



Centre for
**Society and
Mental Health**



REACH

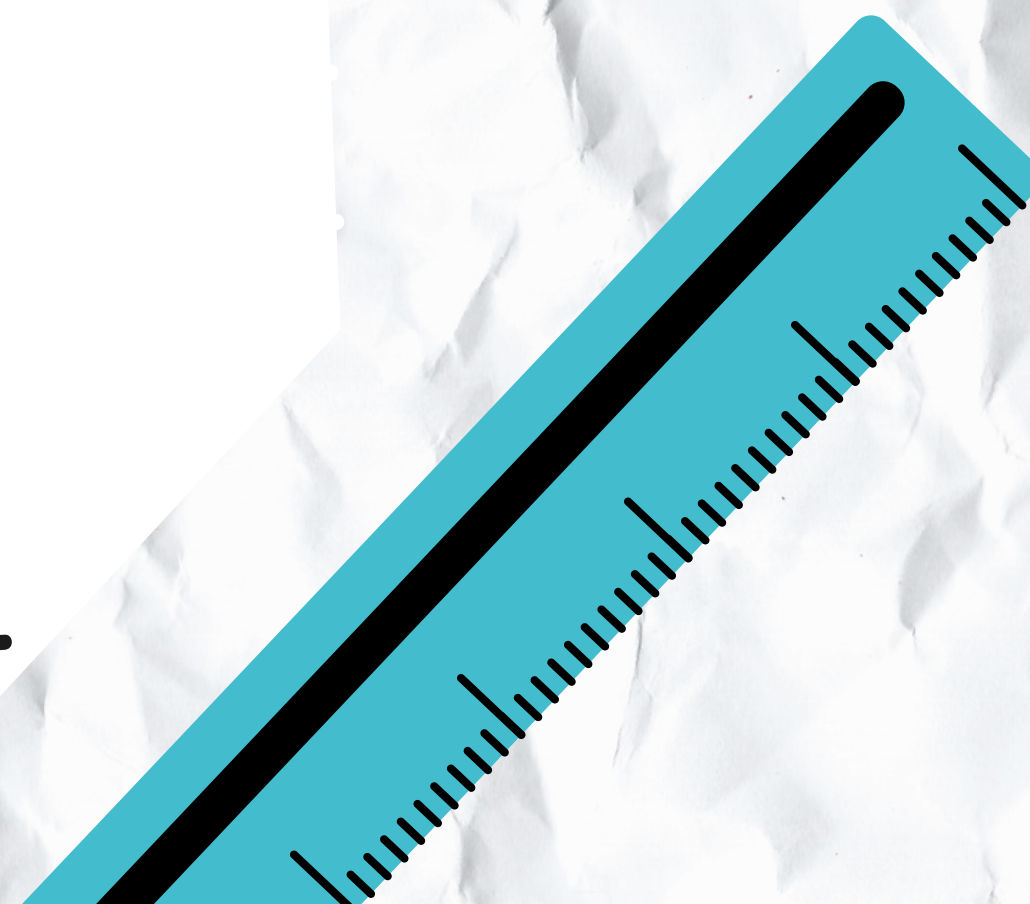
Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health

KING'S
College
LONDON

EXAM STRESS



The REACH Study





REACH

Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health



WE'LL COVER...



Who are we?



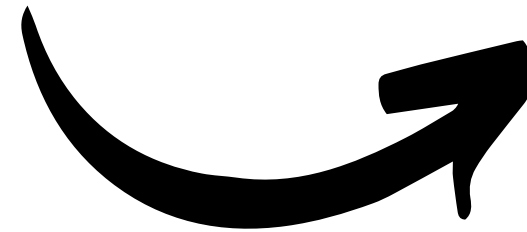
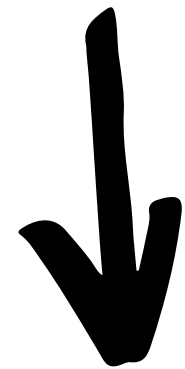
What is stress and how do we reduce
exam stress?



