



## K-12 Remote Learning Parent and Student Wellbeing Guide

We are very grateful for the support and understanding of our families throughout this very challenging and rapidly evolving time. We want the best possible arrangements for our students and families.

As a consequence, we felt it timely to make you aware of some very pertinent information that will hopefully ensure the Wellbeing of your son/daughter throughout this period.

- **All Academic work for students is to accessed via Seesaw (K-2) and via Canvas (Years 3-12).** Students are encouraged to follow their normal school daily timetable and are to contact their specific subject teachers within those timetabled periods.
- **Secondary School Year Coordinators will be contacting students via the students' TPHS email address twice weekly.**
- **Junior School Assistant Heads and Mrs Achurch will contact families by phone.** This contact, we hope, will allow the students to communicate any issues they are having and will contain some Wellbeing tips concentrating on exercise, diet, sleep and leisure as we understand this will be a very unusual time for both students and families.
- **Students can contact the counselling service at Pittwater House throughout this time via email.** Counsellors, Year Level Coordinators and Mrs Tickle in the Junior School will be reaching out to already identified students weekly. Please be assured this service will be fully operational throughout this time although the method in which it is delivered will be altered.
- **IT assistance** for your son/daughter can be accessed via; [support@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:support@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **The Learning Support and the Gifted and Talented teams will be reaching out to those students already identified.** They can also be accessed via email.

### Pittwater House Counselling Support

Counsellor	Available	Email Address
Sean Panambalana	Wednesday and Thursday	<a href="mailto:Sean.Panambalana@tphs.nsw.edu.au">Sean.Panambalana@tphs.nsw.edu.au</a>
Olivia Boyle	Monday, Tuesday and Friday	<a href="mailto:Olivia.Boyle@tphs.nsw.edu.au">Olivia.Boyle@tphs.nsw.edu.au</a>
Juliet Tobin	Tuesday and Wednesday	<a href="mailto:Juliet.Tobin@tphs.nsw.edu.au">Juliet.Tobin@tphs.nsw.edu.au</a>

### Learning Enrichment Support

- **K-3:** Katie Chalmers – [Katie.Chalmers@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Katie.Chalmers@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **Years 4-6:** Andrea Robson – [Andrea.Robson@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Andrea.Robson@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **Years 7-9:** Jenny Cook - [Jenny.Cook@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Jenny.Cook@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **Year 10:** Andrea Robson - [Andrea.Robson@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Andrea.Robson@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **Year 11 and 12:** Kelly Muffett - [Kelly.Muffett@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Kelly.Muffett@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- **Gifted and Talented Coordinator:** Victoria James - [Victoria.James@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Victoria.James@tphs.nsw.edu.au)

## Conversations with Children and Young People

For many young people seeing the news each day does cause some concern. Families and caregivers of children and young people should discuss news of the virus with those in their care in an open and honest way. It is recommended to relate the facts without causing alarm, and in a way that is appropriate for the children's 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 concerned. If the media or the news is getting too much for them, encourage them to limit their exposure. Being exposed to large volumes of negative information can heighten feelings of anxiety. While it's important to stay informed, it may be useful to limit media intake if it is upsetting you or your family.

## Try to Maintain Perspective

While it is reasonable for people to be concerned about the outbreak of COVID-19, try to remember that medical, scientific and public health experts around the world are working hard to contain the virus, treat those affected and develop a vaccine as quickly as possible.

## Access Good Quality Information

It's important to get accurate information from credible sources such as those listed below. This will also help maintain perspective and feel more in control.

- [Australian Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Health Alert](#)
- [Health Direct – Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au) – [Travel Information for Australian citizens](#)
- [World Health Organisation – Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) Outbreak](#)

## It is Recommended that Adults and Children

- Engage in healthy activities that are enjoyable and relaxing.
- Keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy foods.
- Try to maintain physical activity.
- Establish routines as best possible and try to view this period as a new experience that can bring health benefits.
- For those working from home, try to maintain a healthy balance by allocating specific work hours, taking regular breaks and, if possible, establishing a dedicated workspace.

## Tips for Students Managing their Mental Health while Studying from Home

### Structure Your Day

It is beneficial to plan out your days to restore a sense of purpose and normality to your daily life. It is important to clearly define your 'studying' hours, ensuring you have regular breaks. Schedule study-related tasks, in addition to necessary tasks (such as preparing meals and household chores), as well as activities you enjoy. Structuring activities around mealtimes and bedtime can also help you keep to your schedule while ensuring you eat regularly and get enough sleep.

### Maintain a Sleep Schedule

Aim to get out of bed at the same time every day, including weekends.

### Change out of Your Pyjamas Each Morning

Getting out of your pyjamas can help you get in the right headspace to start your day. Wearing your sports uniform or school uniform will help you select the correct mindset for work.

### Set up a Dedicated Workspace

Choose a space away from noise and with adequate lighting to set up your study space. Spend some time decluttering the space to help you feel organised and ready to study.

