

Supporting Your Child

Whilst the measures being taken by Castlemaine Steiner School to respond to the spread of COVID-19 are precautionary: we acknowledge that the current situation may raise concerns or anxiety for you and your children. Therefore, the following is some guidance as to how this anxiety may present itself and how best to respond.

Provide Reassurance

As the COVID-19 has been in the news, we recommend that all families discuss this topic openly. The chances of infection are low and the probability of serious illness is extremely low. When speaking to their children about the virus, it is important that parents are well-informed and remain calm.

General anxieties

Uncertain times can create heightened anxieties for some people. This can appear as:

- Sleep disturbance
- Nightmares
- Separation anxiety
- Pre-occupation with issues around illness and death
- Obsessional washing
- Moodiness or argumentativeness
- Repetitively checking that parents and other family members are not sick
- Loss of motivation to complete assigned schoolwork

In response to these anxieties, parents may need to emphasise that the world has faced many viruses before and may do so again. It is recommended that parents focus on positive messages, emphasising good health and hygiene. It will also be important to dispel myths and untruths, whilst also allowing your child to feel informed. It may not be possible to shield children from media about the virus; however, it is important to encourage them to focus on other interests, rather than consuming too many news stories.

Concerns about Relatives

Your child may be concerned about the wellbeing of grandparents and older relatives. Although older people do have an increased risk of severe illness, the focus should be on encouraging them to engage in healthy practices. It is also important that we do not allow our older relatives to feel isolated and lonely. In relation to overseas relatives, parents should try to ascertain as accurate information as possible and share this with their children. Maintaining online communication with overseas relatives is also important.

Ongoing Support

During this period of school closure, Castlemaine Steiner School is committed to the ongoing support of our students and their families. This may include maintaining a sense of community connectedness if students are learning remotely, as well as promoting proactive wellbeing strategies which are suitable for this current context. The usual educational support structures will also be in place and we encourage parents to contact the School if they have any concerns, or require further guidance.