



## Returning to School

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students,

The end of the term is fast approaching and while the future is still in many ways uncertain, we now do have some dates to which we are working towards.

The Victorian Roadmap provides specific dates for Year 11 and 12 students returning to school – week 2 Term 4- however the majority of Year 10 students will only leave remote learning when we reach specific thresholds.

This means October 26th is identified as the earliest for Year 10s being at school unless they are undertaking a VCE or VET unit.

### Victorian Roadmap for Reopening

The Victorian Government has released its plan for easing COVID 19 restrictions for Victoria and it includes the following decisions about school operations including those at Hallam Senior College.

#### Weeks 9 and 10 of Term 3: September 7th - 18th

All schools including Hallam Senior College will continue to provide remote and flexible learning for the remainder of Term 3. Students will continue to learn from home.

#### Curriculum Day: Friday September 18th

Webex classes will not occur on the last day of term as teaching staff members undertake professional learning.

#### School Holidays: September 19th - October 4th

##### Term 4 - Week 1: October 5 - 9th.

Remote and Flexible learning will continue for students.

VCE and VCAL students can only attend on-site for essential assessments during this week, including the General Achievement Test (GAT) on Wednesday 7 October.

##### Term 4 - Week 2 - October 12th

All Year 11 and 12 - VCE/VCAL and VET students and those in year 10 undertaking a VCE/VCAL/VET unit will return to school and study on site. Remote learning will not continue for these year levels. Year 10 students will continue to study remotely.

#### October 26th

A potential return to school for the remainder of Year 10's will be dependent on further health advice.

## On Line issues

Recently a significant and very disturbing event was uploaded to social media platforms. Some students may have accessed the event.

If any student requires assistance please reach out to the wellbeing team or the many support services available. See the list attached at the end of this newsletter.

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# GAT – Information Session

**An information session will be held on Wednesday, September 16th at 10am for all students who are required to complete the General Achievement Test.**

The session will go for approximately one hour. Any student who is undertaking one or more Unit 3 + 4 VCE sequence or a Second Year Scored VET/VCE unit is required to complete the GAT and therefore needs to “attend” the information session.

The GAT information session will be held on line and hosted by Ms Morra.

The GAT is more significant in 2020 due to the current climate and will be used to statistically moderate VCE outcomes and provide indicative grades for each student if for some reason they could not complete the VCE exams.

We understand that the GAT information session may be during a student’s scheduled classes, however all teachers of VCE unit 4 units have been requested to leave this time available for the GAT information session.

## Who must complete the GAT?

All students undertaking a Unit 3/ 4 sequence including any year 11 students completing a unit 3 /4 sequence. This also includes students undertaking a 2nd year Scored VET Subject.

If you are unsure about the GAT or would like further information, please contact myself or visit the VCAA website:

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/studentguides/ExamsNavigator/Pages/GeneralAchievementTest.aspx>

