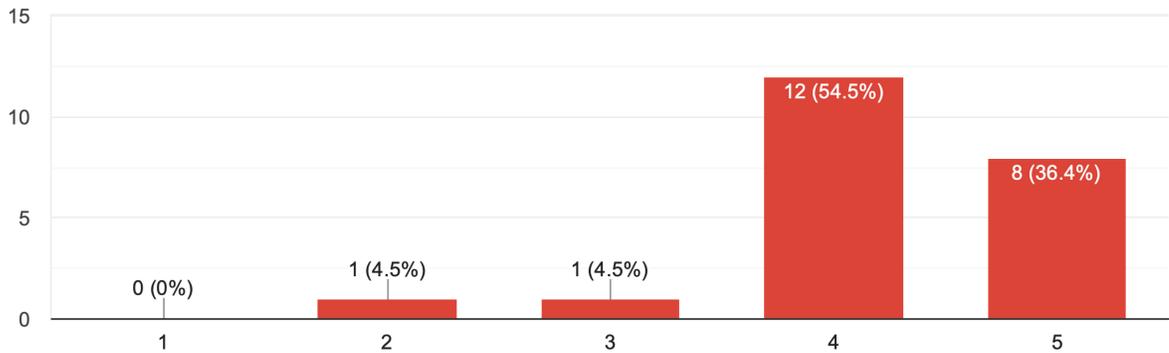
Indicate the areas, if any, the #100s Video Series has helped you in your daily life as a student. (if none, indicate NIL)

47 responses



(Only Applicable to Upper Secondary Students) Retrospectively, having this resource would have enabled me to better manage my time, stress levels, and commitments as a student.

22 responses

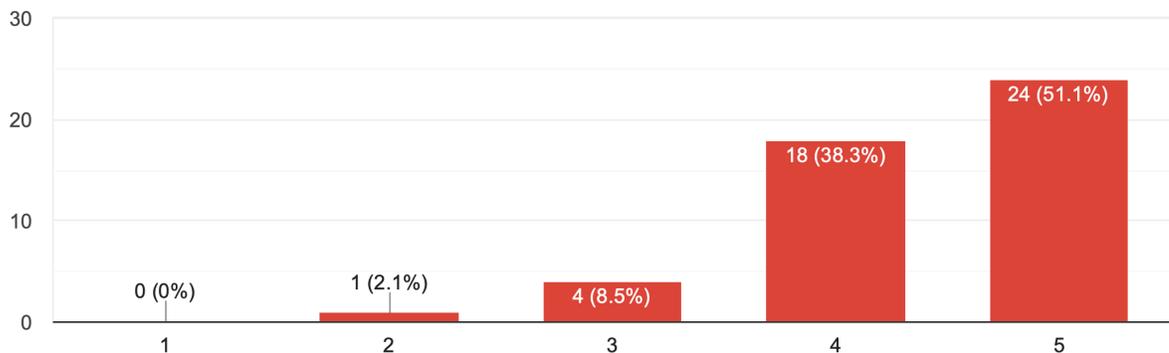


91.5% of students found the #100s Video Series attractive and easily digestible, with **97.9%** finding the series highly useful in areas such as Time Management (**85%**), Setting a Schedule (**72.3%**) and Stress Relief (**68.1%**). In fact, **90.9%** of respondents felt that retrospectively, this would have been useful in their High School journey.

Happy Holidays Vlog

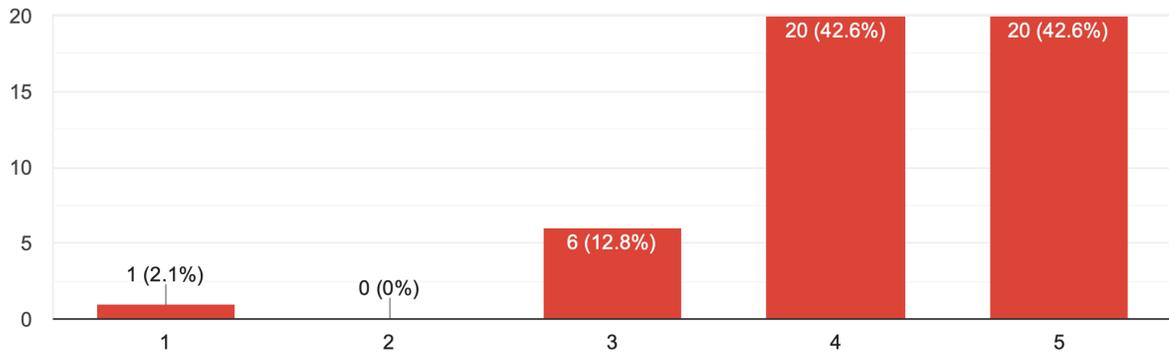
The "Happy Holidays!" Vlog provided me with a better understanding of how to use my holidays in a productive manner.