Building resilience



WHAT WE DO



1

To understand what influences mental health among young people over time

2

To improve our understanding of what leads to better mental health

3

Includes **over 4000** young people from diverse backgrounds in South London

1 SO FAR... 2

We ask thousands of young people about their experiences through a questionnaire. So far, three times in person, at school, and 1–3 times online

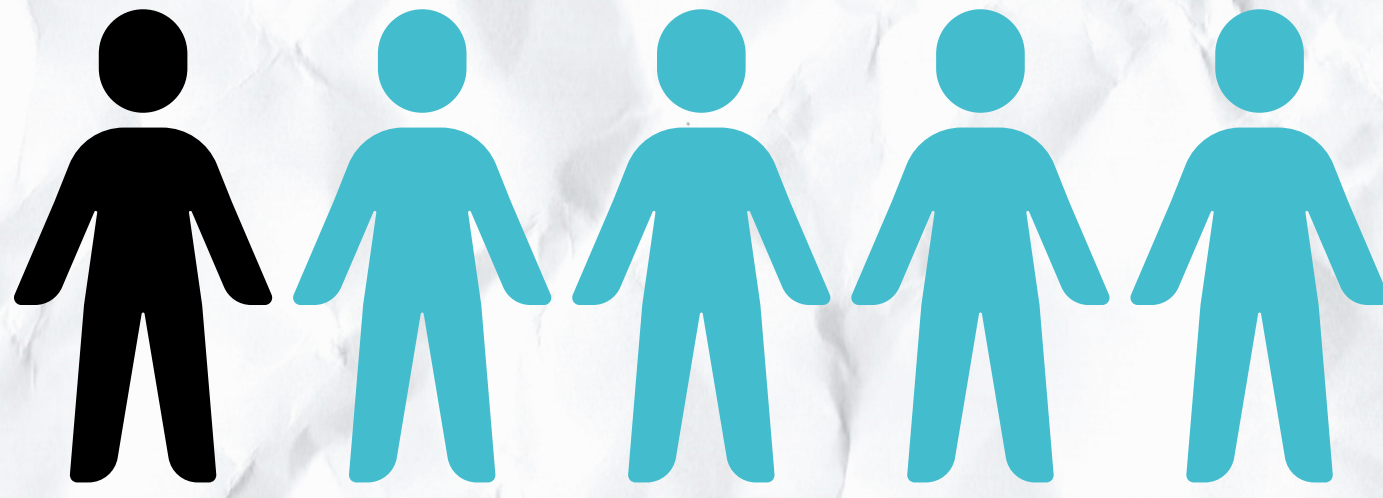
Conducted in-depth interviews alongside diary study project

3

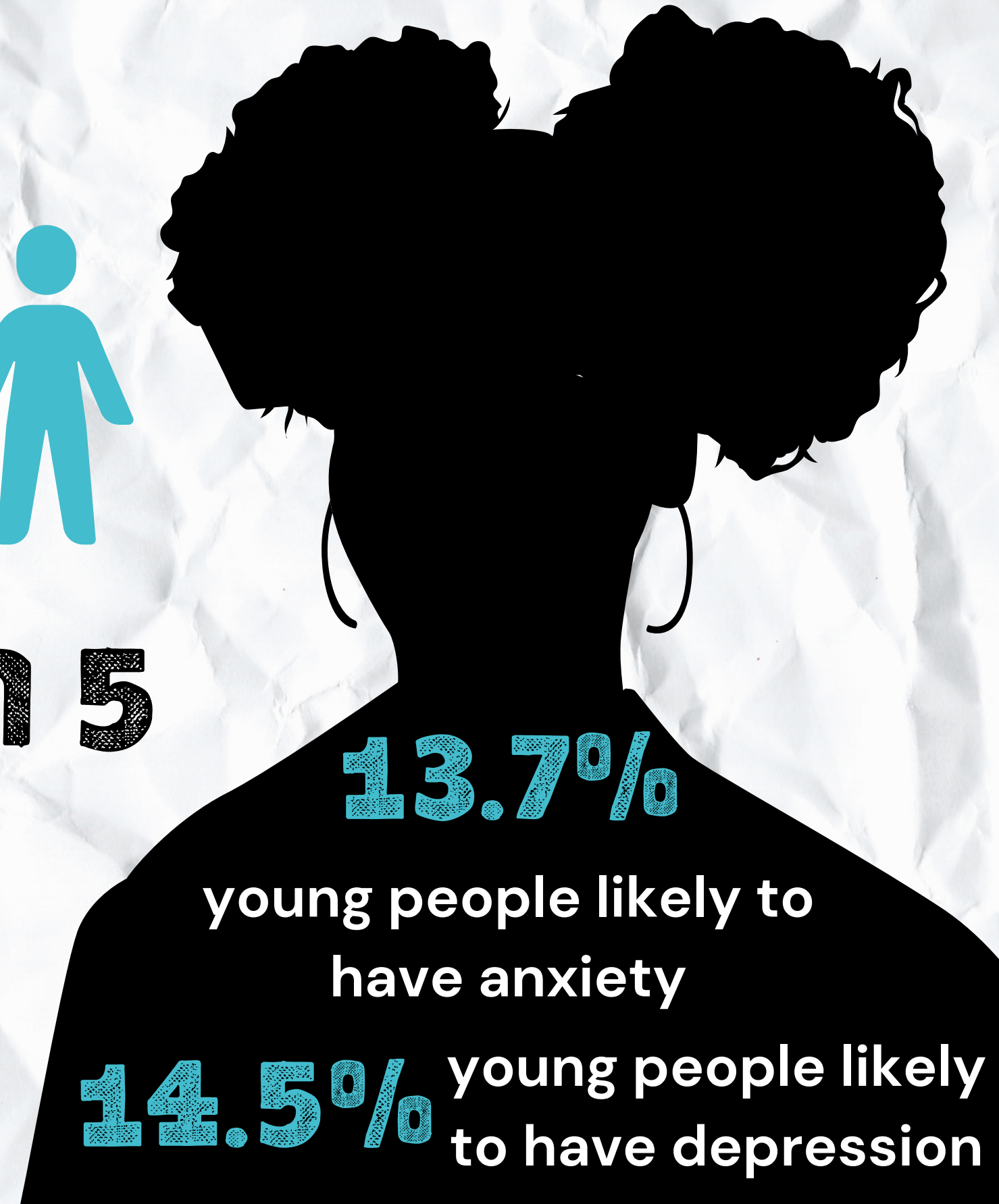
Used virtual reality to explore paranoia

