



LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Care Quality Creativity



February 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

The purpose of this letter is to provide information about the role of school psychologists and to inform families regarding the available support options for students and their emotional wellbeing. If you have any general concerns about the wellbeing or educational progress of your child, the first point of contact is the relevant year coordinator. If appropriate, the year coordinator will facilitate a referral to the school psychologist.

The role of the school psychologists

School psychologists (SPs) provide a psychological service to enhance student learning, engagement and wellbeing. The workload of a SP varies considerably throughout the year and they may need to redirect parents and students to other professionals depending on their workload at any given time. In order for the SP to determine the urgency of your child's need, it is important to indicate any immediate concerns you might have about your child's safety. This will allow the SP to determine the best course of action for each child at a particular point in time.

The role of the school psychologist can include:

- Consulting with the Student Services team to support student learning and engagement
- Conduct **preliminary** evaluations of learning issues, including disability. This also includes transition processes and eligibility.
- Provide advice and training to staff about all aspects of student wellbeing, engagement and supporting educational needs.
- Provide advice to parents and students about accessing external agencies e.g. Headspace
- **Occasional** counselling for students who are presenting with mild to moderate mental health concerns.

School psychologists are registered psychologists and are bound by the same guidelines, ethics and legal requirements as any other practicing psychologist. Because of this they are required to seek consent from a parent before engaging with a young person at school.

Finding the appropriate services for your child

Fortunately, in the ACT there are a range of accessible points for assistance and support depending on the need of the child. As School Psychologists, our work focuses on supporting students in the school environment and in some instances, we work indirectly with students and families to liaise with outside professionals and agencies.

If the matter is urgent or you have serious concerns about your child's mental health, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) accepts referrals. You can consult during business hours on **6205 1050** or after hours through the Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT) on **1800 629 354**.

In other situations, the following is a list of professionals who may help your family seek support:
The following is a list of professionals who may help your family seek support:

- The GP can screen for and monitor any underlying medical issues impacting a young person. GPs also can refer to an allied health professional such as a Psychologist (fees may be subsidised with a Mental Health Plan).
- Headspace is a national youth mental health foundation. This organisation services young people aged 12 – 25 years with mild to moderate mental health concerns. Headspace is located in Braddon. Referrals can be made by phoning **6201 5343**. The website www.headspace.org.au includes information for parents/carers and adolescents.
- The Next Step program provides interventions for people with **moderate to severe** mental health presentations. This program is available to residents of the ACT who are not currently accessing other psychological interventions and have financial barriers to accessing mental health treatment. This service is provided at no cost. A GP referral is required to access the program.
- The Junction Youth Health Service, located in Civic, provides holistic care to young people by offering medical care and counselling. Services are outlined on their website www.thejunction.org.au and they can be phoned on **6232 2423**.
- The ANU Psychology Clinic offers subsidised psychological services for children, adolescents and families experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns. Their phone number is **6125 8498**.
- The UC Psychology Clinic offers subsidised psychological services for children, adolescents and families experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns. Their phone number is 6201 5843 and the website link is www.canberra.edu.au/on-campus/health-and-childcare-services/clinics/student-led-clinics/psychology-intern-clinic
- National Health Co-Op. PO Box 521 Jamison Centre, ACT 2614. Phone **6178 0400**. Clinics located around Canberra and NSW.
- Private Psychologists are listed in the Yellow Pages, Google Search or the Australian Psychology Society (APS) website www.psychology.org.au (has a find a psychologist tab)

If you require further information or contact details, please do not hesitate to email (as below) or phone us through the school on 61421176. This letter outlines main referral points but is not exhaustive, and we are able to provide assistance in guiding students and parents through the process of obtaining support in other agencies as needed.

Kind regards,

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