Incandescence

Dunman Secondary School

- Mindful Innovators -

Outline

1. Introduction
2. DT – Empathy
3. DT – Define
4. DT – Ideate
5. DT – Prototype
6. DT - Test

Introduction

Who we are:

We are a group of students from the Peer Support Leaders of Dunman Secondary School. The main role of Peer Support Leaders is to provide practical, social and emotional support for our peers, and to promote mental health in our school.

Name of Team Members:

Natalie (Sec 3)

Navin   (Sec 3)

Johnny (Sec 2)

Rafael (Sec 2)

Introduction

The goal of our project:

Main Outcome:

As Peer Support Leaders, one of our key roles is to strengthen the mental well-being of Dunmanites.

How the project enables us to achieve this goal:

We hope to provide support to the future Secondary 1 students by starting a system which allows them to connect and learn from their Seniors; this also reinforces a culture of care in the school.

Empathy

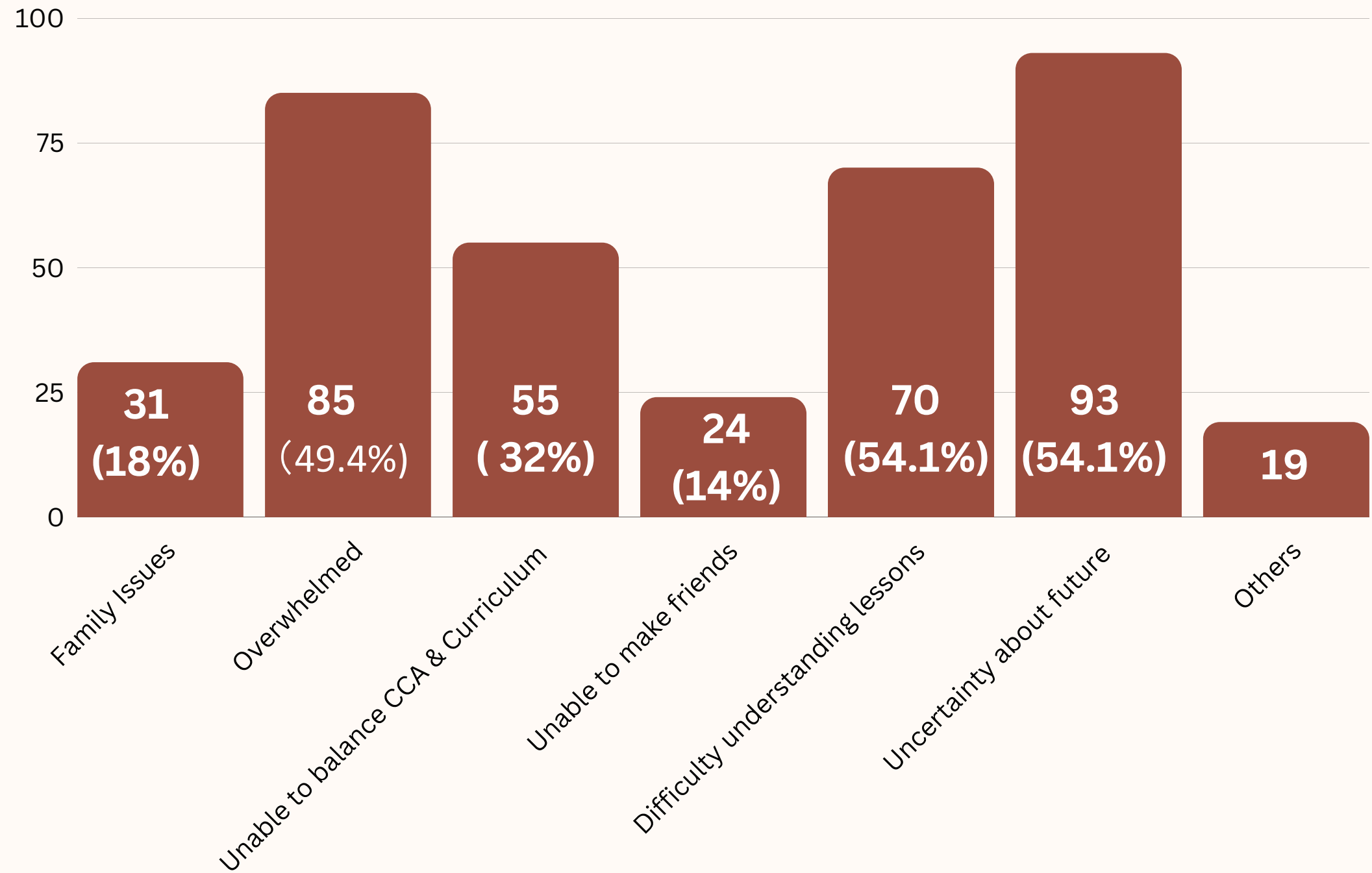## The problem we are trying to solve & How we found out about it:

