



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD IN SENIOR SCHOOL

Our College is characterised by our Young Adult Ethos, evident by our staff and students:

Pursuing Personal Excellence by:

- setting high expectations and meaningful goals
- persevering when faced with challenges and building resilience
- accessing help and support

Building Positive Relationships by:

- promoting mutual respect and trust
- engaging in teamwork and cooperative learning
- contributing to a productive learning environment

Demonstrating Social Responsibility by:

- behaving ethically
- recognising and supporting the needs of others
- contributing to a sustainable community

Working in partnership with our parents, the goal of MSC is to have our students become positive and contributing members of the community, achieving the goals they set. The final years of secondary schooling can be very stressful and intimidating. The purpose of this document is to provide some useful points of reference for parents to explore as they support their children as young adults.

Student Services

The Student Services staff at MSC are a varied team; here to help and assist in the development of sound emotional, physical, spiritual, social, and psychological health.

Staff focus on early intervention to assist students in need and work interchangeably if required, and will refer to external agencies if considered suitable. Staff are available to meet students, parents, and caregivers confidentially. Academic support and careers advice are also available.

If your child needs support whilst at MSC, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Mentor teacher, classroom teacher or a member of Student Services.



Keys to success, happiness and good health

Respect
Resilience
Social intelligence
Gratitude
Good communication
Learned optimism
Self-control
Curiosity
Grit

Issues students often face

Too much screen-time, too little sleep
Not eating right
Mental illness
Uncertain future pathway
Study Avoidance
Body image
Family relationships
Stress
Balancing work/life/school

Tips for parenting a child in their final school years

Stay Interested
Know their friends
Know their interests
Know their diet, exercise, sleep and online habits
Stay Connected
With your teen
With the College
With the Community

How to handle stressful young adults



- Talk with them – ask open ended questions
- Listen, comment, question, justify and consider their opinions. i.e. do not judge
- Get them to teach you
- Use 'start' not 'stop' language
- Pick your battles
- They need security – provide them with boundaries
- Be consistent and fair
- Role model: read a book, do some study, volunteer, talk optimistically, plan your future
- Chat (and laugh) about your mistakes, fond memories, ambitions, regrets
- Keep (or invent) family rituals: communal dinner, movie night, walking the dog, exercise
- Affirm them and praise not the successes but the ATTEMPTS – this is a growth mindset
- Give them space and time to process thoughts and feelings
- When they vent, it is a coping strategy – they will vent to the people they trust most



Tips to practise gratitude



- Write down 3 things you are grateful for in a diary
- Write about one positive experience you had today
- Try to praise or thank someone everyday



Mentally Healthy School

Act – Belong – Commit

The mental health message of Act-Belong-Commit encourages children and young people to deliberately do things to look after their mental wellbeing

Keeping mentally and physically active, having good friends and helping others or learning new things not only builds self-esteem and confidence, it can reduce stress and help with academic outcomes. As part of our role in Student Services, we encourage students to participate in activities around the college and suggest students still do something they love to do.

Physical exercise is very important throughout life and equally as important in senior school. Research shows that people who are physically active in high school demonstrate more confidence, leadership, and self-respect. They are better at setting goals and managing their time. The Act-belong-Commit message is simple:

Do something
Do something with someone
Do something meaningful



When to get help?

Mindfulness exercises allow you to be able to identify, tolerate and reduce difficult and unpleasant thoughts, feelings, and sensations.

Mindfulness gives you back a sense of control over our thoughts and feelings. Rather than having the sense that you are being pushed around by your feelings and thoughts you learn to be develop control over them. Put simply, mindfulness is becoming aware of your here and now. It gives you a space in the present moment to be able to safely deal with distressing and unpleasant things that might happen or be happening to you. It also allows you to look at and plan for the future.



Watch for thoughts that are:

Global

"Everything I do is wrong"

Persistent

"Every day I feel like this"

Permanent

"Things aren't going to get better"

Concerns do not need to be negative unless they affect your day to day functioning or enjoyment of life.

Help your child develop 'growth mindset'

Instead of...



I'm not good at this
I give up
It's good enough
I can't make this any better
This is too hard
I made a mistake
I just can't do this
I'll never be that smart
Plan A didn't work
My friend can do it

Try thinking...



