



One Tree Hill
COLLEGE

Tips for Teachers & Parents to support students

Teens look to adults for guidance on how to respond to stressful events. Often young people will react to stress in different ways such as acting out in anger, being anxious or fearful. Others may find it hard to get motivated or keep focused on studies. To feel an increase in stress, anxiety, and perhaps even loneliness would be considered normal.

Clear and concise information can be helpful as it helps young people feel informed and have some awareness of the things they can or cannot control. They also need to feel that their fears and worries can be talked about and listened to. Some ways to support students are listed below:

Provide accurate information

Young people will inevitably be seeking information from their peers and the internet. Encourage use of trusted sources of information and avoidance of rumours and sensationalistic news. It may be helpful NOT to watch the news or check online COVID updates too often.

Talk through any fears

It's important to talk to your teen about their worries which may include the impact of COVID-19 on academic learning/grades, future choices, loss of social connections, or missing out on life experiences. Try not to jump in and solve their problems, but listen, show compassion, validate their feelings, and let them know you're there to support them.

Reassure

Reassure students that the OTHC has an effective online learning system, and that school staff are working hard to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Emphasise that their friends, peers, teachers, and family are most likely fine.

Maintain routines

Keep to daily routines as much as possible (e.g. regular times for meals, sleep, study). This creates stability, and a sense of normality amidst change and unpredictability.

Promote Safety

Setting clear expectations for staying safe is critical. Social distancing, mask-wearing, and hand sanitising/hand washing are key safety precautions.

Be active

Online learning can mean sitting at a device for long periods at a time, so it is important to do some exercise (get up and stretch, walk, run, swim, or bike ride) and get some fresh air).

Stay Calm

Be calm yourself. Speak slowly. Listen if your teen wants to talk. Normalise reactions by reassuring that it's OK to feel distressed, anxious, worried, overwhelmed etc. They are perfectly normal reactions in this situation.

Promote Connectedness

Encourage young people to keep connected with those who are important to them in whatever way they can - phone, text or instant messages, Video calls, or other social media.

Promote Hope & Positivity

Acknowledge that there are things that are not within our control right now and encourage teens to identify what they can control in their life. Read, watch and share some good news stories, or focus on gratitude (e.g. a gratitude journal), or noting the positive things about each day, rather than the bad.

Kindness

Remind them they're not alone and we're all going through this together. Be kind and show you care. Remind them the lockdown won't last forever.

Self-Care

Promote the importance of self-care such as keeping to a daily routine, eating healthy food, good sleep hygiene, daily exercise, undertaking fun enjoyable activities, and practising relaxation (a long soak in the bath, yoga, meditation, or mindfulness, or just reading a good book and listening to music).

Rethink Household Rules

Have a family discussion about family routines. Allow for family-time, and for alone-time. Teens will likely want their own space and privacy. Think about what to do if you start getting on each other's nerves!

Embrace the time together

This is a moment in time. What matters, in good times as well as bad, are our family and our community.

Mental Health: If you are worried about your teen, please do not hesitate to contact their Whanau teacher or a team member from the Student Services Team.



One Tree Hill College Student Services

Booking Link: [Bit.Ly/OTHCStudentServices](https://bit.ly/OTHCStudentServices)
Email Counsellor: TNewman@onetreehillcollege.school.nz
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