We gathered data from the secondary 2 & 3 students through Google Forms. Through the results (in the next slide) we can conclude that generally, the most significant issues students were facing was uncertainty about the future and being overwhelmed with work.

Empathy
Survey Data:

What are some of the causes of stress you or your peers face? *

☐ Family issues e.g disputes or pressure from parents/death of loved ones

☐ Overwhelmed by homework load

☐ Unable to balance Curriculum and Co-Curriculum activities

☐ Unable to make friends / disputes amongst peers

☐ Difficulty understanding lessons

☐ Uncertainty about the future

☐ Other...

Bar chart:
- Family Issues: 31 (18%)
- Overwhelmed: 85 (49.4%)
- Unable to balance CCA & Curriculum: 55 (32%)
- Unable to make friends: 24 (14%)
- Difficulty understanding lessons: 70 (54.1%)
- Uncertainty about future: 93 (54.1%)
- Others: 19

Empathy
Survey Data:

Responses for elaboration included:

Can you elaborate further on the option you have chosen as your cause of stress?

172 responses

I think its just because of streaming and whether or not I'll be able to get my desired stream class.

I'm worried that I might not be able to enter the sch and stream I want in the near future.

I do not know whether to go to JC or Poly

I just dont want to seem like a bad student who doesn't do their work and since I have been constantly doing my work..so I'm expected to keep up that standard

Since exams are coming up and they are important as this is streaming, I am a little stressed if I will do well for them

A major representation of the elaborated responses show that:

1) Sec 2 students worry about streaming being the source of uncertainty towards the future

2) Sec 3 students worry about not knowing how to choose between Poly and JC as their post-Sec education option.

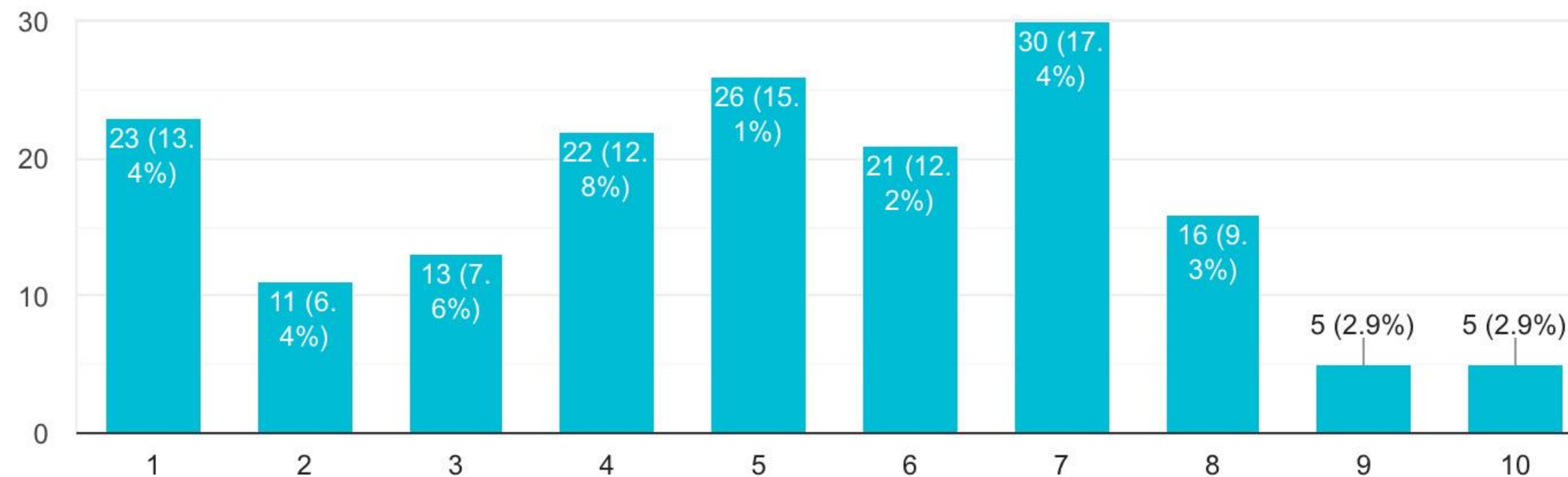Additionally, being overwhelmed could be due to this anxiety as well as upcoming examination.

