



ReConnectEd Art Project

*May the wilderness of this time & the uncertainty we may feel,
strengthen our resolve to lean on your Word, abide in your presence,
and be guided by your enduring and powerful Spirit.*

In times where social distancing, isolation and separation have been necessary, let us take time to pause, reflect and look towards the future possibilities with hope. Sharing our experiences and feelings, to know we are not alone and gather strength and wisdom from each other.

Post traumatic growth theory suggests that children and adolescents have a great deal of resilience and can learn from adversity. They can discover and develop their abilities and learn how to manage difficult events by reflecting on the character strengths they have used during the previous challenging times, such as lockdowns last year.

Art in all mediums provides the opportunity for students to explore and express some of their feelings, worries and fears in a powerful and engaging way. It also acts as a mindful and relaxation activity.

Catholic Education Ballarat invites your child(ren) to participate by sending in a drawing, photo, poem, short stories, song, painting, or small clip inspired by the last 18 months and/or looking towards the future.

Questions/prompts to help focus on looking forward and positivity.

- *What has been important to you during the lockdowns?*
- *What have you learnt?*
- *What new things did you do?*
- *What were some of the things you enjoyed in the lockdowns?*
- *What strengths have helped you?*
- *What are you looking forward to in the future?*
- *What are some ways you can help others during this time?*
See Australian Red Cross: Kindness in a global crisis -photo gallery celebrating humanity and kindness in the COVID pandemic, for examples of helping behaviours.
<https://www.redcross.org.au/news-and-media/news/2020-photo-gallery-covid>

A selection of the works will be displayed via an online art exhibition for Mental Health week later in the year and a booklet available for download.

Please submit works to studentwellbeing@dobcel.catholic.edu.au or send originals to Wellbeing Education Officer Catholic Education Ballarat 5 Lyons St Ballarat, 3350 Vic. By submitting the piece you agree for it to be shared in the formats mentioned above.

Please note originals sent to the office will not be able to be returned.

Submissions close on the 5th of October, 2021.

Helpful hints when discussing Covid -19

Conversations with your child about challenging circumstances are important. These conversations can help your child to cope, be prepared, and make sense of what they are seeing, hearing and feeling. When your child does not understand the situation, they can worry, feel alone and misunderstand what is going on.

Promote hope by sharing information about the actions being taken in the community and at home.

The best way to communicate hope is to talk about the actions that are being taken to prepare, to stay safe and to recover. Talk to children about:

- **What is happening in the community?**

Lots of people are working really hard to keep everyone safe, for example, doctors and nurses are getting ready to look after people if they get sick.

- **What are you doing at home?**

By staying home we are helping to stop the spread of the coronavirus. We can help to protect the people we love and everyone in the community by washing our hands, social distancing, wearing masks and following the restrictions.

- **What can they do?**

Children often want to help. You can share some of the helpful things that they can do such as washing hands and covering their mouth and nose when they cough. One of the most important things you can do is to help stop the virus from spreading. This means washing your hands more regularly and for longer - let's try singing 'Happy Birthday' all the way through while we wash. You can also cover your mouth with your elbow whenever you cough or sneeze (Emerging Minds, 2020).

Further Resources

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/talking-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://preparecenter.org/toolkit/kidskit/>

Reference

National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health (2020) Communicating with your children about COVID-19. Emerging Minds.

https://d2p3kdr0nr4o3z.cloudfront.net/content/uploads/2020/09/30145047/How-to-communicate-with-your-child-about-COVID_19_FINAL-1.pdf