WE HAVE
FOUND...

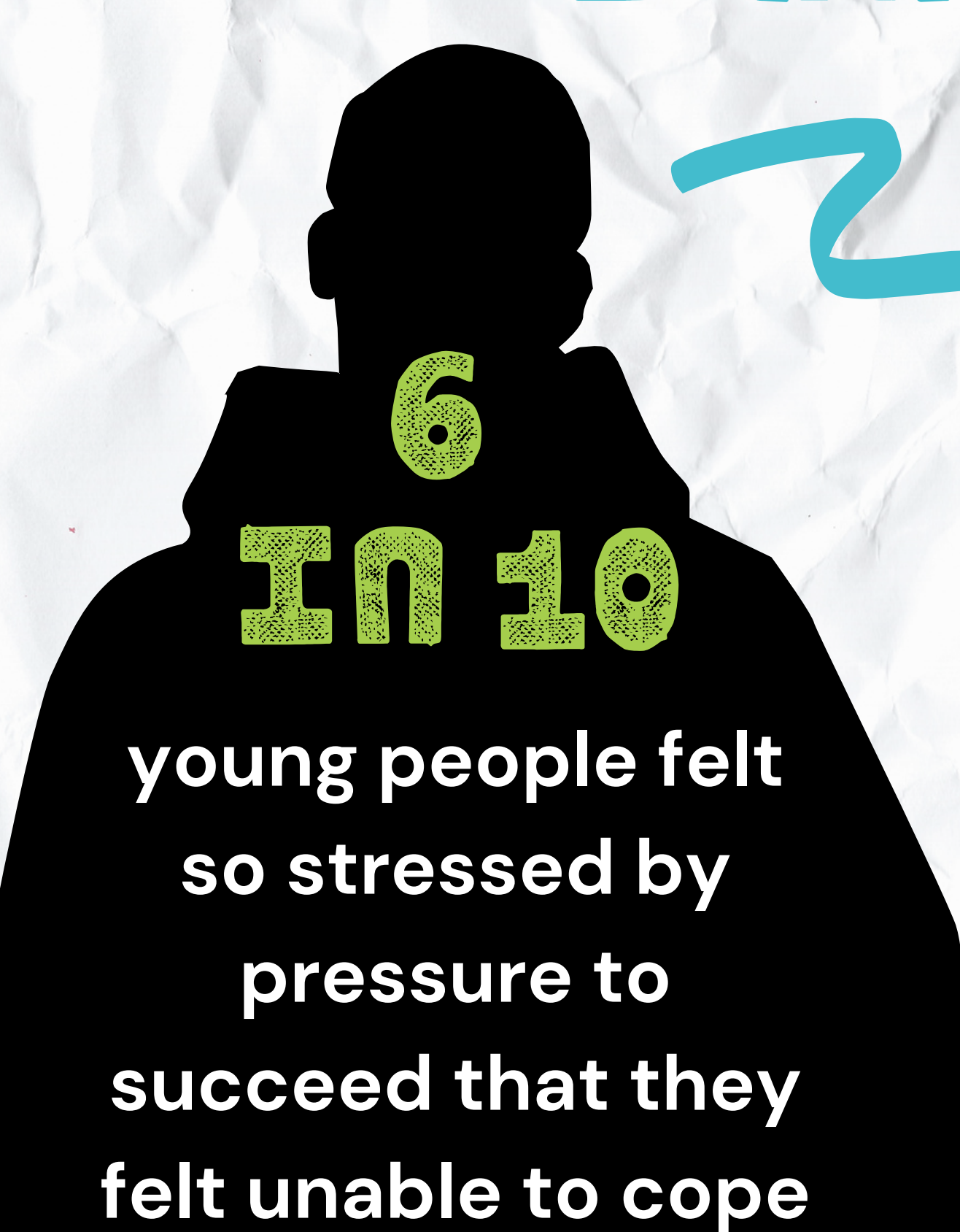
MENTAL HEALTH FACTS



THATS 1 IN 5
(The REACH Study)