What am I missing?
I'll use a different strategy
Is this really my best work?
I can always improve
This may take some time
Mistakes help me to learn
I am going to train my brain
I will learn how to do this
There's always Plan B
I will learn from them

If you are concerned with your child's mental health, discuss this with a GP, medical professional, or a member of the Student Services Team.

TIPS: THE ART OF MINDFULNESS



Reducing test anxiety

**Test anxiety has two components:
Negative thoughts and physical symptoms.**

Tackle negative thinking by:

- Identifying negative thinking traps
- Developing positive self-talk

Tackle physical symptoms by:

- Assisting your adolescent in developing effective relaxation techniques



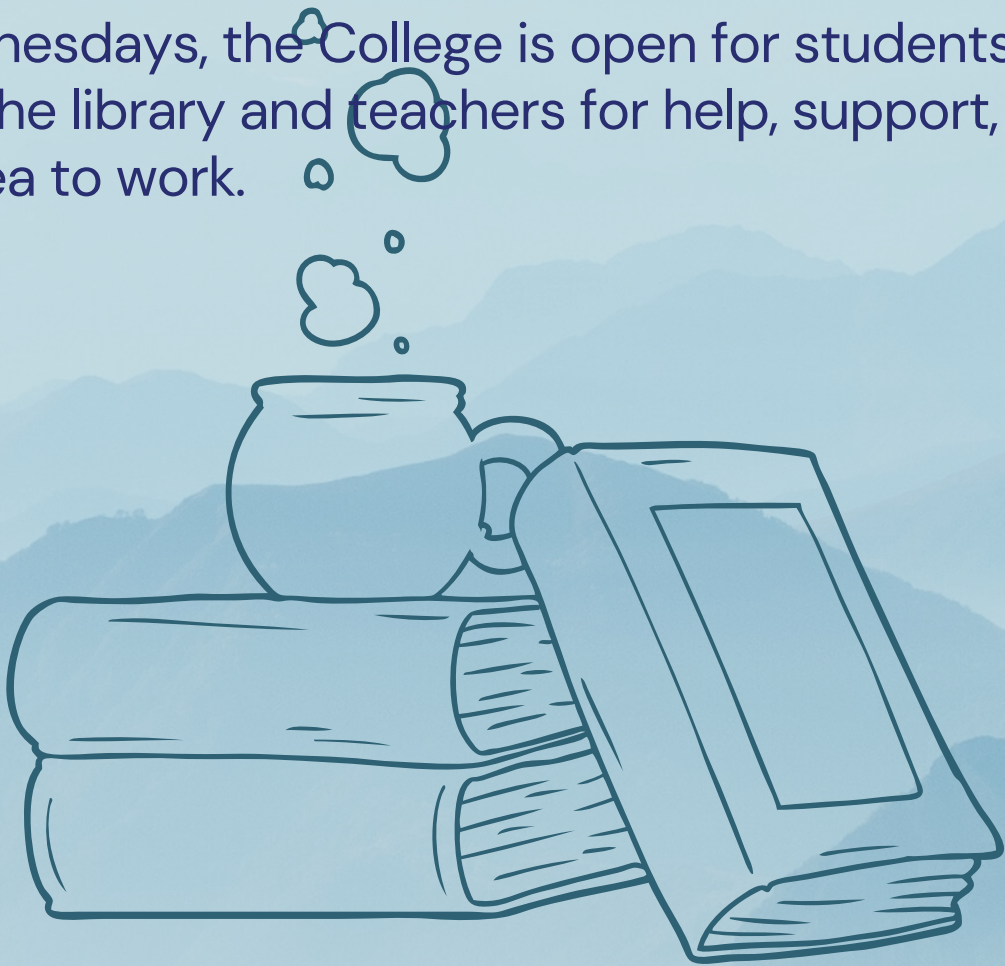
Study skills

Setting up good study habits is paramount to achieving success.

Have a well-lit, quiet area free from distractions.

Encourage your child to create a study timetable and support them to sticking to it.

On Wednesdays, the College is open for students to access the library and teachers for help, support, or a quiet area to work.



Studiosity

Your child has 24/7 access to a huge network of expert teachers and subject specialists, online, on-demand.

They can connect to an expert in minutes and ask a question one-to-one when they get stuck or upload a draft essay or assignment for review anytime and get fast, helpful feedback on how to improve it.

