

# THE VIBES NEWSLETTER

*Evergreen Secondary School*

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## BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Hey there reader! This is the second issue of the Vibes Newsletter! In this issue, we have 6 new articles for you to read up on. There are tips on how to manage your mental health, and scoops on the recent Nation School Games and Singapore Youth Festival (SYF). I do hope you enjoy these articles made by your fellow EVGians!

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# SLEEP SCHEDULES

Written by Yu Eng\_(2DYN) and Franchesska (2ITG).

Have you ever fallen asleep in class before? Maybe you stayed up late finishing overdue homework that you had procrastinated on. Perhaps you lost track of time reading your comics or playing your favourite computer games. You assure yourself that you can always catch up on sleep the next day and that you don't need much rest to get through your classes. However, as you try to listen to your teacher's words, you find yourself being lulled into drowsiness. Your eyelids get heavier and close no matter how hard you fight to keep them open and ultimately you lose the battle to stay awake.

I'll be honest. I'm very guilty of the above. My parents, classmates, and teachers will attest that I have the unfortunate tendency to sleep in class. Maybe you've never experienced what I just described but that still doesn't mean you're getting enough sleep.



The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) states that teenagers in our age group should be getting about 8-10 hours of sleep. Are you reaching that quota? Studies have shown that a large percentage of students often don't.

Getting an adequate amount of rest is extremely essential. When you sleep, your body slows down and begins many crucial processes such as strengthening your immune system, repairing the damage done to your body, and many other vital things. Proper sleep and rest also help you maintain a healthy body and good health.

Lack of sleep has some pretty awful effects. Your attention span will waiver and you will find it harder to regulate your emotions. You might become restless or irritable, your body feeling constantly sluggish and fatigued. You might find yourself prone to forgetfulness and daydreaming. Failure to establish good sleeping habits may also lead to a higher risk of mental health issues such as anxiety and depression.

It'll be difficult to solve your problem without knowing what's the root cause. So, let's go over some of the reasons why you might have trouble falling asleep.

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The most common obstacle between you and a good night's sleep may be your phone or computer. Did you know that the usage of electronic devices may decrease the rate of melatonin production, a hormone your brain releases at night to help you get ready for bed? Instead of keeping your eyes glued to your screens, maybe you should try taking part in relaxing activities such as reading books, listening to soothing music, or treating yourself to a hot cup of milk before bed.

Consumption of caffeine products may also deter you from sleeping soundly. Coffee, tea, soft drinks, and even chocolate contain caffeine that will keep you awake at night by stimulating your nervous system, preventing your body from relaxing naturally.

Also, reduce irregular or long daytime naps. Short power naps are beneficial but long or irregular napping during the day can negatively affect your sleep. Sleeping in the daytime may confuse your internal clock, meaning that you may struggle to sleep at night. Lastly, your sleeping environment matters more than you might think. Optimizing factors such as temperature, noise, and light will aid you in getting over your sleepless nights. First, the temperature of your room. If you are too hot or too cold, chances are that you might wake up in the middle of the night. So before sleeping, you should try to set an ideal temperature so that you will not wake up in the middle of the night. Secondly, external noise such as traffic, the television, or people talking can cause poor sleep and long-term health issues. You can play calming background music to drown out the other noises. Thirdly, total darkness is best when you're attempting to sleep. Bright lights may irritate your eyes so it's best to diminish any light sources in your vicinity.

Your health is extremely valuable! Remember that sleep is greatly integral to keeping your body running healthily. Don't be afraid to consult with those you trust if you feel that your troubles with sleep go deeper than what you can cope with.



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# COPING WITH MENTAL HEALTH

Written by Sonal (4CMT) and Zarifah (3THK).

Mental health is a serious issue for most teenagers these days. Be it being burnt out from the work given at school or feeling anxious from arguments with friends, we deal with mentally stressful situations all the time. For example, students will definitely want to work hard for their exams so that they can pass with flying colors. However, students can sometimes accidentally overwork themselves, to the point where they feel extremely stressed and on the verge of breaking down. This can lead to their mental health deteriorating, resulting in the inability to focus during exams and getting less than ideal results. However, here are some tips that can help you cope with such situations.



