

## **Crusoe College: COVID-19 Wellbeing Support for Families and Students**

Many children are aware of the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and may pick up on the concerns and anxiety of others. This could be through listening and watching what is happening at school, at home or online. It is important you speak with your children about their concerns.

With social-distancing measures, isolation and anxiety around this very challenging and concerning time, student wellbeing will need to be monitored. It is therefore important to highlight to families the need to reduce their daughter's/son's anxiety and promote her/his health and wellbeing.

Our Wellbeing Team will continue to provide counselling to students in the event of a closure. This will be done via phone or video conferencing apps such as Google Meet / Google Hang Out. Students can also email [wellbeing@crusoecollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:wellbeing@crusoecollege.vic.edu.au) or contact our Wellbeing Officer Mim Grundy via SMS on 0477 826 695 from 8:30 – 4:30 Monday to Friday to seek support or make an online appointment with one of our Wellbeing Team members.

Our Wellbeing Team will also provide further information about online/telephone counselling that is available from agencies including KidsHelpline, Eheadspace, and Beyond Blue as it becomes available. Our Student Wellbeing page is accessible to students who are seeking general guidance on aspects of wellbeing and mental health. In addition, our Wellbeing Team will post information on student self-care and ways to cope with social isolation on our webpage and social media platforms.

Attached to the end of this document is a list of external services and supports for students and families. These include online counselling and information on how to have conversations with young people about COVID-19.

### **Providing support at school**

Children of essential service workers and all other vulnerable children will be provided with an opportunity to learn on-site at Crusoe College through our SWITCH facility located in Building A, should they require this support. This will be supervised by staff at school. Students who attend will be required to be at school from 9:00 – 3:10 each day and will be expected to wear full school uniform on these days.

### **Providing support at home**

What you can do:

- Try and model calmness when talking with your children and family.
- Talk with your children about how they are feeling. Listen and reassure them.
- Talk with your children about COVID-19. Answer their questions as honestly as possible. This may help to address their fears and reduce anxiety.
- Limit media exposure—frequent exposure to media may increase fear and anxiety.
- Focus on what you are doing as a family to stay safe. Give your children clear information about how to reduce their risk of infection in words they can understand, as this will give them a sense of control.
- Spend time together and keep to routines as much as possible or help create new ones. Make time for playing and relaxing. Have fun together.
- Look out for signs of distress—children may respond to stress in different ways. This may include changes to their sleeping patterns, change to appetite, loss of independence, e.g. increased clinginess, wanting to be close to adults or an increased in anger, irritability, anxiety and/or fear.
- Try and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## Supporting learning and wellbeing in the home

Being in a confined space for a long period of time may lead to added stress and conflict in the home.

What you can do:

### Reassure

- Talk to your family about what is happening. Understanding the situation may reduce their anxiety.
- Help your children think about how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure them. Discuss different ways children and adults react to different stressful situations.
- Remind them that isolation will not last for long but necessary for their ongoing safety.

### Engage

- Exercise regularly as it is a proven way of reducing stress and depression. Be creative. This could include exercise videos, dancing, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment.
- Plan time for structured family activities, schoolwork and play. Keep a normal routine where possible.

### Connect

- Encourage your children to keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or where appropriate, social media.
- Communicate with your children's school often as they will regularly update and provide you with important and current information.
- Have fun together as a family.
- Remember, any decisions or actions you may take is what you have consider best for you and your family. Do what you can, try and be patient with yourself, your family and others, and seek support as needed.

## Additional Resources to support families

### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCIES

In an emergency call 000 or 112 from a mobile telephone. Should you require medical care after hours please contact Bendigo Health on 5454 6000, GP Helpline 1800 022 222, or Nurse on Call 1300 606 024.

Crisis Care - If you, or a loved one, requires urgent mental health assistance, please call the Bendigo Regional Triage Service on **1300 363 788**. This service operates 24 hours, 7 days a week and acts as the single point of entry into clinical mental health services.

### 24/7 Mental Health Services

Service	Online	Phone
<b>Beyond Blue:</b> Anyone feeling anxious or depressed	<a href="http://beyondblue.org.au">beyondblue.org.au</a>	1300 22 4636
<b>Kids Helpline:</b> Counselling for young people aged 5 – 25	<a href="http://kidshelpline.com.au">kidshelpline.com.au</a>	1800 55 1800
<b>Mensline Australia:</b> Men with emotional or relationship concerns	<a href="http://mensline.org.au">mensline.org.au</a>	1300 78 99 78
<b>Open Arms:</b> Veterans and families counselling	<a href="http://openarms.gov.au">openarms.gov.au</a>	1800 011 046
<b>Lifeline:</b> Anyone having a personal crisis	<a href="http://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a>	13 11 14
<b>Suicide Call Back Service:</b> Anyone thinking about suicide	<a href="http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au">www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au</a>	1300 659 467
<b>Suicide Line Victoria:</b> Counselling for those struggling with their mental health, those concerned about others in their life or may otherwise be affected by suicide.	<a href="http://www.suicideline.org.au">www.suicideline.org.au</a>	1300 651 251

