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An Exploration of the Stressors and Coping Responses of Year 9 Students
in the Wellington Region of New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to explore the stressors and coping responses of Year 9 students in the Wellington region of New Zealand. Thirty participants (aged 13-14 years) were recruited from two secondary schools (which were geographically and socioeconomically diverse). Five focus groups were conducted, with 5–7 students in each group, and open-ended questions were used to facilitate discussion. Data was analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and it was found that the stressors most relevant to the students were associated with school, peers, family, technology, and school/leisure conflict and extracurricular activities, and that the main coping responses used by the students were problem-solving, support-seeking, distraction, avoidance, and emotion-regulation. Patterns of difference according to gender, school decile and/or culture were found for some stressors and coping responses reported by the students.

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