



**Learning Excellence  
Integrity**

# KELLYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**“We are a vibrant and innovative learning community that is committed to delivering excellence within a rich and diverse learning environment. Every student has the opportunity to achieve their personal best through engaged, active learning in a safe, respectful and supportive school. Students will grow into global digital citizens.”**

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## **A note to parents, from the Kellyville High School Counselling Service.**

It can feel stressful and overwhelming during an event like the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and we can all be affected differently. You or your children might feel overwhelmed by the information, conversations and the increased levels of stress in your community.

Below is a link to a 20 min podcast by Lyn Worsley from The Resilience Centre called "Fires, Floods, Pandemic! Toilet Paper?"

<https://www.theresiliencecentre.com.au/fires-floods-pandemic-toilet-paper/>

It can be hard to know what information to trust especially in a situation where things are changing so quickly. It can be helpful to keep up-to-date but it is also okay to switch off from the 24-hour media cycle if this is getting too much. Following is some advice accumulated from the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and Headspace that may assist you to support your family's mental health as this situation continues to unfold.

Children will inevitably pick up on the concerns and anxiety of others, whether this be through listening and observing what is happening at home or at school. Providing opportunities to answer their questions in an honest and age-appropriate way can help reduce any anxiety they may be experiencing. You can do this by:

- speaking to them about coronavirus in a calm manner.
- asking them what they already know about the virus so you can clarify any misunderstandings they may have.
- letting them know that it is normal to experience some anxiety when new and stressful situations arise.
- giving them a sense of control by explaining what they can do to stay safe (e.g. wash their hands regularly, stay away from people who are coughing or sneezing).
- avoid overwhelming them with unnecessary information (e.g. death rates) as this can increase their anxiety.
- reassure them that coronavirus is less common and severe in children compared to adults.
- allowing regular contact (e.g. by phone) with people they may worry about, such as grandparents, to reassure them that they are okay.

Furthermore, go back to basics. Children learn by observing. Keep doing the stuff you love to do (where possible) and the things that are important to you, model that there is a life outside of the hysteria, and ensure you are having conversations about other things as well. Try not to let the children worry about financial or other stresses that may be occurring in your family as a result of the virus. Provide opportunities for your kids to switch off, watch a movie together or play a board game. Staying active will help them (and you!) to sleep better, manage stress and boost mood and will provide some much

needed fresh air and vitamin D - even going for a walk as a family or down to the local park are safe options. Stay hydrated and continue to enjoy a healthy diet. Getting enough sleep may mean reducing access to TV news and social media hysteria before bedtime.

Common reactions to the crisis might be fear and anxiety, anger, frustration and confusion, sadness or denial. If you ever feel unable to cope because of overwhelming or intense emotions, or if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, than ask for help immediately.

The school counselling service at Kellyville High School has created a Google Classroom for students to sign up to, where they can access confidential, individual virtual support (through video appointments), or a number of resources that may assist students and their families to cope throughout this crisis. Many students have already joined the Kellyville High School Counselling Information Google Classroom, but for those who have not, it is available to students through the following codes:

**Stage 4 (Year 7 and 8):** rvyo7dj

**Stage 5 (Year 9 and 10):** a2mrxmz

**Stage 6 (Year 11 and 12):** jnylfil

**\*\*Please note this service is only available during school hours (8:40am to 3:00pm) and in school term.\*\***

There are a number of crisis services that are available outside of these hours including:

- Lifeline (13 11 14)
- Kids HelpLine (1800 55 1800)
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
- Beyondblue Support Service: 1300 224 636
- NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511
- eHeadspace (<https://www.eheadspace.org.au/>)

If it is an emergency please call 000.