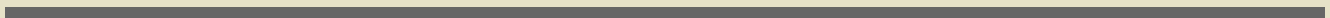
Taking breaks is definitely a good way to help avoid study burnout. As simple and straightforward as it may seem, it can really help you work much more efficiently as compared to working for 3 hours straight. What you do on break can be different for everyone. Some people take a nap while others would rather play a game. Either way, if it helps take your mind off the work for a while, it can really help with both your mental health and the results of the work.

Another way to cope with stress is to take time off social media. Whether you realise it or not, social media can make you even more stressed, especially with all the negativity there is on the Internet. You do not have to restrain yourself from social media for a week or a month but maybe only for a few hours or a couple of days. Maybe take some time to enjoy the greenery around you or chat with family members and friends. As simple as it may sound, it can really aid in stress management.

Another mental health issue prevalent in teenagers is depression. Just like the causes of burnout, depression can be caused by issues at school such as having difficulty in academics, bullies, and troubles with friends. Unlike burnout, depression revolves around the loss of interest in daily life, feelings of hopelessness, while some could also feel angry and irritable. Burnout is more like a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that results from stress and overworking oneself. If you think you have depression, the best course of action is to tell a family member or a trusted adult. You could be referred to a therapist or a counselor that could help you work your feelings out. Exercise also generally helps with lifting your mood. It releases endorphins which helps with relieving stress.

Another mental health issue teenagers face in our day and age is anxiety. Anxiety is usually caused by a feeling of constant worry and fear of things going awry. Anxiety may cause you to stop doing things you enjoy. How can we cope with this? Just like depression, therapists and counselors can help. Breathing exercises can be very beneficial for you to cope as well. Doing activities to destress such as watching a show or going out with a good friend can help relieve anxiety and make you feel more at ease.

Mental health issues are very important and you must be wary about it since it could affect you or someone close to you. Remember to always keep an open heart and mind and be ready to help others in need.



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# NATIONAL SCHOOL GAMES

Written by Yen Weng (3THK) and Franchesska (2ITG).

Despite the current pandemic, schools nationwide were still able to send out their teams to participate in the National School Games 2021 with safety measures implemented, of course. Evergreen Secondary School managed to also get our sport CCA teams to be part of the games. CCAs such as Bowling, Badminton, Tennis and many other different types of sports took part in this yearly event.

At first, the games were to be suspended due to the current pandemic, but it still managed to thrive after careful consideration and newly implemented safety measures, especially since the event involves different schools intermingling with one another.

Our school's volleyball boys and girls and table tennis boys have achieved 4th placing in the North Zone. Especially table tennis, which is their best ever result for the boys. Badminton has also done well. They are top 8 in the North Zone, and they demonstrated resilience against the top badminton schools. Other participating teams from our school have also done their best and made the school proud. Isn't it wonderful?

Hopefully next year, the Covid-19 pandemic will be resolved and everything will return back to normal, and we can have another fruitful National School Games again!





## CAREER'S WEEK

Written by Natasha (2THK) and Reanne (2ETP).

The Secondary Twos had recently gone through Careers Week. There were many informative talks and activities planned for us throughout the week. We found the information very useful for our future plans. Furthermore, it will definitely help us as we choose our subject combinations at the end of this year.

On Monday, we received a booklet and to start off the week, we thought about and listed our strengths and interests to get to know ourselves better. The Subject Awareness briefing that followed gave us insights on the various subjects that could be offered next year. We were quite excited to choose the subjects we would like to study in Secondary Three next year. We got to know and understand Education and Career Guidance (ECG) and its importance.

