



Common Wellbeing Concerns

Feeling Anxious: Parenting Tip:

There are a lot of options to reduce anxiety. There are medicines, herbs, relaxation strategies and therapies. But an important strategy to implement is regular exercise. Studies have shown that exercise and anxiety have a number of links: Those that do not exercise are more likely to develop anxiety disorders and exercise itself has been favourably compared to anti-anxiety medications.

- It is also important that as parents you support your teenagers to reframe their thoughts and thinking patterns from awfulising (worry) to productive action plans. Encourage collective problem solving rather than isolating and internalising their concerns.

Sense of Belonging: Parenting Tip:

- A sense of belonging is the most powerful protective factor for teenagers. It is a remedy for loneliness, hopelessness and loss of meaning in all our lives. The research suggests that three forms of belonging dominate: belonging to and feeling loved by your family; belonging to a diversity of friendship groups; and belonging to and fitting in at school.
- One way to support the sense of belonging in your family is to have Family Rituals: these are important in bringing the family together. They can be as small as having regular evening meals together (aim for at least 3-5 times a week) or a family outing on a Sunday afternoon. Make it a time of fun, relaxation and a chance to catch up with what is going on in each other's lives.

Friendships: Parenting Tip:

- Positive friendships are an important part of the journey to adulthood. They help teenagers learn important social and emotional skills, such as being sensitive to other people's thoughts, feelings and wellbeing.
- Good parent-child relationships tend to lead to positive relationships with peers. So being warm and supportive, staying connected and actively listening to your child can help with the development of friendship skills.
- Also getting to know your teen's friends shows them that you understand how important these friendships are. You can do this by encouraging your teen to have friends over or offering transportation to social outings.
- It is important to be aware that not all friendships are positive and your child may need help to avoid or deal with toxic friendships and it is important to let your child know that many teenage friendships don't last.



Ways to support:

- Eat a nutritious breakfast (smoothies, fruit, oats, protein like eggs, avoid sugary cereals, coffee or energy drinks).
- Bring a healthy lunch minimal packaged/processed/sugary foods including fresh vegetable sticks and fruit.
- Encourage drinking plenty of water (2-3L a day).
- Organise equipment the day before (books, assessment tasks, lunch, and water). Talk to your child about what they need for the day.
- Getting at least 8 hours sleep, off screens 1 hr prior to sleep and in bed before 10pm. Phones, iPads shouldn't be easily accessed at sleep times.
- Take an interest in your teen's course work (establishing a homework/study routine and schedule).

Student Welfare Team:

- Anna Willis - MS Guidance Officer
- Hilary Wilson – School Based Youth Health Nurse
- Loretta O'Brien – Psychologist – Mental Health Plan required

Student Support:

- Appointments to access the welfare team are based on a welfare referral from teachers, parents or students. This information is then brought to a weekly welfare meeting to determine the student's case manager and level of support required.
- We support teenagers in conflict resolution through mediation, short and long term counselling, and wellness programs, mental health care plans to access the school psychologist and recommend referrals to external agencies.
- Our service is professional, confidential and free.
- 2 external agencies worth mentioning are Family and Child Connect they work on connecting families to the right services at the right time (call 133264) and Parent line offer free confidential counselling on any parenting issues (call 1300 301300).