

A note to parents, from the Lynwood Park Public 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.

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.

Learning from home

The school may continue to be closed for an extended period of time, in which case the school will continue to provide learning activities for your child to do at home and will communicate with you about their learning. When the school makes contact, please understand that the teachers are not checking up on how much or how little schoolwork the children have done. The purpose of making regular contact is to offer support and encouragement to both your child and you, the parent.

It can be difficult for parents to understand what to monitor and supervise when children are at home during school times. The information below will help you understand how to help your child learn at home:

- Parent's responsibility – there are things you will need to do to help your child learn from home such as setting routines, finding a quiet space and asking how their learning is progressing. It is not the parent's responsibility to assign learning activities, the teacher will produce tasks for children similar to how it would be done in a classroom environment.
- Child's responsibility – your child will also need to follow the routines set for them and complete the tasks the teacher assigns while doing their best work.
- How to plan their day – breaking up school tasks with short breaks will help the child focus better throughout the day. These breaks could include sports, playing in the backyard, games and activities they can do in the house.
- Communication – it will be important that you talk to your child regularly about their learning. Your child's teacher and/or the school will communicate with you and tell you how to get in touch.
- Using technology and screen time – it will be important that you supervise your child to use technology safely and put limits on the time they spend online.

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, then ask for help immediately. Please refer to the attached helplines and support services handout, which outlines services available to both parents and children.

If you need further information please call the school principal Mrs Leigh Bade, on 9622 2659.

Regards

Mrs Tracey Tsanadis and Ms Judy Song

Lynwood Park Public School Counselling Service

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E-HEALTH AND PHONE SUPPORT SERVICES

Young People

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

The Kids Helpline is a 24/7 confidential support and counselling service specifically for young people aged 5 to 25 years. Kids can contact the service about a wide range of issues, from everyday issues such as family, friends or school, to more serious issues such as abuse, mental illness, drug and alcohol use, homelessness and suicide. Counselling can be provided online, via email or over the telephone.



Kids Helpline

For ages 5 - 25

Free 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

1800 55 1800

Available 24/7

Chat with us online

Available 8am - 12am AEST

Visit [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

*International: <https://www.childhelplineinternational.org/child-helplines/child-helpline-network/>

Youth Beyond Blue 1300 224 636



THE BRAVE PROGRAM
ANXIOUS? IT CAN GET BETTER.


If you are a young person who would like help managing your anxiety, The BRAVE Program is a free interactive, online program you should check out. »


THE CHECK-IN APP
HELP SOMEONE YOU KNOW

So you've got a friend who you're worried about. Knowing how to talk to them about it can be the hard part. The Check-in app helps you plan your conversation so you know how you're going to go about it. »

OUR FORUMS
CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Our forums are a place where you can share your experience of dealing with tough times, help others work out the hard stuff and learn ways to get better. »

Need to talk to someone?  **1300 22 4636**
(24 hours)

 **chat online**
(3pm - 12am)

e-headspace (online)

eheadspace offers online and telephone mental health support to young people aged 12-25 years and their families or friends. Young people may contact eheadspace if they need advice, are worried about

their mental health or are feeling isolated or alone. eheadspace is not a crisis service. eheadspace email, web chat and phone support provides flexible ways for young people who don't have a headspace centre nearby or don't feel ready to visit a centre, to get the help they need.





<https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/>

All Ages

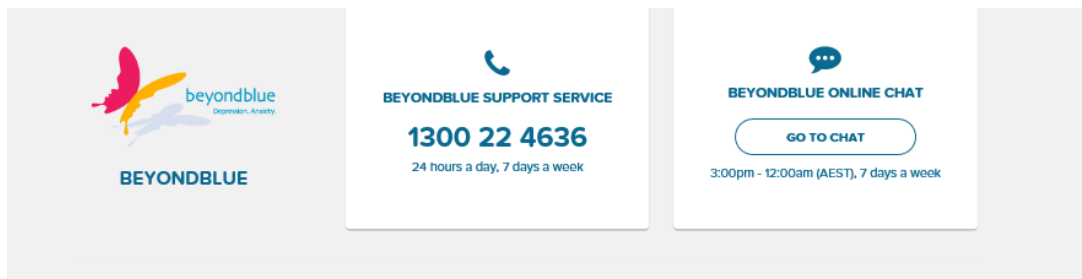
Lifeline 13 11 14

Anyone across Australia experiencing a personal crisis or thinking about suicide can contact Lifeline's confidential crisis support service. Trained volunteers are available 24/7 to listen and provide support and referrals.

 <small>Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.</small>	Lifeline <small>For all ages</small>	 13 11 14 <small>Available 24/7</small>
Provides all Australians access to crisis support and suicide prevention services.		Chat with us online <small>Available 7pm – 12am AEST</small>
		Visit lifeline.org.au

Beyond Blue Support Service 1300 224 636

The Beyond Blue Support Service offers 24/7 confidential telephone support, counselling and referrals from trained mental health professionals. All calls and chats are one-on-one and are completely confidential.



1800 RESPECT 1800 737 732

This service provides 24/7 sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling by qualified, experienced counsellors. This service is for anyone who has experienced, or at risk of physical or sexual violence, as well as those concerned about someone else.



Gambling Help 1800 858 858

Gambling Help is a telephone and online support service for people affected by problem gambling. The service is available 24/7 and provided by experienced professional counsellors.



MensLine 1300 789 978

MensLine Australia is a 24/7 telephone and online support, information and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns. The service is staffed by professional counsellors, experienced in men's issues.



