



# Toronto Public School Newsletter

*Quality and excellence... Learning together*

1/04/2020



Dear Parents and Carers

There is little about our school, or schools in general, that feels familiar at the moment. The situation we find ourselves in is a challenge for everyone. The advice I have is that our current working arrangements will continue for some time. I would love to have a time frame, but the reality is we just don't know. We have been told to plan for Term 2 teaching to be delivered remotely.

We currently have 9% of our students attending school. These children are completing the same work as the children who are working from home. They are organised in two classrooms K-3 and 4-6, with every effort to ensure social distancing. Our teachers are rostered to cover these classes. When not on the roster, teachers have the option to work from home. Many of our teachers are continuing to come to work each day regardless and they can socially distance themselves in their classrooms and they have their resources readily available.

The last two weeks have been a huge learning curve for us. The way we teach has been completely disrupted. We have had to find new ways of doing things to hopefully get the same result. I am incredibly proud of the work our teachers have done and the success they are experiencing taking their teaching online. We are doing our best to find engaging content and also to continue with our teaching program. We want our children to be learning not just being kept busy. This is our challenge. We are learning in this space and we will get better at it. To keep your darlings busy and to buy you some peace, Miss Leah has made great art packs for every class. We will keep these coming. The response to online learning from parents varies. Some people love having their children at home, others don't. For parents who are trying to work from home themselves this adds another layer of difficulty. The Department has resources to help with this transition (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/learning-from-home/advice-to-parents-and-carers>). We are here to help. Our aim for the remaining 7 days of this term is for all children to engage with the online platforms and to become comfortable. If you need support to access programs now is the time to let us know! We will have video conferencing up next term, so the children will be able to have some time each day when they can see their teacher. We will keep you informed. If you have concerns regarding your child's adjustment, let us know and we will provide additional support where we can.

We will continue to mark our rolls each day. Children who are engaged in learning are marked as present using the F (flexible) code. If your child is not engaged in learning because they are sick, please let us know and we mark them as S (sick). When a child is not engaged in learning and we haven't been informed that they are sick, they are marked as A (absent). The expectation is that all children should be engaged in learning.

We love our TPS community spirit; let's get creative so that we can continue to feel connected. We will begin with an online Easter Hat Parade. Make an Easter hat with your child. Take a photo. Send it through on your class dojo. We will create a movie and post it on our Facebook page. We need to receive photos by Wednesday morning next week. We can't wait to see your children's beautiful faces and their wonderful creations.

We will draw our Easter raffle next week. No one wants to see chocolate without a home to go to! If you have tickets you would like to return, we will have a collection container at the gate. If you would like more tickets just put the money in an envelope with your names on it and we will write them out for you.

We are sending lots of positive vibes out to you. Stay safe.

Kim Witt

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# Remote learning guidelines for students and parents



## Stay connected



## Ask questions



.....  
If you don't understand something, ask your teacher or classmates online.

## Workspace



.....  
Work in a quiet area, at a desk or table and try to limit distractions.

## Use classroom language



.....  
Talking to your teachers and in class is different from how you speak to your friends online. Use proper grammar and avoid excessive emojis.

## Focus



.....  
During calls with your teacher, stay focused on the call. Avoid reading chats or looking at other tabs.

## Take breaks



.....  
Take breaks away from screen. Move around and try not to sit all day.

## Your normal routine



.....  
Eat breakfast, brush your teeth and get dressed in the morning.

## Resources for Student & Parents During Remote Learning

### WHAT'S GOING TO HELP...

#### Maintain routines where possible

Maintain as many aspects of your routine as possible. Break tasks down into manageable chunks and give as much notice as possible about transitions and changes to routines and environments.

Have realistic expectations of children and young people during this time, especially if they are transitioning in and out of school.

#### Talk about what's happening in the news

Talk about the importance of getting information from trusted sources like government websites. Draw their attention to the facts around the outbreak and the reassuring aspects of this information. For example:

- Children are unlikely to experience severe symptoms if they contract coronavirus.
- There are few cases in Australia compared to the rest of the world
- Government and health professionals have been preparing for a pandemic for a long time and are acting quickly to minimise the outbreak and develop a vaccine.

It's important to listen to any questions children and young people may have, and to let them know 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.

For more information watch Beyond Blue's video on [Talking to kids about scary stuff in the news](#).

Why not check out BTN – Behind the News on ABC for kids (Google it!) This brings current news and events to children in a very non-confronting and child-friendly manner.

#### Impacts of stress on learning

Children and young people develop coping skills through exposure to manageable amounts of stress. However, when there are high levels of stress or multiple stress factors (especially those they can't control) then it can impact on their physical and mental health, relationships, and learning and development.

Take it easy, don't have arguments you don't need to have. Their emotional wellbeing is most important at this time.






Be kind. Be safe.