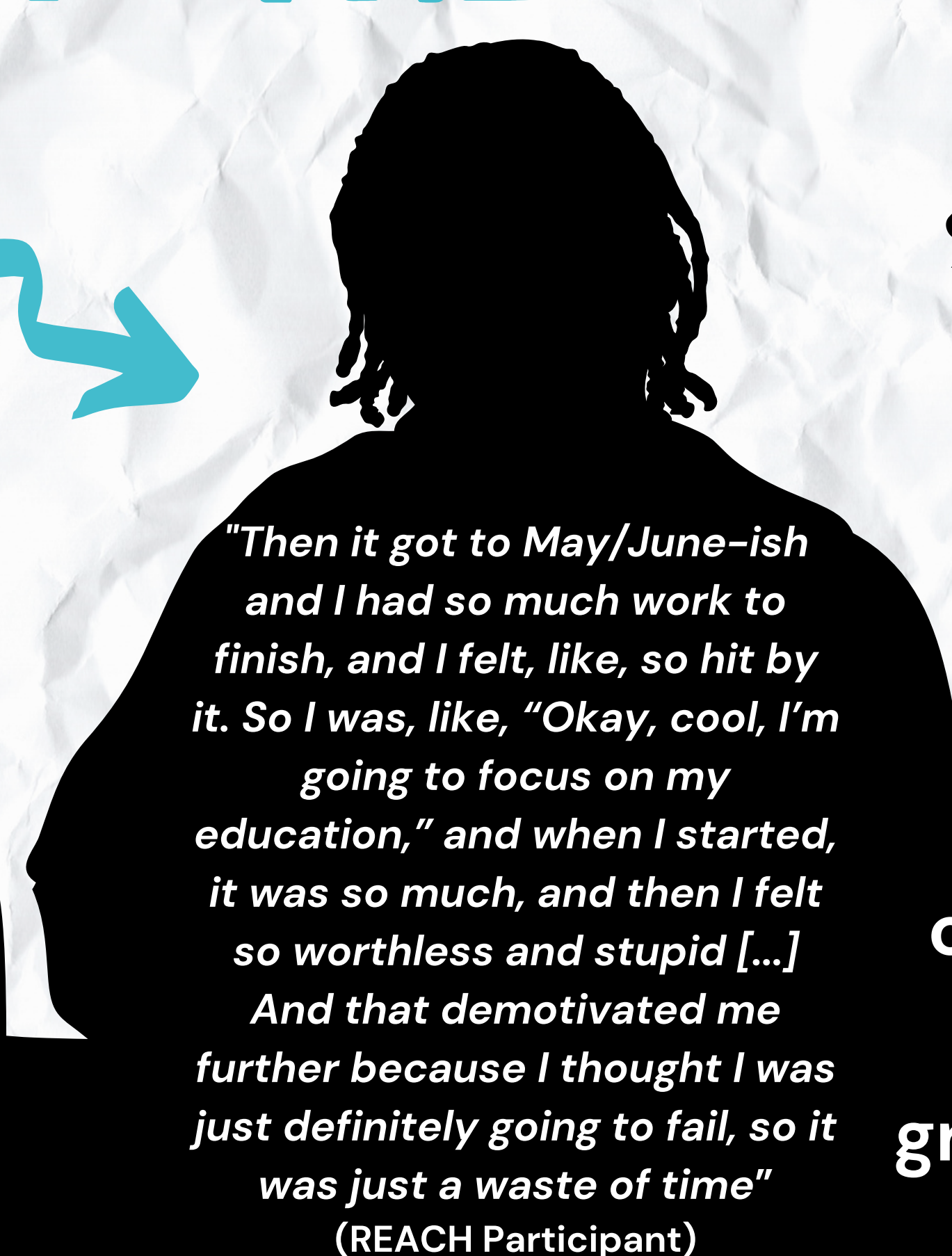


EXAM STRESS FACTS

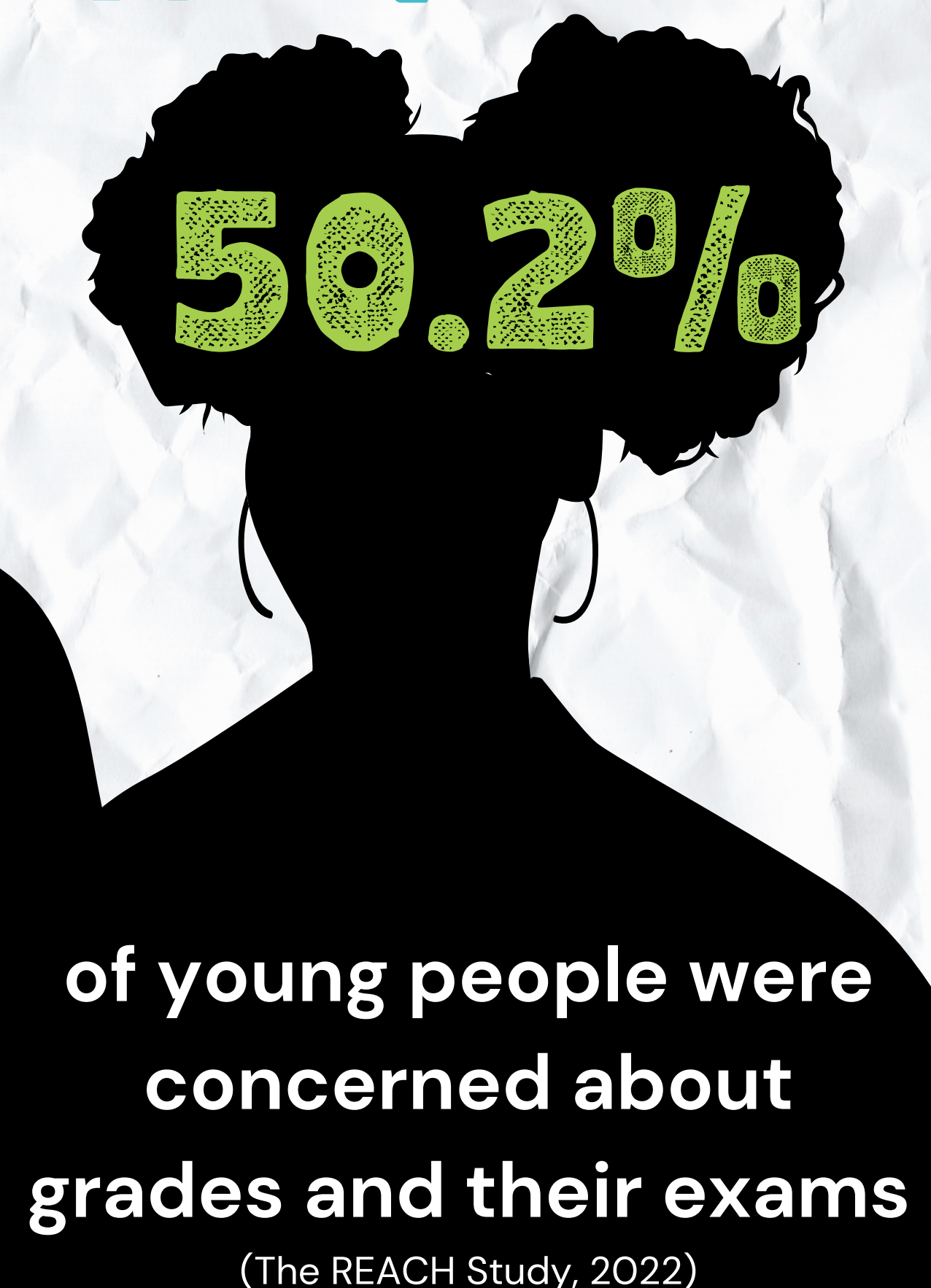


**6
IN 10**
young people felt
so stressed by
pressure to
succeed that they
felt unable to cope

(Mental Health Foundation, 2018)