Students can access **Studiosity** FREE all year, thanks to the school and ECU.

Simply log in to the school's Studiosity service via the LMS, or find your school at: studiosity.com/access for instructions.



Parents can support their children by helping them to be motivated to study

The type and amount of this support can affect a child's motivation to succeed. This is determined by the extent to which you affirm your son/daughter:

- ➡ Your own belief in the value of education
- ➡ Your home's study conditions
- ➡ The amount and type of pressure you place on your adolescent to succeed
- ➡ The goals and expectations you have for your son/daughter

Being motivated to study and do their best in school is also determined by the adolescent's belief in the value of school. Parents can help their child value their education by:

- ➡ Showing interest in their work
- ➡ Arranging the home environment for study
- ➡ Going to parent-teacher nights or communicating with teachers
- ➡ Taking what the teacher says seriously
- ➡ See all subjects as important



Healthy eating

You can encourage your child's health by providing good food choices in the house for them to access. Eating well has several benefits:

- Reduced risk of physical health problems
- Better sleeping patterns and energy levels
- Assisting the body and brain to function well
- Improved general health and wellbeing

Maintaining healthy eating habits

- Regular, nutritional meals and healthy snacks help keep energy and concentration levels high. Skipping meals can lead to headaches, irritability, lack of concentration and behaviour issues
- Top priority is breakfast before school
- Encourage your child to avoid sugary foods and using the fast foods outlets on a regularly basis because:
 - They are more costly
 - They have lots of calories but limited nutritional value
- Junk foods are also high in refined sugar causing blood sugar levels to rise and fall too quickly, leaving you feeling more tired than you were before
- Also leaves you feeling hungry after a very short time
- Try and encourage your child to eat fresh fruit, vegetables and whole meal carbohydrates which will them a 'natural' sugar lift
- Take adequate fluids, water is excellent! Drinking water reduces tiredness and improves concentration

Energy drinks and caffeine:

- Have little proven nutritional value!
- Contain high levels caffeine which can have the potential side effects of elevated heart rates, high blood pressure, anxiety, headaches and interrupted sleep patterns

**Refer to the Australian Guide for Healthy Eating
or Live Lighter health campaign for advice**

Sleep

A lack of sleep can affect schoolwork output. It may also lead to mood swings, make teens more vulnerable to illnesses and decreased resiliency.

It can also lead to drug and alcohol use, which is linked to mental health issues.

- Good sleep patterns are essential to function at peak performance levels, help keep you energised, focused, and motivated
- Studies show that teenagers need at least 9.25 hours of sleep to function properly in school
- Developing a good sleep routine can help you increase the quality of your sleep

How to create a sleep routine

- Wake up and go to bed at the same time (even at weekends)
- Avoid caffeine after lunchtime
- Have a quiet, dark uncluttered bedroom
- Shut down electronic devices 30 minutes before going to bed



Partying

Partying as become the weekend 'culture' along with the 'need' to have alcohol and possibly other substances.

It affects sleep patterns, temperament, attitude, and mental health.

School work can be affected, also family life (arguments re alcohol etc). Potential issues can arise.

Talk to your children about safe alcohol and drug use. They are more likely to come to you with an issue if you have an open dialogue.

If you are concerned about your child, make a Doctor's appointment or, seek a counsellor for support.



Consider talking with other parents as to the details of the party.

Follow the Police advice when it comes to hosting a party.

Part-time work

This is a desire of many teenagers to start raking in the money and the joy of spending their own money!

This can come at a cost to their health and well-being when trying to juggle it all.

Ensure your child is not over-working and is focusing on school first and work second.

Speak to your child's boss if you are concerned about the time or number of hours your child is working.



General health

- Ensure your child's immunisations are up to date
- Have regular check-ups with a doctor, dentist and an optometrist

Useful Links

- <https://www.actbelongcommit.org.au/>
- <https://learnmate.com.au/parental-support/>
- <https://www.mindarie.wa.edu.au/student-support>
- <https://raisingchildren.net.au/>
- <https://headspace.org.au/>
- <https://livelighter.com.au/>
- <http://tisc.edu.au/>
- <https://www.police.wa.gov.au/>
- <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>
- <https://au.reachout.com/tough-times/addiction>
- <https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/info-for-children-and-young-people/mental-health-online-resources/>
- <https://www.sdera.wa.edu.au/>
- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>