

Kia ora to all our Whangaparaoa College community

I am very aware that many of you are facing considerable personal pressure while you attempt to juggle work-at-home, school-at-home and much more. If this is you, please be sure to look after yourself; and to connect with friends and others who can help.

Over the last few days we have transitioned to online teaching and learning. We have got quite a bit right, and we certainly have things to learn and improve. As you will be aware, we now have a two week break from online lessons and there is no expectation that your children will do any school learning activities or assessments over this time. Online learning will resume after the Easter weekend. If you have questions about online learning, please first contact the appropriate teacher. Otherwise, Dawn Sullivan, our DP who oversees this area is available after the break via DawnSu@wgpcollege.school.nz.

While challenging for all, this is also a particularly stressful time for some learners. Our guidance counsellors are available, and information is on the front page of our website, under Covid-19 updates.

Can I please remind us all to be aware of the security settings on our children's social media apps. Linking with whanau and known friends is a good thing. Becoming 'friends' with unknowns is seldom a good idea, and in the current situation would be very unwise.

The Ministry of Education suggests the following information and resources to support wellbeing and support learning at home:

- The Ministry of Education has developed a resource for parents, caregivers, whānau and family - <http://education.govt.nz/school/health-safety-and-wellbeing/pastoral-care-and-wellbeing/talking-to-children-about-covid-19-coronavirus/>.
- The Ministry of Health's website includes Top ways to look after your mental wellbeing during the Covid-19 lockdown.
- I AM HOPE is the youth & community focused support group run by The Key to Life Charitable Trust, (Mike King) - <https://www.iamhope.org.nz/>
- Nathan Wallis has some helpful videos on his Facebook page for parents & whānau - <https://www.facebook.com/nathanwallisxfactoreducation/>
- Tips on looking after mental health and wellbeing from the Mental Health Foundation <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/>

As I have been pondering the weeks ahead, I was mindful of something I say to Year 13 learners at the end of their year as they are embarking on new and uncertain times. I encourage them to keep connected, keep contributing, keep active, keep learning, plus we should keep having some fun! So, here at our home we are trying to apply this, and have lists with all sorts of ideas!

All the very best with the lockdown at your place.

I plan that our next communication will be on the afternoon of Tuesday 14 April, and we'll start Term Two online on Wednesday 15 April.

Take care
Nga mihi nui
James