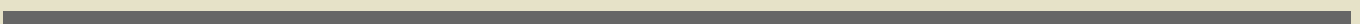
We were exposed to the different education pathways available. We were advised on how to plan our next step in our education journey. The subject combination that we will take next year is important in helping us with our plans after secondary school. For example, some students choose to take FCE because they are interested in that particular subject. Their interest in that subject might develop and later on, they choose to study FCE at a higher level. The subjects chosen may solely be based on how well the students perform at the end-of-year examinations or on how passionate they are about those subjects.

Midweek, we got to learn about jobs in the cyber security industry. We watched a few videos about the purpose of cyber security and the jobs that we may be interested in pursuing in the future. The jobs are very similar but they all work together to protect the digital world. Next, we looked into the finance industry and gained an insight into a trader's work day. Personally, the trader's job seemingly looks easy but one needs to read a lot and be aware of any news that may affect the stock market.

On Thursday, we got to learn more about other industries: healthcare and engineering. We learnt the skills required for the two industries, for example, healthcare requires us to have patience, being friendly and having good communication skills. On the other hand, to work in engineering, we learnt that not only we must be good in Physics and Math, we must also be meticulous and adaptable. After the few videos we watched for the past two days, we were required to rank them according to our level of interest, which allowed us to reflect on what we want to possibly do in the future.

On the last day of Career's Week we had a chance to listen to the professionals from these two industries, healthcare and engineering, live via Zoom. The nurse, representing the healthcare industry, shared with us his working experience and the special skills they needed. He also highlighted the Polytechnic and University courses we need to take to enroll into this industry. We also had an engineer sharing with us the different types of engineers to solve different problems and the technical skills required. That was quite an eye-opener! I used to think that there is only one type of engineer. Now I know we can explore other different engineering fields, depending on our interests.

By the end of the week, we understand how important it is that we have a goal in mind. Most of my classmates are more certain of the subjects that they would like to study next year, after considering the post-secondary institution that they would like to enrol in upon graduation from Evergreen. In fact, following the Careers Week, I thought long and hard about my options and my future. I am quite certain about the field that I would like to pursue in the future, what about you?





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# SYF PERFORMANCES RUNDOWN

Written by Elisya(2CHR) and Jarren (3RSP).

It is that time of the year once again. The Singapore Youth Festival (SYF), although canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has been brought back this year, bigger and better than ever! As expected, many of our talented Evgians took up the challenge of representing our school performing arts Co-Curricular Activities(CCA) in SYF. In this article, we shall be going through some highlights of the event as well as our school's accomplishments during the event that the contestants had pulled their weights for.

## Chinese dance

This year, the Chinese dancers attained the Distinction award at the SYF! This was very well deserved as, according to our interviewee, Rui Han from 2 CHR, they have been practicing within the hall, with no air conditioning and wearing silk clothing. Despite the intense heat they faced, they pulled through and managed to put up a spectacular performance. So good job Chinese dancers, and keep it up!



## Malay dance

Another year has passed for the Malay Dancers, and, once again, they have achieved a distinction award from SYF. This is their fourth year achieving distinction! Although their practice venue, the spectrum, is very small and cramped which led to the dancers crashing into one another. They persevered and endured through the hardships. Their efforts truly paid off, a great example of as they quote, "No pain, no gain."

## Evergreen secondary school

### Chinese orchestra (EVGCO).

Our school's chinese orchestra was really not fooling around when it came to preparing students to perform at SYF. Thanks to both Jia Xuan from 2 CHR and Pei Ci from 2 DYN, we learnt that the students have been practicing since December, and were actually required to record and submit a practice footage of their playing to their seniors every week. We also discovered that during every CCA session, a student will be picked out at random to perform their part of the song alone at random timings. In addition, the students had to stay back in school to practice three days a week. However, with all these implemented practicing techniques, it is no wonder that they managed to obtain a distinction award. Any outsiders could even feel the satisfaction of their hard work paying off as they managed to achieve a distinction.