NSW Mental Health Line 1800 011 511

The NSW Mental Health Line is a 24/7 telephone assessment and referral service, staffed by mental health clinicians. This service can provide advice about clinical symptoms, the urgency of the need for care and information about local service providers.



Carer Line 1800 242 636

This telephone support, information, counselling and referral service is available from 9am to 5pm weekdays. This service is staffed by experienced carer support officers and is available to carers, service providers and community members.



Ages 15+ Years

Suicide Callback Service 1300 659 467

The Suicide Callback Service provides free phone, video and online counselling for anyone affected by suicide. Staffed by professional counsellors with specialist skills in working with suicide-related issues, the service can provide ongoing counselling or referrals to appropriate services.

SUICIDE
CALL BACK
SERVICE

**Suicide Call
Back Service**

For ages 15+

Provides immediate telephone
counselling and support in a crisis.

☎ **1300 659 467**

Available 24/7

Chat with us online

Available 24/7

Visit

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Parents and Carers (Adults)

ParentLine NSW 1300 1300 52

Parent Line NSW is a confidential telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents and carers of children aged 0 to 18. Trained professional counsellors are available from 9am to 9pm weekdays and from 4pm to 9pm weekends.



Parent Line - 1300 1300 52

Would you like to talk to someone about parenting?

Parent Line is a telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents of children aged 0 to 18 years who live in NSW.



Tresillian Parent's Help Line 1300 272 736

Call the Parent's Help Line for any questions or advice on breastfeeding and settling your baby, as well as dealing with post-natal depression and nutrition.

<https://www.tresillian.org.au>



**Karitane Careline 1300 CARING
(1300 227 464) OR (02) 9794 2350**

Do you have a parenting question about your 0 - 5 year old child?

When you call Karitane Careline a friendly and experienced Child and Family Health Nurse will support you with guidance and encouragement on your parenting journey.

<https://www.karitane.com.au>

Family Referral Service 1800 066 757

Family Referral Services (FRS) are intended to assist children, young people, and families who do not meet the statutory threshold for child protection intervention, but would benefit from accessing specific services to address current problems, prevent escalation, and foster a protective and nurturing environment. FRS are intended to link vulnerable children, young people in need of assistance, and their families, with the most appropriate available support services in their local areas.



MindSpot Clinic 1800 61 44 34

MindSpot is a free service for Australian adults who are experiencing difficulties with anxiety, stress, depression and low mood. We provide [assessment](#) and [treatment courses](#), or we can help you find local services that can help. The MindSpot team comprises experienced and [AHPRA](#)-registered mental health professionals including psychologists, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists who are passionate about providing a free and effective service to people all over Australia. We have a dedicated IT team to ensure that this happens as securely and efficiently as possible. MindSpot is based at Macquarie University, Sydney. We are funded by the Australian Government and contracted by the Department of Health as a regulated clinical service.

<https://mindspot.org.au/about-mindspot>



Blue Knot Foundation 1300 657 380

Telephone counselling for *adult survivors* of childhood trauma, their friends, family and the health care professionals who support them. Call 1300 657 380 between 9am-5pm for counselling services or email at helpline@blueknot.org.au.



Crisis Numbers

Child Protection Helpline

[13 2111](#) (NSW)

If you are calling from an international number call: [+61 2 9765 5117](#).

The Helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Child Protection Helpline is a twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, statewide call centre staffed by professionally qualified caseworkers to receive and screen all reports about suspected abuse or neglect of a child or young person or those at risk of harm from abuse or neglect.

Link2Home

[1800 152 152](#)

If home is not safe and you have no place to stay, ring Link2home on 1800 152 152. This service is available 24/7 every day of the year, and can help you with up to 2 nights' accommodation, as well as refer you to other services you may need around NSW.

Domestic Violence Line

Free call [1800 656 463](#)

Translating and Interpreting Services: [13 14 50](#)

TTY [1800 67 14 42](#)

The Domestic Violence Line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Domestic Violence Line is a NSW statewide telephone crisis counselling and referral service for women and persons who identify as female.

NSW Elder Abuse Helpline

[1800 628 221](#)

Disaster Welfare Services

[1800 018 444](#)

Emergency services

[000](#) (Triple zero)

Kids Helpline

[1800 551 800](tel:1800551800)

Lifeline

[13 1114](tel:131114)

Victims Access Line (VAL)

The Victims Access Line or VAL is the single entry point for victims of crime in NSW to access services.

Victims Access Line: 1800 633 063

Aboriginal Contact Line: 1800 019 123

Business hours: 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)

Some activities and ideas for home for parents of primary and early learners

Make or do a jigsaw puzzle



Try some origami

Create an obstacle course

Bake or cook something

Learn a magic trick

Paint or draw a picture



Make a joke book

Take photos of 10 living things



Build a blanket fort

Plan and hold a picnic

Make your own kite

Try a new board game



Play indoor mini-golf



Play Limbo

Write a letter to your future self

Potato sack race with pillow cases

Hold a tea-party



Make a time capsule

Hold a Karaoke concert



Play hide and seek

Open a pretend store

Blindfolded taste test

Look at photo albums

Have a paper plane contest



Play Pictionary

Play dress up



Play Restaurant

Try Yoga

Make a shoebox diorama

Learn a new card game



Put on a play

Make or play an instrument



Create a treasure hunt

Write or recite poem

Have a talent show

Make handmade presents

Choreograph a dance



Read a new book from the library

Play water bottle bowling

Play life-size Noughts and Crosses

Build the tallest tower

