



WODONGA
MIDDLE YEARS COLLEGE

Middle Years

my news



Newsletter No 26

Term 3

September 7, 2020

Principal's Report

Celebrating Success

We continue to encourage all students to keep connected with their peers, teachers and their CARE teachers, as well as accessing the advice and strategies offered by our Student Wellbeing team as required.

Celebrating our first Semester of learning through the weekly assemblies was the highlight of last week. Students were recognised for both Academic Excellence and Diligence. It is great to see that so many students are still motivated to achieve great results even in the interesting year we have had. Our Celebration Assemblies are part of the routine of our school and a significant contributor to our culture of excellence. We believe that it is essential for our students and staff to pause each term to reflect on each other's success. It was disappointing that we were unable to do this face to face and to have parents involved. We look forward to (hopefully) making this happen at the end of the year!

Looking after Ourselves and our Families

The COVID-19 world in which we have been plunged has had a profound impact on each and every one of us, and undermined the major activities and events that we no longer are able to participate in as a school community. We held a community evening last week run by headspace. This evening covered topics such as looking after your child's health and wellbeing, grief counselling and understanding the support agencies that are available in Wodonga. If you need further information on any of these topics please visit the headspace website or call the College.

Curriculum Day – Friday 11th September

Just reminding everyone that the Department of Education has provided all schools a further curriculum day for Term 3 – Wodonga Middle Years College has scheduled for this Friday 11th September.

Week 10 Term 3 and Week 1 Term 4

We have received advice from the Department of Education that students will remain in remote learning in Week 10, Term 3 and Week 1, Term 4.

Maree Cribbes
Campus Principal

Wellbeing

Noticing Change in your Teen

We know too well that the effects of COVID-19, social isolation/restrictions and online learning can leave us feeling overwhelmed, worried, fearful and anxious (not to mention a host of other symptoms listed below). Under 'normal' conditions (ie. before the impacts of COVID-19), young people tend to try to manage their strong feelings and emotions by using a variety of distractions such as cramming as much into their lives as possible, engaging in a variety of daily activities, juggling sports, having a social life, social media, work, running to a schedule, family disruptions, as well as just having everyday issues, all of which add to emotional stress. With most of these 'distractions' unavailable in our current world, our concern is that young people can adopt unhealthy ways of coping with stress, worry and fear. While adults are more likely to recognise signs of stress within themselves, sometimes young people may miss or overlook these important signs which can lead to feelings of sadness, anger, overwhelmed, not coping, anger and frustration. They could even find it hard to tell someone how they are feeling, particularly if they are embarrassed or worried about causing stress or burden to their parent/carer who may also be under stress. As a parent/carer this is concerning in itself, however one of the best strategies as a parent/carer if you are concerned about your kids, is to look out for one or more of the following symptoms:

- Losing interest in things they once enjoyed
- Not eating or sleeping well
- Wanting to be alone / avoiding friends and family
- Daydreaming
- Procrastinating
- Disengaging from school community and school work
- Feeling guilty or not worthy
- Showing extreme emotions – anger / sadness (overreacting)
- Worrying constantly about appearance
- Feelings of being afraid
- Constant headaches / stomach aches
- Forgetfulness
- Withdrawing from peers
- Inability to concentrate well or make decisions
- Turning to drugs / alcohol
- Eating too much or too little
- Over exercising (obsessive)
- Taking risks
- Struggling to get up in the morning
- Feeling overwhelmed

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Ph: 02 6057 9000

Absence Hotline
02 6057 9051

HUON CAMPUS
22-24 Mitchell Street, Wodonga, Victoria 3690
Ph: 02 6057 9000, Fax: 026024 3633

Email: wodonga.middle.years.co@education.vic.gov.au

www.wmyc.vic.edu.au



All of the above are signs that something is not going so well and they may need support around better way to manage stress, fear and worry. Perhaps a listening ear as well as having the support that allows them to take time out to learn new coping strategies and/or undertake stress reducing activities. If left unattended and the stress continues over a long period of time, studies have shown that brain chemistry can be affected possibly leading to depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide and complete withdrawal and loneliness. Also considering the ongoing changes to our usual daily routines under social restrictions and social distancing measures, we need to be in tune with our teens, offering support and alternative ways of coping with stress and worry.

There are many different ways to help manage and cope with stress and to allow the mind and body to relax. This could be an activity like yoga, meditation, dancing, exercise, reading or listening to music. Or a quicker simpler method of a few minutes of deep breathing and breath awareness which is a fantastic way to relax the nervous system and calm the body and can be done almost anywhere!

If you suspect your teenager is experiencing stress, worry or fear which is impacting on their daily functioning and routine, it is important to speak with them about it, gently inquire and speak with them curiously about what you have noticed that is different or concerning. Try and work with your teen to identify the issue(s) and work together with the college if needed to lessen the burden of the stressor(s).

If you require support, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's care teacher, house leader or Assistant Principal and request support. You can access wellbeing and community service information via our 'wellbeing course' on D2L or by clicking on the below link.

<https://inspire.wmyc.vic.edu.au/d2l/le/lessons/10755/units/131248>

*It is also important to remember to focus and give energy to what we *can* control, not what we can't.

MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY

BlessingManifesting

For You

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

For Kids

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

For Quarantine/Isolation

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques

There's more to say after R U OK?

Thursday 10 September is R U OK? Day – and a reminder that on every day of the year we should support people who may be struggling.

But there's more to say after R U OK?

If someone says they're not OK make time to listen, encourage action and check in. To help people keep the conversation going when someone says they're not OK we're encouraging everyone to learn what to say after R U OK?



To spread this message, we'll be sharing information and resources that guide you through what to say after R U OK? If you need immediate crisis or emotional support you can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Kids Help Line on 1800 555 1800. R U OK? is a national charity dedicated to Inspiring all of us to have regular, meaningful conversations

To support anyone struggling with life's ups and downs, you can learn what to say after R U OK? at

www.ruok.org.au

or get your child to look at the Wellbeing Page on D2L <https://inspire.wmyc.vic.edu.au/d2l/le/lessons/10755/units/130626>

Wellbeing Team

Positive Behaviour Awards

Week 7 Positive Behaviours!

Congratulations to our Week 7 recipients:

Wanumarru: Tyler Davies, Harley Jamnikar, Nicholas McGrath

Nangwiya: Noah Ellis, Ben Birongo, Destiny Dodd

Gawungwa: Benoit Mubali, Maggie Andriske, Jack Clay

Wagarra: Jayden Petrovski, Sebastian Kennedy, Teagan Tschirpig

Team Leaders

EAL

Emergency services link

Below is a link to information for our EAL families on how to use the 000 emergency telephone service.

<https://www.esta.vic.gov.au/language-options>

It is translated into various languages to inform the community what to expect when calling 000 in an emergency.

It contains a translated animation video and infographics. Not all languages are included, but hopefully, more will be added in time (unfortunately, it does not cover Swahili or Nepalese yet).

Currently it includes translations for: Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Italian, Greek, Dari, Turkish, Korean, Khmer, Burmese, Macedonian, Spanish, Persian, and Cantonese.

Annett Huon, Daphne Soanes
EAL Teachers

Dates to Remember

Dates for 2020	Activity
September 11	▶ Screen Free Day - No lessons
September 18	▶ Last day of Term 3
October 5	▶ First Day Term 4