47 responses



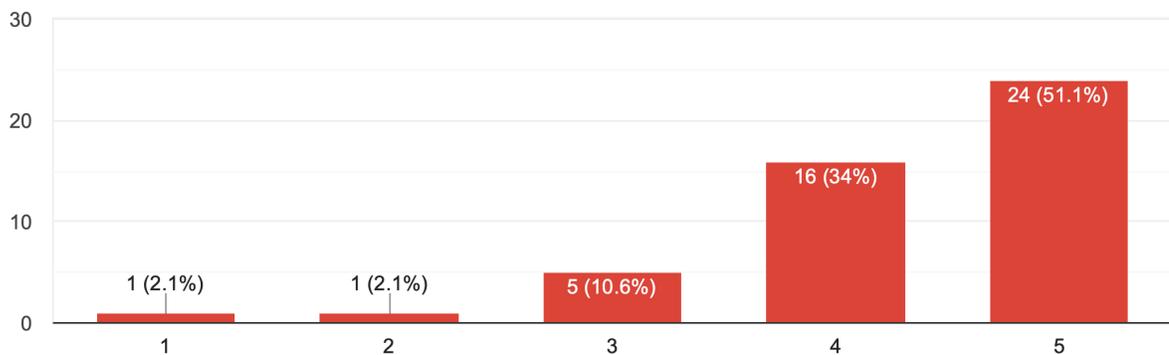
The "Happy Holidays!" Vlog has influenced the way I spend my holidays (e.g: spending less time on gaming, choosing to take a break offline instead of online)

47 responses



In the future, I would take up the tips and suggestions in the "Happy Holidays!" Vlog in terms of rest and studying during the holidays.

47 responses

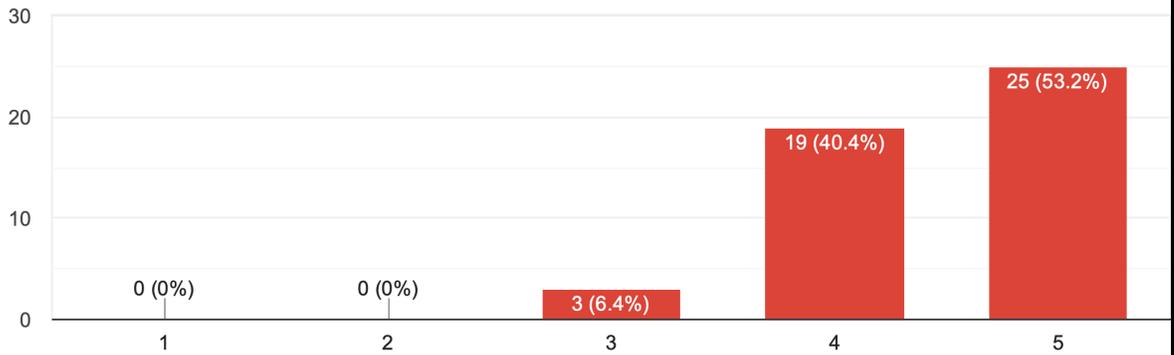


89.4% of students found the vlog useful in helping them spend their holidays, with **85.0%** indicating they would implement the mooted suggestions in their daily lives!

A Day In The Life of a Secondary One Student

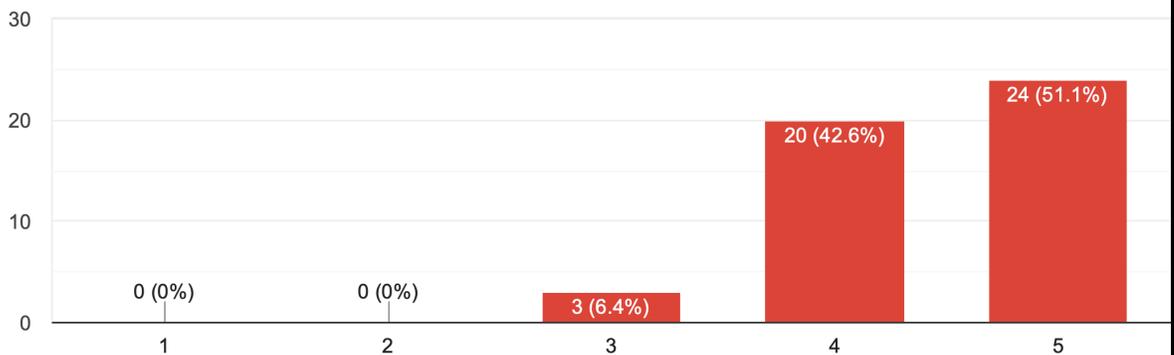
The "A Day In the Life of a Secondary One Student" Vlog has enabled me to have a better understanding of what the schedule of a Secondary One Student is like.