***Below is a list of agencies, websites, phone numbers and apps that can help during these stressful times.***




**If you need to talk to someone...**

Name	About	Phone	Online
<b>Kids Help Line</b> 	For anyone 25 or under - Kids Helpline is a free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.	1800 55 1800 24/7	Webchat 24/7 <a href="https://kidshelpline.com.au/get-help/webchat-counselling">https://kidshelpline.com.au/get-help/webchat-counselling</a>
<b>Lifeline</b> 	For all ages - 24-hour crisis support telephone service. Lifeline provides 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.	CALL: 13 11 14 24/7  TEXT: 0477 131114 6:00PM - Midnight	Crisis Support Chat 7:00PM – Midnight <a href="https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/online-services/crisis-chat">https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/online-services/crisis-chat</a>
<b>Youth Beyond Blue</b> 	Beyond Blue provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.	1300 22 4636 24/7	Chat Online 3:00PM - Midnight <a href="https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/">https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/</a>
<b>Headspace</b> 	eheadspace provides free online and telephone support and counselling to young people 12 - 25 and their families and friends.	N/A	Group Chat 24/7 1 on 1 Chat 9AM - 1AM <a href="https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/">https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/</a>
<b>Carers NSW</b> 	Carer Line offer emotional support, referrals and distribute carer specific resources and information to carers and community members	1800 242 636 9AM – 5PM Monday - Friday	<a href="http://www.carersnsw.org.au/how-we-help/support/carers-line/">http://www.carersnsw.org.au/how-we-help/support/carers-line/</a>
<b>Mental Health Line</b> 	A mental health professional will answer your call about mental health concerns for you or someone you are concerned about, including children, teens, adults and older people	1800 011 511 24/7	<a href="https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/Mental-Health-Line.aspx">https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/Mental-Health-Line.aspx</a>
	<b>Child Protection Helpline</b>	13 21 11	<a href="https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg">https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg</a>



**If you are looking for an app...**

Name	About	Website
<p><b>Clear Fear</b></p> 	<p>The fear of threat, or anxiety, is like a strong gust of wind. It drags you in and makes you want to fight it or run away.</p> <p>Instead, face your fear with the free Clear Fear app and learn to reduce the physical responses to threat as well as changing thoughts and behaviours and releasing emotions.</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>App Store Google Play</p>
<p><b>ReachOut Worry Time</b></p> 	<p>ReachOut WorryTime interrupts repetitive thinking by setting aside your worries until later, so you don't get caught up in them and can get on with your day. This means you can deal with worries once a day, rather than carrying them around with you 24/7</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>App Store</p>
<p><b>ReachOut Breathe</b></p> 	<p>ReachOut Breathe helps you reduce the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety by slowing down your breathing and your heart rate with your iPhone</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>App Store</p>
<p><b>Smiling Mind</b></p> 	<p>Smiling Mind is a meditation app for young people. It has been developed by a team of psychologists and uses mindfulness to boost calmness, contentment and clarity. Mindfulness meditation has been shown to help manage stress, resilience, anxiety, depression and improve general health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>App Store Google Play</p>
<p><b>WellMind</b></p> 	<p>WellMind is designed to help you with stress, anxiety and depression. The app includes advice, tips and tools to improve your mental health and boost your wellbeing.</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>App Store Google Play</p>

**If you are looking for online support...**

Name	About	Website
<b>The BRAVE Program</b> 	BRAVE-ONLINE is an evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) available online to help children (8-12) and teenagers (13-17) cope with anxiety	<a href="https://www.brave-online.com/">https://www.brave-online.com/</a>
<b>ConnectEDSpace</b> 	A website provided by Relationships Australia Victoria with tip sheets, news and useful links to help young people manage problems and issues such as bullying, relationships, stress and mental health, and conflict with parents	<a href="https://www.connectedspace.com.au/">https://www.connectedspace.com.au/</a>
<b>Smiling Mind</b> 	Online and app-based program to improve wellbeing of young people through mindfulness meditation.	<a href="https://www.smilingmind.com.au/">https://www.smilingmind.com.au/</a>
<b>MyCompass</b> <b>myCompass</b>	Are you feeling the pressures of study, finding a job or starting a career? It has an interactive self-help service that aims to promote resilience and wellbeing for people experiencing mild to moderate stress, anxiety and/or depression	<a href="https://www.mycompass.org.au/YoungAdults">https://www.mycompass.org.au/YoungAdults</a>

**If you are seeking additional information...**

Name	About	Website
<b>ReachOut</b> 	Our mission is to deliver innovative e-mental health services that enable young people to take control of their mental health and wellbeing.	<a href="https://au.reachout.com/">https://au.reachout.com/</a>
<b>Black Dog Institute</b> 	Primary areas of mental health research and treatment include: depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, workplace mental health, adolescents and young people, suicide prevention, e-mental health, and positive psychology and wellbeing.	<a href="https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/">https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/</a>