## Gamelan Ensemble

The Gamelan Ensemble achieved a certificate of achievement at the SYF. According to our third interviewee, Izzul, a secondary 3 student from 3 ITG and a drummer in Gamelan, has told us that while it was difficult to memorize the notes in their 7 minute song performance, he had a lot of fun preparing for the performance. He had also mentioned that though the actual performance was nerve-wracking, he felt that all the members of the CCA did their best and the performance they had put together was amazing. All in all, preparation for competitions does not only mean suffering all the time but also includes times where you get to experience fun. Congratulations to the Gamelan Ensemble for their certificate of accomplishment!



## Guitar Ensemble

Members of the Guitar Ensemble have also been diligently practicing hard for SYF. One of the members was extremely proud to see other members keeping up their great efforts despite playing the same piece over and over again. During the contest, members of the Guitar Ensemble had to remain as silent as possible and even with that restraint, they still found themselves practicing their hand movements over and over again with their instructor timing them. The Guitar Ensemble ended their journey with a certificate of accomplishment. They had really worked extremely hard and put on a passionate performance.



In a nutshell, all of the performing arts CCAs did an amazing job and really burned the candle at both ends, obtaining certificates of accomplishment and distinction. We hope that this article could provide some insight into the lives of the students who work so hard to put a good name to our school!

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# TECHNOLOGICAL INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY

Written by Elisya (2CHR) and Reanne (2ETP).

Technology has greatly impacted our lives, especially during the Covid-19 period. Although technology has impacted our lives positively, it also has potential to negatively affect our lives. We will be diving in deeper to explore and break down the impacts of technology in our society.

One of the adaptations that has emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic is definitely Home Based Learning (HBL). All of us have gone through the one month long duration of HBL. It is definitely a good alternative as compared to going to school with the high risk of spreading the virus. Technology has managed to ensure that we can learn well during HBL, despite being outside of school. We also still managed to have our CCA sessions despite Covid-19 because face-to-face sessions were transitioned to online Zoom sessions. Although it was not the full experience, it was, of course, the best alternative that we could have. HBL has made such a big impact on us that the Ministry of Education has even decided to give us our own personal learning device (PLD) this year. I'm sure we are all looking forward to receiving it! It is definitely more convenient than carrying our bags with all the heavy books. Instead of using books and completing our worksheets on paper, everything can be transferred into the PLD. Technology is surely something that helps a lot in our daily lives!



Another positive impact is definitely the Trace Together app that the government has designed to help with contact tracing. It has a Bluetooth function that helps them trace the people whom we have had contact with more specifically than Safe Entry. It is an app that has helped a lot in contact tracing. This way, we can easily know if we have had possible exposure to people with Covid-19.

These are just some of the advantages of technology that have impacted our lives during Covid-19.

While technology has had an amazingly positive impact, there is also some negative impact resulting from it too. The most common concern is how digital devices emit a great amount of blue light which can bring about eye strains and also causes dry eyes and headaches. Our posture while using mobile devices can also cause muscle pains and aches.

Overusing our devices also contributes to our addiction to technology. This can affect our sleep schedule and may cause lack of sleep. Not only that, we might find ourselves skipping physical activities due to all the engaging activities that we can do in the comfort of our mobile devices.

Not only can technology affect our physical state, it can also affect our mental state which is something less talked about. Research has shown that excessive internet use may create a heightened level of psychological arousal. It can adversely affect our social skills, increase the risk of depression and lower our sense of well being.

The misuse of devices by children can also lead to them finding undesirable websites that are explicit and gruesome which will affect their mental well-being. This leaves an impact on the way they think and behave. Fortunately, there are ways to avoid the adverse impact of technology. Parents should monitor their child's internet usage and block off unwanted websites. We are also encouraged to limit our use of technology which can be done easily by turning on the screen time limit on your devices' settings. Both of these solutions can easily alleviate the negative effects of technology if done properly



In my opinion, technology can be extremely helpful and has many benefits to our daily lives. It is just the improper use of them that creates bad habits. Based on our experience, we think it is extremely important to have parents monitor their child's devices and limit their use to avoid the potential life-long consequences that their child may face. Habits like these can help when they grow old. Other than that, technology is something that we find extremely incredible in all the benefits and affordances that it offers.

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