### Set Study Goals

Set goals each day and week about what you would like to achieve with regard to your schoolwork. Keep these goals realistic. They are challenging enough to motivate you, but also keeping realistic, aiming not to overload yourself.

### Managing Distractions and Screen Time

Being at home can mean you can be easily distracted by other people or tasks. Schedule set times where you can take a break from study to complete these tasks, rather than completing them randomly throughout the day where you can lose track of time. Also, limit your time engaging in unproductive screen time, such as social media or streaming videos online. We know that excessive screen time is not helpful for our mental health. We also know that young people struggle to resist distractions and temptations, therefore, it may be helpful to limit your access to these distractions (e.g. ask your parent to take the remote control with them to work, turn your phone off and leave it in another room, have your parent place 'app limits' or restrictions on your devices, turn off all social media notifications on your phone).

### Stay Active

Many young people not able to engage in their usual physical activities (e.g., swimming, football) as they have been cancelled but it is still important for you to stay active. Harness your interests and have fun at home (e.g., play cricket in the backyard or dance to music inside). At home workouts can also be a fun way to have a break from study and remain physically active – there's heaps of different types of exercises you can do from home, thanks to YouTube and apps. Some suggestions for a few free apps are: Yoga with Adrienne, Nike Training Club and Seven (7 Minute Workout).

### Limiting Media Exposure

It is important to monitor your exposure to media reports about the COVID-19 virus as frequent exposure can increase your level of fear and anxiety. Try to limit your exposure, and ensure you have access to accurate, reliable and up-to-date information. Try to be with a parent when you are watching, listening or reading the news so you can ask them any questions or concerns you may have.

### Have Fun and Try to Relax

Take this opportunity to have fun – get creative, play an instrument, play games, learn a new skill, research to expand your knowledge in an area. Engage in pleasant and relaxing activities, such as mindfulness, reading, or listening to music.

### Make Time to Leave Your Desk

Remember to take regular break - leave your desk, and if possible, go outside and get some fun and fresh air.

### Practice Mindfulness

When we're stressed about something, our thoughts tend to speed up. It can be helpful to take 10 minutes or so to practice mindfulness to help produce a sense of calmness within our minds. Here are some suggestions for free mindfulness apps to try:

- Insight Timer has over 25,000 free guided meditations, from 1 to 90+ minutes. Try searching by a topic that interests you (e.g. stress, learning to meditate, sleep).

- Smiling Mind might be a good option if you don't want to be overwhelmed by choice. The meditations are organised by structured programs, such as Mindful Foundations, Sleep, Relationships, etc.
- If meditation isn't for you, try doing an everyday activity in a mindful way – in other words, put aside distractions and focus fully on one small task. For example, while you're having a cup of tea, pay attention to your senses (the smell of the tea, the warmth of the cup in your hand, the taste..)

### Maintain a Positive Outlook During Periods of Self-Isolation by:

- Reminding yourself that this period of isolation is temporary.
- Thinking of the benefits of self-isolation to the wider society, including slowing the spread of the virus and protecting those most vulnerable in our community.
- Remaining mindful that medical and scientific experts are following strict protocols to contain the virus and treat those affected.

### Keep Things in Perspective

When we are stressed, it is easy to see things as worse than they really are. Rather than imagining the worst-case scenario and worrying about it, ask yourself:

- *Am I getting ahead of myself, assuming something bad will happen when I really don't know the outcome?* Remind yourself that the actual number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Australia is extremely low.
- *Am I overestimating how bad the consequences will be?* Remember, illness due to COVID-19 infection is usually mild and most people recover without needing specialised treatment.
- *Am I underestimating my ability to cope?* Sometimes thinking about how you would cope, even if the worst were to happen, can help you put things into perspective.

### Reducing Conflict with Those Around You

Living with someone 24/7 with little or no time away from each other may give rise to arguments and/or tension. There are several things you can do to limit conflict with those you are isolated with, including:

- Creating a roster to help you distribute chores equally and fairly
- Identifying and taking part in activities you like doing together such as movies, board games, puzzles, gardening
- Sharing positive emotions and experiences, rather than anger, frustration and disappointment
- Communicating about your worries and concerns, and seeking support from one another
- Maintaining your sense of fun and positive humour
- Remaining respectful of each other in times of conflict – walk away and take time to calm yourselves, returning to the discussion later and repairing any hurt caused.

### Reaching Out for Help

For assistance to manage your studies from home contact your teacher or Year Coordinator.

For assistance with your mental health, consider contacting:

- A Pittwater House School Psychologist on: [counsellors@tphs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:counsellors@tphs.nsw.edu.au)
- Your family GP
- A private psychologist (via a referral from your family doctor)
- Online and over the phone services, including: **Kids Helpline** (1800 55 1800), **Headspace** (Ph 1800 650 890 or live chat), **Beyondblue** (1300 22 4636) and **Reach out** ([website](#)).