



## Wellbeing information and resources for families during isolation

### Wellbeing Email Address:

Please note that for extenuating services in relation to school services and support, we have a Wellbeing email address: [wellbeing@southmelbourneps.vic.edu.au](mailto:wellbeing@southmelbourneps.vic.edu.au) This email address is monitored between the hours of **8:30am and 4:30pm Monday to Friday**. A member of the Wellbeing Team (Miss Carmen Britnell or Miss Jenny Davies) will endeavour to **respond within 24 hours during the Remote Learning period**.

### Support Resources for Students and Families:

- **Covid Hotline:** 1800 675 398

The COVID hotline is available to anyone and operates 24 hours a day. The hotline can connect you with services to support with food, mental health services, safe accommodation and much more to anyone who may be isolating. The hotline is the go to place for any questions you may have in regards to isolation, testing and or support you may need during isolation. They will direct you to the right point of call and are very helpful with answering questions and supporting you.

- **Beyond Blue Phone:** 1800 512 348

Give us a call any time of the day or night – select from the voice menu or simply hold on the line to talk with a trained mental health professional.

We'll be there to offer brief support, provide information and advice, and point you in the right direction so you can get the help you need for the cost of a local call.

Any time of the day or night. If you would like to chat online, we offer online chat's from 1pm to 12am 7 days a week. We also offer email services.

Looking after yourself during the Coronavirus outbreak: A dedicated service for those feeling anxious, stressed, depressed or need assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. A link to a list of Wellbeing tools. Beyond Blue has a range of resources to support you and your children's mental health: <https://beyou.edu.au/resources/tools-and-guides/wellbeing-tools-for-you>

- **Financial Advice and Guidance:** <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/parents-carers-and-guardians>

### Other:

- **HeadtoHelp Phone:** 1800 595 212

Telephone advice from trained professionals and, if needed, connection to the best support or service for the caller (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm).

- **Lifeline Australia Phone:** 13 11 14

A crisis support service offering short term support at any time for people who are having difficulty coping or staying safe. <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

- **Smiling Minds:** <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/> Smiling Minds is a non-for profit mindfulness platform. You can sign up for free and access all mindfulness programs. They have a range of programs that are aimed at children, families and adults. Smiling Mind's digital care packs provide tools and resources for parents, carers and teachers to support positive mental health for the children in their care. <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/kids-care-packs>

- **Kidsline:** 1800 55 1800 – children can use this website around a range of issues and speak to someone if they are concerned. <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

- **RUOK:** <https://www.ruok.org.au/education>

- **Student Wellbeing Hub:** <https://www.esa.edu.au/solutions/our-solutions/student-wellbeing-hub>

- **Carers Victoria:** Represents and provides support for carers in Victoria.

<https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/>

- **Disability Information Helpline Phone:** 1800 643 787

Access to information and referrals for people who need help because of COVID-19, including access to counselling (available Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm).

- **Eating Disorders Victoria:** In response to COVID-19, Eating Disorders Victoria has implemented a new Wellbeing Program to assist people living with eating disorders and their support people during these challenging times. <https://www.eatingdisorders.org.au/find-support/eating-disorder-wellbeing-support-program/>

- **PANDA Phone:** 1300 726 306

Support for individuals and families to recover from perinatal anxiety and depression. PANDA's National Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Helpline (Monday to Friday, 9am to 7.30pm) or online. <https://www.panda.org.au/info-support/supports-for-parents-anxious-about-coronavirus>

- **TANDEM carers:** Represents organisations and individuals who care for people living with mental illness. <https://www.tandemcarers.org.au/>

- **Headspace:** Meditation App

- **Esafety Commissioner:** <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents> Keeping your child safe online.

## Conversations with Children and Young People:

Families and caregivers of children and young people should discuss COVID-19 in an open and honest way that they will understand.

Talk about the facts without causing alarm, and in a way that is appropriate for their age and temperament. It is important to listen to any questions they may have, to let them know that they are safe and that it's normal to feel worried or concerned.

If the media or the news is getting too much for them, limit exposure for young children and encourage teenagers to limit their exposure or turn it off completely.

## Tips for parents/caregivers when talking about COVID:

<https://minedu.cwp.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-coronavirus/tips-for-teachers-parents-and-caregivers-supporting-children/>

## Further Tips for Caring for Younger Children:

- Ask children what they have heard about COVID-19.

- The way parents behave can have a significant effect on children. Keep conversations calm and focused on the facts. Emphasise efforts that are being taken to contain COVID-19.
- Model health-promoting behaviours for your children. For example, teach them to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Educate the entire family about good health habits. Talk about what each family member can do to help others outside of the immediate family.
- Include children in family discussions and plans, in an age-appropriate way.
- Address any misconceptions children may have that could result in stigmatising people or groups of people in the community.