### Online and Phone Services

Service	Online	Phone
<b>Crusoe College Wellbeing Team</b>	<a href="mailto:wellbeing@crusoecollege.vic.edu.au">wellbeing@crusoecollege.vic.edu.au</a>	Text: 0477 826 695
<b>eHeadspace:</b> Provides online (chat services) and telephone support and counselling to young people aged 12 – 25.	<a href="https://eheadspace.org.au">https://eheadspace.org.au</a>	1800 650 890
<b>Qlife:</b> Counselling and referral service for LGBTI people.	<a href="http://www qlife.org.au">http://www qlife.org.au</a>	1800 184 527 3pm – 12am
<b>RESPECT:</b> Family Violence Support 24/7	<a href="https://www.1800respect.org.au">https://www.1800respect.org.au</a>	1800RESPECT
<b>YSAS:</b> Support for young people with AOD issues or concerns	<a href="https://www.ysas.org.au">https://www.ysas.org.au</a>	5444 2969 9am – 5pm Monday - Friday

## **Local Services**

### **Headspace Bendigo**

Headspace Bendigo is a place you can go to for any issue (large or small) that maybe worrying you. They provide support, information and assistance for young people aged 12 to 25 years who are going through a tough time.

Contact details: 78-80 Pall Mall Bendigo (directly opposite Law Courts). Phone 03 5406 1400

Opening hours Monday to Friday – 9am to 5pm

Website: <http://www.headspace.org.au/headspace-centres/headspace-bendigo>

### **Anglicare Youth Services**

Information and support to young people and families for personal issues, family conflict, at risk of homelessness, education and work issues.

Contact: 10 Mundy St, Bendigo. Phone: 03 5434 3922

Website: <https://www.anglicare.org.au/what-we-offer/family-parenting-youth-support/youth-support/>

### **Bendigo Community Health Services**

Health, medical (GP + nursing), counselling, sexual health, financial, alcohol and drug counselling services for young people and families.

Website: [www.bchs.com.au](http://www.bchs.com.au) Phone: 5430 0500

Bendigo Community Health: 19 Helm St Kangaroo Flat. Ph.: 5406 1200

Bendigo Primary Care Centre: 123 Arnold Street, Bendigo Victoria 3550: (03) 5441 8622 or book

online: <https://www.hotdoc.com.au/medical-centres/bendigo-VIC-3550/bendigo-primary-care-centre/doctors>

### **Tristar Medical Group – All Clinics are predominantly 100% Bulk Billing**

Kangaroo Flat clinic: 68-72 High Street, Kangaroo Flat, 3555 Phone: 0354477088

Epsom clinic: 71-73 Midland Highway Epsom, 3551 Phone: 5448 5952.

Eaglehawk clinic: 13-21 Peg Leg Road, Eaglehawk, 3556 Phone: 5446 7755

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT and CARE PACKAGES**

The Victorian government can assist eligible families with little or nothing in the pantries with emergency relief packages. Families can register their need for 2 weeks' worth of food, by calling Victoria's coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 from Monday, March 23.

For eligible families the packages will contain items such as long-life milk, pasta, cereal, canned vegetables and sugar. Personal care packages containing soap, toothpaste and deodorant are also available for eligible households. The program is being run by the Red Cross in partnership with Foodbank Victoria under the direction of the State Relief Coordinator.

Bendigo Family and Financial Services can also be contacted on 5441 5277 or email their Financial Counsellors, Tracie ([tdriscoll@bffs.org.au](mailto:tdriscoll@bffs.org.au)) and Jenny ([jelvey@bffs.org.au](mailto:jelvey@bffs.org.au)).

### **Other options for food and toiletries in the Bendigo area:**

- Uniting Care Emergency Relief: Assisting families in need of food and toiletries. Phone: 035443 4972
- Salvation Army: Assisting families in need of food. Phone 5440 8410. Leave a message and they will call you back.

## **COVID-19 RESOURCES**

The following websites have accurate information about the Corona Virus (COVID-19):

### **World Health Organisation**

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

### **The Department of Health and Human Services**

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>  
[www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus).

### **Australian Psychological Society**

<https://www.psychology.org.au/COVID-19-Australians>

## **FACT SHEETS AND SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

### **Australian Psychological Society information**

[Tips for coping with Corona Anxiety](#)

[Maintaining your mental health during social isolation](#)

### **World Health Organization (WHO)**

[Helping children cope with stress during the 2019-nCoV outbreak](#)

### **Mental health and wellbeing support and advice for students and parents:**

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>

### **Headspace fact sheet**

[How to cope with stress related to COVID-19](#)

### **Kids Helpline support:**

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/coronavirus#wellbeing>

### **Additional Support Resources**

Reach Out – <https://schools.au.reachout.com/articles.recommended-online-counselling-treatment-services>

Association for children with disabilities – <https://acd.org.au/covid-19-latest-information>