*"Then it got to May/June-ish
and I had so much work to
finish, and I felt, like, so hit by
it. So I was, like, "Okay, cool, I'm
going to focus on my
education," and when I started,
it was so much, and then I felt
so worthless and stupid [...]
And that demotivated me
further because I thought I was
just definitely going to fail, so it
was just a waste of time"*
(REACH Participant)



50.2%
of young people were
concerned about
grades and their exams
(The REACH Study, 2022)

IF YOU'RE STRESSED

YOU MAY...



Feel overwhelmed

Racing thoughts

Difficulty
concentrating

Feel irritable or
snappy

Constantly worried, anxious or scared

Sleeping too
much/too little

Eating too
much/too little

Headache or
dizziness

Avoiding certain
places or people

Physical changes (e.g. muscle pain)

STRESS CAN BE A GOOD THING!



HOW DOES IT CHANGE BEHAVIOUR?



- Emotions ↔ Behaviour
- Stress linked to unhelpful behaviours
- If you can identify why your behaviour has changed, you can **overcome it!**
- If you or others notice a change in your behaviour, **seek support**

REDUCING STRESS AT EXAM TIME

 CAN'T
CONTROL



That we must sit
exams

Our thoughts

VS

CAN
CONTROL 



Our body

Our reactions to our
thoughts



 Our actions!



REACH

Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health

HOW DO YOU REVISE?

Knowing your learning style and how to revise can help reduce stressful revision sessions and make them more effective!



VISUAL



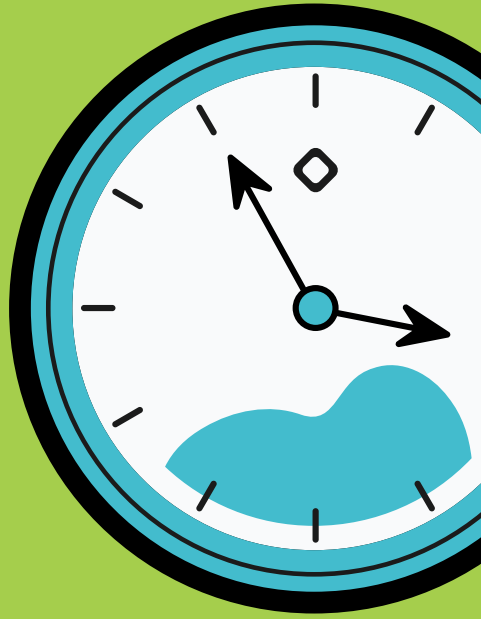
AUDITORY



KINAESTHETIC



**READING AND
WRITING**



SMART GOALS

SPECIFIC
Plan effectively with specific targets in mind.

MEASUREMENTABLE
Track your progress and reevaluate along the way.

ATTAINABLE
Set realistic goals that are challenging but achievable.

RELEVANT
Ensure the goal serves a relevant purpose.

TIME
Specify a deadline, monitor progress and reevaluate.

AN EXAMPLE...


"I will increase my English grade from a 5 to a 6 in my GCSEs. To accomplish this, I will revise my notes from class for 30 minutes a day during the week and 45 minutes a day on the weekends."



REACH

Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health





WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

- Adapting well in the face of stress
- Behaviours, thoughts and actions you can **learn**
- "Bouncing back" and personal growth
- Four key parts to building resilience: **connection, wellness, healthy thinking and meaning**



REACH

Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health

HOW CAN WE COPE WITH CHANGE?



WELLNESS



**HEALTHY
THINKING**



CONNECTION



MEANING



REACH
Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health



Centre for
**Society and
Mental Health**



REACH

Resilience, Ethnicity, and AdolesCent Mental Health

KING'S
College
LONDON

THANKS FOR LISTENING!



@THEREACHSTUDY



@THEREACHSTUDY



KCLREACH



WWW.THEREACHSTUDY.COM



REACH@KCL.AC.UK