Empathy

On a scale of 1-10, how much has this/these issues affected you?(1 for least affected 10 for most affected)

172 responses

Analysis of responses show that close to 1 in 2 students are at least moderately affected (>5) by these issues. More than 50% fall within the range of 4- 7. Close to 15% have these issues affecting them quite significantly (8 to 10). Thus, we decided to work on resolving the issue on uncertainty about the future as well as students feeling overwhelmed by schoolwork.

Define

Scoping our Project - target group and identified aspect

While Sec 2 and 3 students were the target audience whom we collected data from, subsequently analysis of survey data revealed two major and inter-related concerns that are milestone experiences of Sec 2 and 3 students i.e. concerns on streaming and post-Secondary education options respectively. As these are perennial and structural concerns faced by the respective cohorts, we realized that we could better prepare Sec 1 students to deal with these inevitable situations that they will face later. Hence, we defined our target audience to be Sec 1 students to tackle these issues upstream.

One common difficulty faced by students worried about streaming and post-Secondary education options is the ability to make sound and informed decisions. Recognizing the wisdom and experience of Seniors as peers who have gone through these experiences, our group thus decided to zoom in on inculcating decision-making skills among the Sec 1 students as we could readily tap on available Seniors in school to lend their support and guidance.

Define

Our Problem Statement

How might we help inculcate decision-making skills in the Secondary 1 students to better prepare them for future challenges?

Ideate

Ideas we came up with:

1) Mental Health Escape Room which was meant to better spread Mental Health Awareness. This was linked to our original main outcome of improving the school's mental well-being. Additionally, we felt that it would be engaging.

2) A system of study groups to help students cope with feeling overwhelmed with homework. We hoped this would reduce anxiety that students were facing as well as help them feel more motivate.

3) Pairing up of Sec 1s with the Sec 3s students which originated from the idea that we could have activities in which Sec 3 classes were paired with Sec 4 classes and Sec 2 classes were paired with Sec 1 classes. (Project Incandescence)

Ideate

How we came up with these ideas:

We considered a few factors:

1) Data Collected

We wanted to come up with ideas that could help deal with the issues students were dealing with based on the survey.

2) Feasibility

We wanted to come up with ideas that were not impossible to achieve and did not require too much resources.

3)Target Audience

We wanted solutions that would be engaging and fun for the students taking part.

4) Longevity and impact

We wanted to impart long lasting impacts that would benefit students in the long run, and was also sustainable to continue for future cohorts.

Ideate

How did we choose to work on one of the ideas?

With all these ideas to think and choose from, we referred to the survey results and because the third option (Project Incandescence) was the most targeted at resolving uncertainty towards the future, we decided on that idea.

We also made slight refinements to the third option – changing from pairing classes to pairing students as we could control the size of the group and this would make the whole project much more feasible and require less resources as well as manpower.

Prototype

Project Incandescence (being the 'light')

Uncertainty about future could lead to feeling overwhelmed and anxiety experienced by students.

Our solution is Project Incandescence, a programme providing a platform for seniors (Sec 3) and juniors (Sec 1) to pair up and interact over 5 sessions across the year to build relationships, provide guidance and nurture decision-making skills of juniors.

We decided on pairing the seniors with the juniors because the seniors have faced these struggles and have overcome them, and are confident and certain of how their educational choices. They could then share their experiences and guide the juniors appropriately. This would not only reduce future students' anxieties towards the future but also strengthen our school's culture as we would passing down knowledge from the seniors down to the juniors.

