



Parent Information - COVID-19

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

During this anxious, uncertain and sometimes frustrating time, I write to you on behalf of the Student Services Team to provide some guidance on responding to and supporting your adolescents. I would also like to clarify how support can be accessed from Student Services staff.

1. EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR

Adolescents are likely to be struggling just as much as adults are at this time. They are trying to make sense out of this with their not yet fully developed brains. They may experience a range of emotions and their vulnerability toward impulsivity and need to connect, with their peers may increase their risk of them taking themselves outdoors. It will be important to acknowledge their feelings and views despite maybe having different feelings or views from them before focusing on what they can and cannot do. This will help them to regulate their emotions and help them to feel heard and supported. It won't always be easy as some of their pain and worry may come out in anger and frustration.

Your connection and communication with them will be very important at this time. It is hard to have influence over their behaviour without a foundation of a good relationship to work from. There are a number of good resources and links that look at how to manage through this time in further detail (see links below).

2. SCHOOL WORK

In terms of school work, it is important to try and maintain routine and keep them engaged with their education, however, if students are distressed or struggling with their thoughts and or emotions, they are not in a state for learning. It will be important to be FLEXIBLE. Sometimes the plan may need to be adjusted or abandoned until the 'thinking brain' is switched back on.

Equally as important as learning, is having some FUN, interaction, physical activity and relaxation. Time spent engaging in these activities can be rejuvenating and can improve readiness to learn as well as learning outcomes.

3. CONTACTS FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS WHEN SUPPORT IS NEEDED

Student Services Team - The best first point of contact at school in regard to your student's wellbeing is their Student Services Manager. The Student Services Manager and Year Coordinator work closely with the School Psychologist and Chaplain and will pass on your requests for support where appropriate. Students can also contact their Year Coordinator directly as they are always able to do.

If your student is already an existing client of the School Psychologist, then please contact me via email and I will return contact with you or arrange a phone call appointment.
erin.pratt@education.wa.edu.au

Chaplain - Students can approach our Chaplain directly for support by sending him an email.
matt.denholm@education.wa.edu.au

We have collated some very helpful tips and information on the Student Services Support Page on the SEQTA portal page. Check it out here: <https://pa.duncraigshs.wa.edu.au/#?page=/portals/82>

In addition, there are some fantastic tips and links on the Department of Education's "Learning at home" resource page <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/learning-at-home/student-health-and-wellbeing>

Best wishes to you and your family at this difficult time, and thank you in advance for helping us to work most efficiently by following the school's process.

4. OTHER CONTACTS

Urgent Mental Health including: Suicide / Self Harm

- Urgent Mental Health Telephone Support for Children and Families 1800 048 636
- Mental Health Emergency Response line 1300 555 788
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467
- Your nearest Hospital Emergency Department
- Lifeline 13 11 14

General Mental Health including: Anxiety, Depression, Emotional Regulation

- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 <https://kidshelpline.com.au>
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au
- Headspace www.headspace.org.au
- Youth Focus 6266 4333 www.youthfocus.com.au
- ReachOut.com www.reachout.com.au

Additional Resources

APS	https://www.psychology.org.au/COVID-19-Australians
Lifeline	https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak
Beyond Blue	https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak
Helping Kids Cope	https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf?sfvrsn=f3a063ff_2%20parents
Headspace How to Cope	https://headspace.org.au/young-people/how-to-cope-with-stress-related-to-covid-19/

Thank you

Erin Pratt
Senior School Psychologist
Duncraig SHS