# R U OK?

**Thursday 10th September is R U OK? Day.**

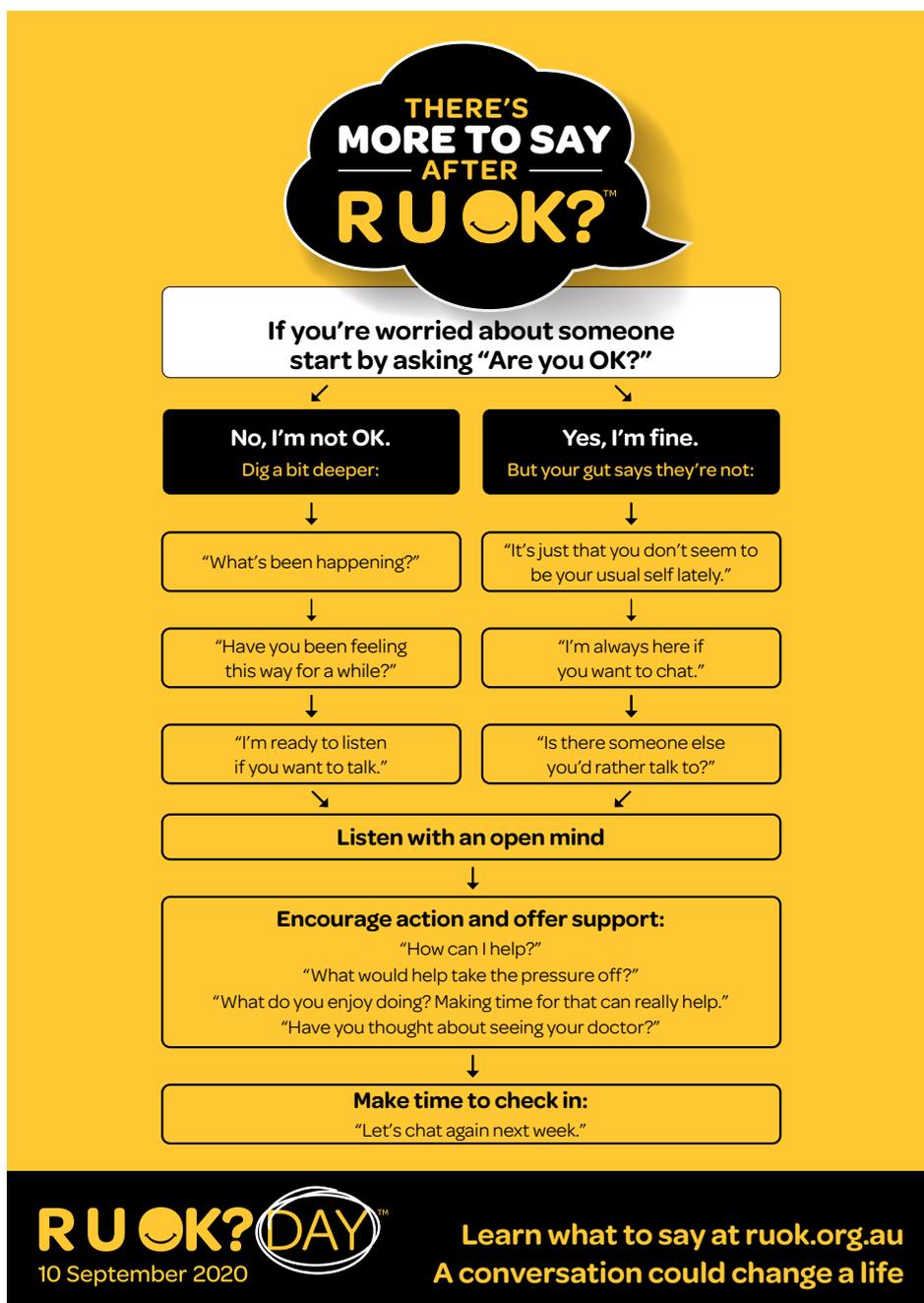
It is a day that reminds us all to watch out for those around us and to remember that every day is a day to ask someone R U OK? if you think they might be struggling.

This year's theme is 'There's more to say after RU OK?'

This is so important, especially now as lockdown continues.

You don't have to be an expert to keep the conversation going, but the people at R U OK have developed some helpful tips and resources here:

<https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>



# Support Services For Families And Young People

<b>Parent Support</b>		
Parent Line	Phone service for parents and carers of children from birth to 18 years old. Offers confidential and anonymous counselling and support on parenting issues.	13 22 89 (8am-midnight/7 days)
Child FIRST	Families needing family services support when they are experiencing difficulties that impact on their parenting and family life.	(03) 9705 3939
Tandem Inc. Carers	Support for carers of people with mental health conditions – phone support, online forums.	1300 314 325 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri).
<b>Crisis Support</b>		
Emergency Services	If immediate threat to safety contact Police, Fire or Ambulance.	000
Psychiatric Triage Service	Crisis support - The triage service can organise both urgent and non-urgent assessments.	1300 369 012 (24/7)
LifeLine	Crisis Support and suicide prevention hotline.	13 11 14 (24/7)
WAYSS	Wayss is the first point of contact for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness	9791 6111 After Hours 1800 627 727
<b>Counselling Services</b>		
Headspace	Free and confidential counselling service for young people under 25 years of age. Online chat available <a href="https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/">https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/</a> from 9am-1am	1800 367 968
City of Casey Counselling Services	Confidential counselling service for young people aged 10-12 years old.	9792 7279
Beyond Blue	Telephone and online counselling support service. Chat online between 3pm-12am, 7 days a week.	1300 224 636 (Call 24/7)
YSAS	YSAS provides practical support and evidence-based clinical services for young people experiencing problems with mental health and substance abuse.	9415 8881
1800respect	Confidential counselling and support for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.	1800 737 732 (24/7)
Grief Line	Telephone support for those experiencing grief or loss.	1300 845 745 (12pm-3am/7 days)
Family Drug Helpline	A program that provides practical help, information and support to families and friends impacted by someone's drug and alcohol use.	1300 660 068
Q-Life	A national service that supports LGBTQI community. Online chat available at <a href="http://www qlife.org.au/resources/chat">www.qlife.org.au/resources/chat</a> between 3pm & midnight	1800 184 527 (3pm-midnight)
<b>Financial Hardship</b>		
Anglicare Victoria	Can provide food parcels and financial assistance. Anglicare Victoria can also connect you with financial counsellors, no-interest loans (NILS) and Step-Up Programs.	1800 809 722