Prototype

Project Incandescence (being the 'light')

Additionally, pairing seniors up with juniors make it more appealing than structured in-class lessons by teachers on such Educational and Career Guidance matters, and serves as an additional layer of informal peer support for Sec 1 students in an authentic and personal context.

Through this project, the Sec 1 students are able to share their worries and questions about secondary school life and the seniors will also be share their own experiences. Not only do we hope that this forges a deep relationship, but we also hope that it promotes better decision-making skills in a natural way as both parties learn from each other.

Schedule Of Project Incandescence (2024)

Term 1

(Week 3) Briefing for S3 Peer Buddies (Senior PSL)

(Week 4/Week 5) Introduction to Project Incandescence and registration for Sec 1 (15 - 20) - Assembly Session

Term 2

Session 1 (Week 1/Week 2) - Icebreaker + Pairing

Session 2 (Week2/Week 3) - Bonding & Skill Activities

Session 3 (Week 9/Week 10) - Bonding & Skill Activities

Term 3

Session 4 (Week 1/Week 2) - Bonding & Skill Activities

Session 5 (Week 9/Week 10) - Celebration & Feedback

Session	Date (Term / Week)	Programme Details
1	T2W1 / W2	Simple bonding activities that get everyone to interact and know each other better to get them to feel more comfortable through icebreaker activities. Aim: To help them familiarize themselves with each other, eventually finding someone their comfortable pairing with.
2	T2W2 / W3	With the pairs we get them to discuss what they think is good Decision Making and Self Reflection through different activities and the seniors who would be more experienced can help. Aim: This is to help them to get more connected together, and as a way for us to observe if their pairs are working out successfully. The focus of this session is to teach essential skills such as time management, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Additionally, we hope to encourage self-awareness and reflection, helping participants better understand themselves and their goals
3	T2W9 / W10	The 3rd round of bonding activities to check in on them. Through these activities we hope to teach them how to resist Peer Pressure and develop skills in effectively communicating. Aim: We hope to empower participants with strategies to resist negative peer influences and make informed choices. We hope that we can develop better communication skills, including active listening and expressing thoughts and emotions through the interactions with fellow participants and Senior PSLs.
4	T3W1 / W2	After the holidays, we bring them back in for a last bonding activity, focusing on the skill of Empathy. We will teach these skills through discussing what hardships the students are facing. Aim: We hope this session can foster empathy and understanding for the challenges faced by peers, promoting a supportive community.
5	T3W9 / W10	Celebrating the consolidation of the event and to get feedback from both the juniors and the seniors. Aim: To end the project off on a good note as well as collect feedback on improvements that can be made in the future.

Considerations on Planning Project Incandescence

(1) <u>Workload and Schedule</u>

• Some Sec 3 peer support leaders might be very busy with exam preparations as well as their CCA roles (competitions, performances, etc). Thus, we put most of the activities either weeks before or after the examination periods. This ensures that neither party is too stressed out during the process. We also had to consider that current PSLs are already having training sessions so to ensure their workload is manageable, thus we did not come up with a very heavy schedule.

(2) <u>Number of Sec 1 students</u>

• Hence we decided on a small pilot group of 15 students so as to have better control of the quality of Sec 3 seniors, programme implementation, and having small enough numbers to ensure redundancy in case of potential student attrition. The focus is to better manage the scale of implementation as a first run, and subsequently to obtain feedback for refining before scaling it up.

Test

Feedback & Measuring Effectiveness

- We plan on getting some feedback from the current Sec 1 students after end-of-year exams (in Oct 2023) as they are closest to our target audience. We would then use it to refine our prototype before launching it next year.

- Following the end of the first run in Sep 2024, we would collect both qualitative and quantitative feedback from the Sec 1 to further refine the programme. This would be in the form of surveys, focused group discussion and interviews.

- We will also triangulate our results with school-based surveys that are administered to the entire cohort to compare related outcomes.

- We will also gather feedback from the seniors (Sec 3 PSLs) to evaluate and improve on the next run.

Other Potential Considerations

Mentorship Training

We can offer training for more senior PSLs to enhance their ability to guide so that they can mentor more Secondary 1 Students effectively.

The school can also collaborate with mental health professionals or decision-making experts to enrich the program's content and effectiveness when the facilitators teach the Senior PSLs