47 responses



Retrospectively, the "A Day In the Life of a Secondary One Student" Vlog would enable me to set more realistic expectations, thus easing the trans... Primary School to Secondary School as a student.

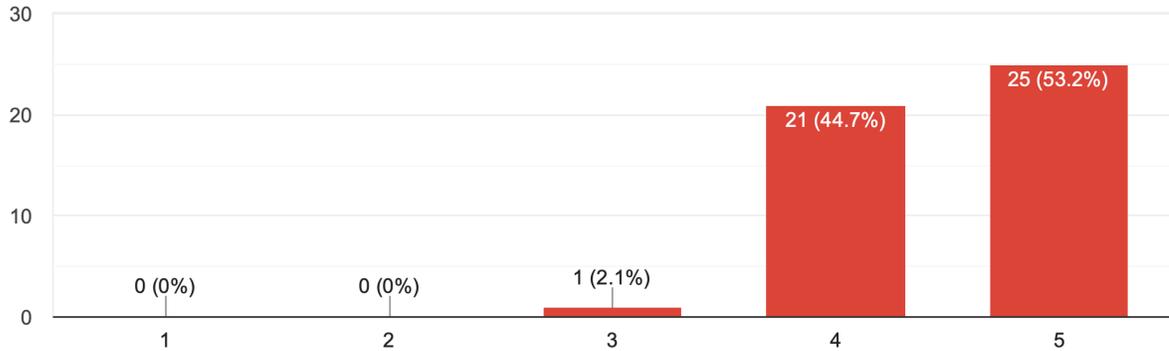
47 responses



93.6% of respondents felt that the vlog helped them to better understand the life of a Secondary One student, which would enable them to set realistic expectations and be better prepared for High School. **(93.7%)**

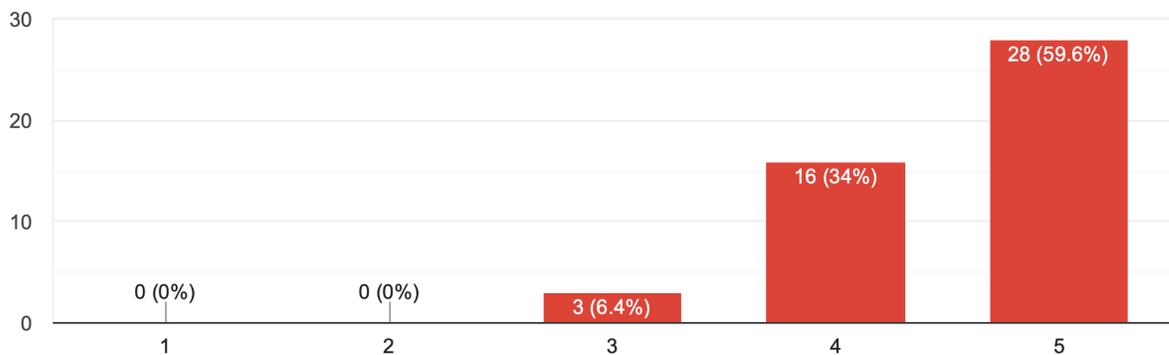
As a whole, the resource is effective in guiding students through time management, the opportunities provided in school, as well as balan...their expectations as they enter Secondary School.

47 responses



As a whole, the resource is comparatively more effective than other resources (e.g: official school websites, school-directed infographics) in providi...l experience via a more student-centric approach.

47 responses



From these statistics, we concluded that an overwhelming majority of students (**97.9%**) believed that our resource was useful for students in their High School journeys, with **93.6%** finding it comparatively more effective than other resources.

Outcome & Discussion

Based on our pilot test and comments received, our resource has proved to be effective in achieving its goals of helping students in their High School journey.

Of course, there were some areas that we could have improved on. Due to time constraints, we weren't able to roll out more specific, relevant guides on issues such as O Level Oral preparation. There were also suggestions to expand the range of issues highlighted in the resource.

However, despite the short time frame, the project has been successful as a whole. Given the chance, we would continue our project to expand this resource by including more guides and tips to help more students.

Conclusion

Creating this package was a challenge. It was difficult, for instance, to be able to reach out to Secondary One students during the COVID-19 situation due to social distancing. It was also difficult to coordinate video filming due to constant shifts in safety measures, which affected our plans and deadlines. However, we have learned as a team to adapt in the face of these situations, and taught us to be empathetic. As Secondary Four students, this project required us to step into the shoes of a Secondary One student just beginning his High School journey, and this process shaped how we empathise with others and understand their experiences.

Overall, for being able to better the lives of students, we are proud of Project SOS and what we have been able to achieve through this resource.

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