

Deputy Chief Minister

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

Minister for Housing and Suburban Development

Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and
Family Violence

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Minister for Women

Member for Ginninderra

Dear parents and carers,

I would like to acknowledge the challenging time we are all facing right now and thank you for your flexibility and support as we work through how we adapt to COVID-19.

I know that it is really tough as families juggle work and other commitments or face the loss of work during this pupil free period. For those families who have needed to continue sending children to school, please be confident they are in a safe environment and are being supported to learn.

This pupil free time is giving teachers the space to train, prepare content, and develop structures and resources to support home learning in term 2.

From now until the end of term 1, know that you are not expected to be the teacher and that supporting your children through this is enough.

Your children may be feeling anxious or distressed. Older children may be also feeling overwhelmed with the information they are seeing on tv or the internet and they may need some guidance to help them find the most-appropriate information. The Education Directorate have compiled a range of [useful wellbeing resources for students and families](#) that may help you support your children. The Directorate is also working on how school psychologists and wellbeing teams can continue to provide high quality support remotely.

I would also like to reassure you that, while we have established the online [Home Learning Resource Library](#) to keep children engaged with their learning, there is no pressure for you to deliver a full educational program to your child. Use what you can, as you see appropriate for your family.

During this pupil free period, students in year 11 and 12 should continue with the course work that is being provided by their school and stay engaged with their teachers. More information about the impacts on Senior Secondary education can be found in the [FAQ section of our webpage](#).

The ACT Government is making sure that Chromebooks are available now for years 4, 5 and 6, so that every student has what they need to continue learning from home. A number of schools have already commenced distribution of these. If you haven't received yours yet, you should hear from your school very soon. We're also working on making internet access available to those of you who don't have it at home—we'll have more to say on this soon.

For children in the early years, we're working to make sure there's a mix of online and offline learning. Families of children in years P-3 can also jump on the Learning Resource Library through education.act.gov.au. There are plenty of ideas on there for offline learning and it is being updated regularly. Some schools may also be providing resource packs to families.

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It's important that students remain connected with their teachers and school communities during this time and schools will be reaching out regularly to students and families during the pupil-free period.

As we get closer to term 2, the Education Directorate and schools will keep you updated on the plans. While each classroom will have its own tailored approach, you can expect regular check-ins and engagement with your child.

This will include physical resources, like technology or library books, and online connections through a virtual classroom.

In the meantime, you can find more information and stay up to date with what the ACT Education Directorate is doing, by visiting education.act.gov.au.

Canberra's solidarity over this summer has been its strength and we need to stay united and continue to be kind and patient.

Together we will get through this.

Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

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