

COUNSELLORS CORNER



Final Weeks!

The final weeks of Term 2 have come around so fast and we are already halfway through another school year. A huge congratulations to all students who have juggled assessments and exams over recent weeks, and a big thank you to teachers tireless efforts in marking assessments and preparing reports – I bet you are all looking forward to the school holidays!

The school holidays are an important time for teenagers to have a break, recharge their batteries and reconnect with the rest of their lives. After a hectic school term, your teenager probably needs a fair bit of chill out time to help them replenish their energy and charge their social and emotional battery. You might like to try these ideas to help your kids enjoy their time off, while managing any schoolwork or other commitments that they might have over the break.

Chill out

Let them enjoy lounging around for a few days if that's what they want, but also encourage them to get out and about – be active, hang out with friends or catch up with family.

Plan any holiday work

At the start of the break, check if your child has any school work over the holidays or tasks due early when school resumes. If so, work out a timetable together to get the tasks completed, taking into consideration any work or family commitments or trips away.

Encourage reading

Screen time is a huge aspect of our lives and teenagers need some extra encouragement to have a break sometimes. Holidays are a great time to read for pleasure or to start a book that they are studying next term.

Strengthen ties

Holidays are a great time to reconnect with friends and family and share some unrushed moments together. You could plan a family trip to somewhere related to your child's interests, go out for a slow lunch, or just spend some time enjoying each other's company at home.

Reflect and reset

When the moment is right, you might like to help your teen reflect on how they went last term, and would they could do better next term? Areas such as time management, study strategies or balance of activities. You might like to help them declutter their room or set up a new study space to help ease them back into the frame of mine for school.

Parenting adolescents & pre-teens with mental health concerns

Is your teenager or pre-teen showing symptoms of depression or anxiety or using self-harm to cope with the pressures of life? The PERKS Parenting Seminars provides information and coping strategies for parents - four seminars over four weeks.

Mondays, 24 July, 31 July, 7 Aug, 14 Aug 4.00 - 6.00 pm	PERKS Parenting Seminars	WODEN WESTFIELD Woden Community Service, above Travelax
Parenting adolescents with mental health concerns	Woden Community Service CRS Barnardos Australia	Adolescent Development, Anxiety, Self Harm, Family Conflict, Depression, School Refusal

This free series is designed to improve knowledge of adolescent development, anxiety, depression and safety planning, self-harm, anger and family conflict and school refusal. The seminars will improve your confidence in using coping and positive communication strategies with teens experiencing mental health issues.

It's on 4-6pm, Mondays (July 24 & 31, August 7 & 14), in Woden.

More information can be found [here](#).

For students and families who might need some additional support over the school holiday break, we have listed a few references that you might find of benefit.

For Students:

- [MindMap](#) support young people to navigate Canberra's mental health system and find mental health services, supports and resources (12pm-11pm/7 days)
- [headspace online mental health service](#) speak with professional counsellors over the phone or webchat (9am-1am/7 days)
- [13YARN](#) (13 92 76, available 24/7) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support crisis support phone line
- [Kids Helpline](#) (1800 55 1800, available 24/7)
- Reach Out [Ways to chill for cheap](#)

For Parents:

- [Reach Out Parents](#) has information for parents and carers on a range of topics.
- [Raising Children](#) has tips and advice around a range of topics that can assist parents in supporting young people.
- Beyond Blue has some tips on [supporting healthy home and habits](#) and [how to talk about mental health](#) if you are wanting to start a conversation with your young person
- ReachOut has a [One-on-one support service](#) which provides free coaching to parents and carers of teenagers.
- Parentline ACT provides telephone counselling to parents and carers. Call 02 6287 3833, Monday to Friday 9am-4pm
- If you need immediate support and assistance call Access Mental Health on 1800 629 354 or 6205 1065 24 hours, 7 days a week. If you or your loved one are in a life-threatening situation, please call 000 immediately.

It is important to note that School counselling is not a crisis service but should you feel your daughter may benefit from school counselling when school resumes, please speak with your daughter's house co-ordinator or email the counsellors on : counsellors@merici.act.edu.au

We wish you all a well-deserved break and look forward to seeing you all back next term.

Take care,

Ms Hannah Johnson and Ms Chelsea Kent

Merici School Counsellors

