

# HELPFUL TIPS FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

FROM YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELLING AND WELLBEING TEAM

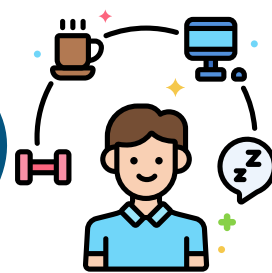
## Parents talk with your teen about how they feel.

It is important to encourage your teen to discuss their feelings about returning to school. Normalise any feelings of anxiety or worry but remind them that you and the school will be available to support them. Although difficult, try not to share with them any anxiety you may have. They may be anxious about coping with school work after such a long time out of the classroom. Reassure them that teachers understand the difficulties and they can expect plenty of revision and support, particularly in the first few weeks.



## Routine

Given the length of the lockdown and the many changes to their school day, children of all ages are likely to find this a stressful period. There will inevitably be a period of adjustment. Establish predictable routines, sleep and wake times as well as meal times.



## Sleep and Rest

Teens may have been getting used to some unusual hours during the remote learning period and that may have extended into the school holidays. Make sure your teen is getting a good night's sleep for their return to school. It might mean introducing some earlier bedtimes than they have had recently and limiting screen time. A good night's rest will help them cope with the return to school and the new routines they will be adapting to.



## End Of The Day Emotions

A school day can require a lot of self-regulation, which can lead to tired and emotional outbursts later on in the day. Given the length of remote learning and new school safety procedures in place, these emotions may be hard to cope with when they return home. It is a good idea to keep this in mind, and allow for some 'letting off steam' allowing teens to unwind – encourage an outdoor walk or other physical activity. It's tempting to ask lots of questions about how school has been, allow a little time first to relax and recharge before launching into question time.



## Keep Connected & Look After Each Other

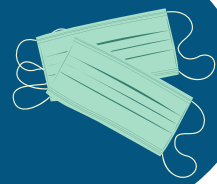
Challenging times can be easier to get through together, so encourage your teen to stay connected to you and their friends. Be positive and be there for each other. Remember that everyone is going through the same experience and others may be feeling the same way so it can help to talk about it together and support each other. Life has been different and it may take some time to adjust. If your teen is anxious in the mornings, you may like to suggest making a meeting place with a friend so they can enter school together. Seek further support if needed from your Year Level Leader or School Counselling & Wellbeing Team.



## Safety

Keep up to date about the rules around mask wearing at school and while travelling to and from school. If you need more information, please check the school's website or contact a teacher or year leader. Remind your teen about COVID safe practices around physical distancing and hand washing, they are for the safety of everyone in the school community.

There may be changes to school-based activities like assemblies, sport and excursions to encourage physical distancing and help keep people safe.



## More Handy Tips

If overwhelmed encourage your teen to:

- Take some deep breaths, walk away to another area to talk about how they're feeling with a trusted adult or friend.
- Use an app like Smiling Mind to practise mindful meditations to help relax.
- Check out Reachout.com there's lots of information and tips for managing emotions.
- Communicate with their support network, family, friends, teachers, Year Level Leader, Coach, GP or School Counsellor.
- Contact a helpline by phone or online, Kidshelpline.com.au 1800 55 1800 or Headspace 1800 650 890.

