



# David Thompson Secondary | Counseling Newsletter

GRADES 8-12 | OCTOBER/NOVEMBER |

## Counseling and Student Services

A month has gone by and the fall season is underway. Important reminders to make sure your child and you have access to My Education as this is where you will see your child's first Interim Report Card published on October 16<sup>th</sup>. If you are a Grade 8 student and you are logging into My Education BC for the first time, please contact your grade counselor or the office receptionist for help.

If you cannot log into Microsoft Office 365 and need to reset your password, use this link - <https://studentpass.vsb.bc.ca/> Your PEN (Personal Education Number) is required to reset and this number can be found in My Ed or on a previous report card.

If there has been any confusion with classes and schedules, please reach out to your grade counsellor to discuss. Parents who wish to have a meeting with the counselor are required to book an appointment. Please do not drop into the counseling suite as we may be unavailable to meet you without any notice and we need to arrange a safe meeting place that allows for social distancing.

### Schoolwork



With the changes to a quarter system and having classes condensed into 10 weeks, it is extremely crucial to stay regularly engaged in schoolwork at school and at home. This includes having a set time/routine where you review/complete in-class work as well as a set time to review/complete any online work from Microsoft Teams. Treat each day as a regular school day with time for class and time for schoolwork to do at home. If your classes are in the afternoon, make sure you wake up as if it were a normal school day and make use of the time you have at home for your Teams work and in-class subject.

### Technology



Students' increased use of technology for schoolwork makes it even harder to regulate students' use of devices for personal/recreational reasons. We encourage all families to have expectations and boundaries for students' use of technology and to limit their time for gaming or social media until after their schoolwork is completed. This will create a routine for students that first schoolwork, chores and family obligations, then personal use of technology. Creating a "first do this/then do that" strategy at home is a clear way to indicate expectations of students that are easy for them to understand and follow.



# Mental Health Focus

It can be hard for adults to know what to say or do to ease a child's worries, especially during times of change and uncertainty. As the most important big people in their life, parents and caregivers can help children feel safer and soften the sharp edges of whatever is making their worries grow.

To help support learning across environments, several fun and practical EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators) lessons have been adapted for use by parents and caregivers to help children manage worries and anxiety at home. While these are intended for intermediate aged children, the basic strategies can be useful for secondary students as well. See some of the categories of resources and visit <https://healthymindsbc.gov.bc.ca/ease-at-home/> for more information.

- Rhythms and Routines
- Finding Feelings
- Calm Breathing
- Tense and Relax
- Movement
- Helpful Mindset



▶ Y Mind Learn to Cope with Stress: Everyone experiences worries and stress. Y Mind is here to help young people learn how to cope with stress so they can live their best lives. Please visit <https://www.gv.ymca.ca/mental-wellness> for more information about this free online program.



▶ Self care is an important aspect to keep calm and reprioritize activities and strategies that keep our minds healthy, focused and resilient. Self-care is time you give yourself to enjoy the things that help us reduce stress. Start introducing some small self-care practices this fall season. We will focus more on self-care in the next newsletter.



▶ Sleep schedules are an important factor in how students function in and out of school. As class times have moved to either mornings or afternoons, it is important that students schedule a healthy wake up time that gives them as much of a school routine as possible.



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## How to maintain a healthy routine while social distancing



Set up a daily routine



Get up at the same time everyday



Spend time outdoors where possible



Set times for regular activities



Make sure to exercise everyday



Have your meals at a regular time



Keep in touch with friends and family



Avoid napping during the day



Go to bed at a time that fits your natural rhythms

*Recommendations from the International Society of Bipolar Disorders (ISBD) Task Force on Chronobiology and Chronotherapy*