

## Guidelines for managing risk while in Lockdown

*For distribution by the Ministry of Education for Schools*

### **Building resiliency:**

The Covid-19 lockdown is an opportunity to build resilience in all students/akonga. Messages to parents and akonga can help encourage and support them to positively focus on their wellbeing.

These messages could be based on the [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#):

### **Ētahi ara e rima ki te ngākau ora, help people stay mentally well:**

- Connect, Me Whakawhanaunga
- Give, Tukua
- Take Notice, Me aro tonu
- Keep Learning, Me ako tonu
- Be Active, Me kori tonu



For in depth suggestions, [click here](#)

Messages can be communicated through email to students, online chats individually and in groups, phone and text messaging. Some schools are funding the use of a dedicated mobile phone with an 0800 number where student and/or parents can text or call and leave messages for their Counsellor.

Counsellors are using google docs, teams, and online appointment websites, including school interviews to make confidential appointments with akonga and whanau. Written/email messages should also include the contacts of online support services.

Check with your principal/upline managers as to school policy, before sending out messages.

NZAC has issued [Covid-19 Guidelines and Information](#).

### **Managing Mental Health risk:**

Schools should have clear policies as to who is responsible for monitoring student wellbeing. This must be a trained professional who is usually the school Counsellor or the Lead in Child Protection (referred to as School Lead). See [here](#), and [here](#) for examples.

Students with **moderate/severe mental health issues**, ideally will be receiving care under Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services which will have policies and procedures as to how they are communicating and working with their clients, their whanau, school leads and counsellors.



#### **Nga Kete**

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### **Monitoring wellbeing:**

School Counsellors and/ or the Lead in Child Protection need to be monitoring the wellbeing of their students to ensure that they and their families are supported. This is particularly the case of students with mental health needs as the lockdown may present an additional challenge.

For **high risk** akonga a safety plan (as shown [here](#)) needs to be negotiated with the student, so that they have a clear line of support available.

Akongā living in **adverse circumstances** have particular challenges and may not have access to the internet, phone or means to contact supports. This includes those who are at risk of **abuse and neglect**. In cases of clear abuse and neglect, a notification can be made to Oranga Tamariki or in the case of family violence, the police. Where caregivers refuse to support akonga to access mental health services a notification can be made [here](#).

Some tamariki will experience abuse and neglect which does not meet the threshold for a notification. This may be further complicated when parents are uncooperative about a counsellor being involved and this requires careful consideration. In this situation, a consultation with others, including the Counsellor's Supervisor and the Principal/School Lead or Head of Guidance, could be made in order to develop a safety plan of support.

Ideally, the Counsellor or School Lead will have had a discussion with akonga about where/ from whom they can access support. In the case of not being able to clarify this with the akonga, relevant school personnel need to explore other ways that wellbeing can be monitored.

### **In these situations, akonga safety and wellbeing is the prime concern:**

Primary school children will face other challenges due to their age, these include accessing technology, which can be limited for younger children and is often monitored closely by parents. It is also important to ensure that anything that is said will not put the child at risk at the hands of parents/caregivers, who may be watching or listening when there is contact with akonga.

### **Managing risk in the use of online platforms:**

Each school will have their own processes for providing online communication and learning. Check with your IT technician as to the degree of encryption, confidentiality and privacy of communication through the school's system.

Health information needs to be treated differently from general school/learning information. It is communicated on a "[needs to know](#)" basis and must be held confidentially in a secure arrangement. It is not for general school distribution. See appendix attached for suggested online protocols.



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