



ST THOMAS'S SCHOOL
KOHIMARAMA . AUCKLAND

COVID-19 ALERT LEVEL 3 Communication #2

Friday 21st August 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

As you will be aware the Level 3 in Auckland and level 2 nationwide remains in place until Wednesday 26th August. A move to level 4 has been ruled out by the Prime Minister.

Until further notice, St Thomas's School will remain open for children of essential workers and our current on-line programme will continue.

We will continue to communicate any changes as we navigate through next week.

Hope you all enjoy your weekend with your families.

Kind Regards,

Michael Maher
Principal

A message from our School Councillor Gemma

Supporting your child's Wellbeing

As we moved quickly back into level 3, there will be many students, as well as their family and whānau, feeling a range of emotions. From sadness, anger, frustration, stress, to happiness, relief, content and calm. It's totally normal to be feeling any or all of these emotions at different times.

Allowing space for your child to talk and express these feelings will help them to feel validated for what they are feeling. Encouraging them to keep a notebook or drawing book, and using it daily, is another way they can express how they are feeling. This is also a valuable resource to reflect on and in time it can be used as a further reminder that 'they can do hard things' because they are doing hard things right now.

Providing positive reassurance is also really important. Using phrases like

'we have dealt with this before, we can do it again' and 'together we will get through this' reassures our children that they are not alone, they have people who care about them and also provides a sense of hope. To have hope means to want an outcome that makes your life better in some way. I'm sure we are all hoping for things to get better.

Many of our children will be finding it hard to deal with the rapidly changing world, with the things most important to them being impacted in some way e.g. seeing friends, the school routine, and upcoming events being cancelled or postponed. Encouraging them to connect with friends and family in different ways, continuing to train or practise their favourite sport, skill, or interest keeps them connected to the things they enjoy doing and increases their wellbeing. As well as having some quiet time to read, watch a movie, listen to music, draw or write.

This tough year of continuous change is really testing our young people's resilience. Resilience refers to a child's ability to deal with the highs and lows of life, and their ability to bounce back from these challenges (Beyondblue.org.au). Building resilience is a valuable life skill and there are many ways in which you can help to foster resilience within your child.

- Building good relationships with others including adults and peers e.g. quality time together, connecting on their level, developing empathy.
 - Building their independence e.g. encouraging autonomy; dressing themselves, putting clothes away, helping to prepare a meal.
 - Learning to identify, express and manage their emotions e.g. encouraging your child to talk about their feelings, acknowledging their feelings, responding to their emotions and encouraging them to manage them in a healthy and positive way.
 - Building their confidence by taking on personal challenges e.g. encouraging them to 'have a go', use open ended/free play materials, and encouraging them to come up with their own solutions to difficult situations.
- <https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au/> has many more amazing ideas and information on resilience and family wellbeing.

Please take care, be safe and be kind to yourself and others.