#### Wellbeing Activities for Home:

- Please find some wellbeing activities you may like to do with your child/ren over the next fortnight
- 1) **Family Catchphrase** - create a family catchphrase together for when things don't go right (internet problems, can't get outside due to weather, lose at a game, learning activity is difficult) to get back into a positive frame of mind. e.g. even when we stumble, we are still moving forward, mistakes are proof we are trying. Children can write the catchphrase on a poster and decorate it.
- 2) **Gratitude Jar** - During the day/at the end of each day, ask every member of the family to write about something or someone they are grateful for that day and then share them together as a family.
- 3) **Write a letter** - Write a handwritten letter or send an email to someone who has helped you recently or you would like to say Thank You to. This could be a doctor, postworker or supermarket worker etc to say thank you for their work during this time.
- 4) **Poem**: Create an acrostic poem from your name or your surname and write a positive quality about yourself or your family for each letter e.g.
  - **B**rave
  - **E**nergetic
  - **N**ice
- 5) **Hand print** - Ask every family member to draw around their hand and write a compliment to each other on each finger. Display around your home.

#### Online Safety:

During this period of isolation, we are all spending more time on online platforms including the children. The Esafety Commissioner has numerous resources and support ideas on their website that may help families navigate this period of increased online access:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents>

It is really important that parents have the conversation about cyber safety and responsible online use with their children. They have provided a Parent Online Safety Booklet during this Covid - 19 period:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/online-safety-book>

The E safety Commissioner continues to hold free online Seminars during this time which can be found at: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/webinars>

#### Age - Restricted Apps:

We remind families that some apps have age restrictions and that some apps and websites are not appropriate for primary aged children. We strongly advise that children remain in the same room with their parents when using online platforms and that children's social media access is restricted and managed by parents.

Please find the age restricted apps list below. This list is not exhaustive so we encourage parents to google other apps their children want to access before downloading them.

- Facebook 13+
- Instagram 13+
- SnapChat 13+
- TikTok 13+
- WhatsApp 13+ (with parental consent) 16+ without

### Getting Through with Kids at Home:

Professor Mark Dadds, director of the Sydney Child Behaviour Research Clinic, had some tips in 2020 for staying sane and getting along during lock downs:

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2020/03/30/self-isolating-with-your-kids-during-covid19.html>

### Department of Education and Training advice for Parents/Carers:

- <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/parents-carers-and-guardians> For Wellbeing and health advice, together with financial support advice.

- **The Mental Health Toolkit:**

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/mentalhealthtoolkit.aspx> has advice and resources to support student mental health and wellbeing. This includes advice on positive mental health promotion, curriculum support, how to identify and access support as well as parent and student-specific pages.

- **The Quickguide to Student Mental Health and Wellbeing resources:** <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/quick-guide-to-student-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources.pdf> highlights the most relevant evidence-based resources for teachers, parents and students.

### Stay Active:

- **Cosmic Yoga** for Kids: <https://www.cosmickids.com>
- **Go Noodle:** <https://family.gonoodle.com/> Engages kids with movement and mindfulness videos created by child development experts. This is a free platform

### Parent Wellbeing:

Taking care of yourselves and your loved ones is the number one priority during this time. Below you will find some advice regarding managing the situation at home.

We are all working in unprecedented times. We know that this current situation of Remote Learning and isolation is challenging. We encourage parents to touch base with their child's teacher if needed

for advice around which learning activities should be completed and how to best to support your child during this time. You are all doing an amazing job so please be kind to yourselves.

Professor Mark Dadds, director of the Sydney Child Behaviour Research Clinic, had some tips in 2020 for staying sane and getting along during lock downs:

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2020/03/30/self-isolating-with-your-kids-during-covid19.html>

### **Some tips for balancing work commitments and supporting your children:**

- 1) Routine: Set up a workspace for your child. Get up at the same time, eat at the same time, exercise and go to bed at the same time daily.
- 2) Communication: Explain the situation to the children and how you are balancing work too. Create a visual timetable to show them when you are working, when they are learning and when you are free.
- 3) Create a system. While working, you can't always be 'present' to support your child with their learning so set up a system that signals to your children that you are working and can't be interrupted. e.g. using traffic light system: Red - I can't be interrupted unless it's an emergency, Amber - interrupt me if its important , Green - you can interrupt me. Alternatively, you could use a timer to alert children that you are working at that time but when goes off they can ask you a question.
- 4) Activities: Provide your children with activities at hand they can access when you are working and you can't be interrupted e.g. colouring book, playdoh, reading etc.

**Gabbie Stroud a former teacher and author was interviewed on ABC's Q&A in 2020. Here are some of her comments and quotes she made during her interview:**

*"What we're seeing right now are students learning from home, just like adults are working from home, so no-one's actually expecting parents to teach their child as a teacher would in a classroom," she said.*

*"Teachers are working very, very hard to deliver curriculum online and remotely in many varied forms so that their students can still access it"*

*"We just can't do it all, no matter how hard teachers work and with what integrity parents go at this learning from home with their own children.*

*"We need to start asking 'what matters', 'what matters right now'. And what matters right now is that our families feel harmonious and safe.*

*"Children can't learn unless they feel safe and there's high anxiety in the air around them all the time at the moment, especially related to this pandemic that we face."*

*She believed what teachers wanted to say to parents at the moment was to relax and take a breath as they knew parents were doing the best that they could.*

*She advised parents to look for opportunities around the home where they can educate their child and "just be with them at this time, help them get through this".*

*"What our kids are actually learning right now is how we deal with a crisis," she said, which she described as a "massive life skill"*