

Ways to boost psychological wellbeing



These strategies were compiled from suggestions made by teaching and non-teaching staff across the NSW who participated in the webinar “Boosting Psychological Wellbeing” conducted by Dr Ben Palmer from Genos International in conjunction with the School Leadership Institute in April 2020.

A recording of the webinar can be found on the School Leadership Institute site at:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-leadership-institute/supporting-remote-learning---wellbeing>

Thinking

- Set boundaries around emails by scheduling set times during the day to check emails, keeping work email access off your phone or using email software filters to sort emails.
- Set boundaries around devices by turning phones to airplane mode, grey scale or Do Not Disturb at certain times of the day.
- Limit the amount of news you watch, reduce or stop using social media. Set quiet days and quiet times on digital calendars or software programs.
- Keep a daily gratitude journal, develop routines for sharing things you are grateful for with family, friends or work colleagues or use apps such as Three Good Things.
- Practise mindfulness and meditation by doing yoga or using apps such as Calm, Headspace, Smiling Mind, Simple Habits, This Way Up, 10%, Soul time.

- Engage with affirming websites such as Future Crunch, TED Talks, The Kindness Pandemic, Room with a View, Good News Channel, Good News by John Krasinski and Science Alert or read inspirational biographies.
- Listen to music or play a musical instrument.
- Spend time in nature, walking or gardening.

Relationships

- Establish routines for more formal meetings with colleagues but also informal opportunities to catch up and check in on one another using video conferencing
- Have recess or lunch together as a staff using video conferencing
- Set up SASS or SLSO chat groups to make sure everyone stays connected
- Establish a buddy system so that each staff member contacts another staff member regularly by phone or video to check on how they are
- Engage in fun activities using video conferencing such as trivia quizzes, dress ups, book club, singing or playing music together
- Set aside regular time to engage in activities such as walks or board games with family
- Establish a system of regular phone contact with each family in the school to check how they are going, sharing the task among all teaching and non-teaching staff
- Contact elderly members of the community by phone to check on how they are going or have students contact an elderly relative or friend with some prepared questions on a topic.

Physiological

- Engage in regular physical exercise such as walking, running, bike riding, Pilates or yoga.
- Exercise with friends or family and use fitness apps for inspiration or motivation.
- Organise a group boot camp on social media and set new challenges every few days.
- Plan your meals and cook extra for lunch the next day or keep an eating diary and remember to drink water
- Dance around as you do chores or enrol in online dance classes
- Garden and spend time in the sun.

Environmental

- Set up a separate work space so that you can “enter” and “leave” each day and signal to others that you are working
- Rearrange the furniture at home or school to reinvigorate the space
- Set up your laptop outside and have your feet touching the grass.
- Wear your work clothes for work and then change out of them.
- Achieve a work/life balance by working less hours on some days and making time for activities you enjoy such as art and craft activities, cooking, singing, playing a musical instrument, doing a jigsaw puzzle, playing with Lego, gardening or exercising.

We trust you find these suggestions from colleagues useful.

Joanne Jarvis, Director and the School Leadership Institute team

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