How does the picture change when we ask young people?

Stress is caused by the self
“Not achieving what I wanted to achieve, I’m scared of that as well”
“Going to college. That’s all I want to do. I want to make my mum and dad proud that I actually get into college”

Stress is caused by being judged
“Or your choice of clothes, or your hair style or whatever or just things that you want to do that people can judge you on, and that makes you feel stressed. Like, I’m going to get judged if I wear these, this hat. Or am I going to get judged if I wear these types of shoes or whatever?”

Stress is caused by growing up
“Making decisions... Anything major. Yeah, college. School. Leaving your house, your parents, moving away. Getting a job. Paying taxes. All that kind of stuff.”
“It’s kinda like, we don’t know anything about the world”
“I can’t imagine going in to like a lecture hall with like 500 people. I’d be like, daunting”

Stress is caused by school
“I don’t know anything about Brexit. And I have to write a four-page essay on it next week”
“And we’re here still majority of the day, and then you go home, and you’re supposed to, like, eat healthy, get at least eight or nine hours of sleep, and then do at least five hours of homework and you’re like, wait was more than twenty four hours in a day, I can’t do that”

Stress is caused by fear of regret
“If I was sitting in all that and I get slapped with a cat tomorrow, am I done, great things with her life, she sat in and studied”

Stress is caused by the Leaving Certificate
“Like exams. They’re coming to you and like you can’t change that.”
“I’m petrified that I’ll fail. I’m petrified I’ll fail”

Adolescents tell us that stress has multiple causes for them, and the Leaving Certificate occurs at a time of multiple stresses and changes, some of which overshadow academic stress

Stress is caused by other people
“there’s the odd teacher that says like oh you better get ready, because the leaving cert is right around the corner, you know, this is it, this is it”

I feel like it’s like the Beast from the Beast and the Beast kind of metaphor

You feel like you’re drowning or something

It’s like a train filled with everything that stresses you out coming straight for you and you’re like, tied up on the track and you can’t move, it’s just heading your way, there’s nothing you can do about it”

Like, family pressure or something to do something and you don’t even know if you’re gonna do it”

“Something out of your control, you can’t change, or you have like, not much power over it”

Stress is a feeling that comes from inside or outside

Leaving Cert parents’ diary: ‘The sight of my son playing Fortnite is enough to send me into a panic’
10 tell-tale signs the State exams are looming all too soon in my house

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