The school wellbeing team will be available on their work phones during school days (8:30am to 4:00pm, except on school holidays) and can provide additional information and support to you and your family

- Year 10 students can contact Amy Magnusson on 0481 930 881
- Year 11 students can contact Ashleigh Dobson on 0492 165 787
- Year 12 students can contact Selena Jordan on 0466 320 228
- You can also contact Emma Kelly, the wellbeing team leader on 0481 930 924

# Supporting Your Teen Through Mental Health Challenges During Coronavirus

The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) is a challenging time for both teens and parents, with everyone spending much more time at home than usual and teens missing out on regular schooling and social activities. This disruption to routines can take a serious toll on mental health.

Even if your teen doesn't seem to want your help, there are things you can do to help them cope with their current circumstances. They include recognising the signs that they're struggling, and helping them to access mental health support through Telehealth.

## Notice the signs

Even with good routines and habits in place, mental health can suffer during this time. Here are some signs that your teen may be struggling, and feeling depressed or anxious:

- They are finding it hard to get out of bed, are sleeping more or less than usual, or are always tired.
- They've stopped taking care with their appearance or personal hygiene.
- They're eating more or less than usual.
- They've become withdrawn, avoiding friends, family and activities they used to enjoy.
- They have outbursts of anger or irritability.
- They're tense and restless.
- They're engaging in risky behaviours.
- They're self-critical (e.g. they refer to themselves as 'worthless' or 'stupid').

## How to have the conversation

- If you think your teen is struggling, it's important to [talk to them](#) about it. Here are some tips for checking in:
- Pick a time when you're not rushed and a place where your teen feels comfortable.
- Some conversation starters include: 'I've noticed that you've been sad/withdrawn/not yourself lately. Let's talk about what's happening', or 'I'm worried about you. Can we talk?'
- Be honest with them if you feel a bit awkward talking to them about mental health.
- Tune into their feelings. Ask them how they're feeling, and then really listen to them. Don't rush to fill silences or to offer solutions.
- Don't dismiss or downplay their feelings, even if hearing about them makes you uncomfortable. Mental health difficulties can happen at any age.
- Ask them what they need in order to feel better, and what you can do to support them. Remind them that they're not alone.

## Good habits in a time of constant change

The rules around isolation are constantly changing, which can make young people feel worried, uncertain or anxious. The following are some tips to help your teen feel more secure and in control:

- Stay informed about the current rules in your state, and provide your teen with up-to-date and age-appropriate information. Try to stay hopeful and positive, but be realistic.
- Plan family [routines](#) to help your teen feel safe and secure. Regular bed and meal times, and routines around household chores, school work, fun activities and down time, are great for physical and mental health.
- Help your teen plan how to structure their time, and to break large goals into smaller, achievable daily goals.

## Getting professional help

Many young people struggle with their mental health in isolation, despite good routines and family support. [Professional support](#) can help your teen find a solution, or a combination of things, that suits them. Some options are:

- Online and phone support (such as Kids Helpline, e-headspace and Youth Beyond Blue).
- Psychological therapy – a psychologist will work with your teen over several sessions to manage their mental health symptoms.
- Medication – this can be prescribed by a medical professional, such as a GP or psychiatrist.

Encourage your teen to see a [GP](#) they trust, or who has an interest in mental health, to discuss their difficulties and figure out the next step, which may include referral to a psychologist or psychiatrist.

Many health-care professionals are currently offering Telehealth consultations (over the phone or by video). So, even if your teen is staying home, they can receive the help they need.

For the full article please visit:

<https://parents.au.reachout.com/skills-to-build/connecting-and-communicating/things-to-try-supportive-parenting/supporting-your-teen-through-mental-health-challenges-during-coronavirus>