

Back-to-school previously signaled a time of renewal and change, exciting most students and families as they prepared for the new school year. In 2020, that excitement has been coupled with anxiety and in some instances fear for parents, kids, teachers and others who work in and around schools.

Although physical distancing and wearing face masks may be more common practices for kids outside of schools, there are notable differences and procedures in school policies from province to province and across different regions and municipalities. In some instances, different boards have adopted varying policies with respect to attendance and in-person schooling including, full-time in-person attendance, fully remote or online classes, and a blended approach combining multiple adaptations of both in-person and remote or online learning.

These options may be more easily understood by parents and teachers, but may be confusing to young people who are hoping that returning to school signals a return to normal. They may be apprehensive, anxious or even fearful of returning to an environment of uncertainty and evolving changes. These feelings can be amplified for younger students or with pre-existing medical or mental health concerns. Students may be highly sensitive to additional policies or procedures if anyone in their life has been directly or indirectly impacted by COVID-19.

Homewood Health, in collaboration with our good friends at Kids Help Phone, is pleased to offer additional support to students who may be experiencing fear, anxiety, or difficulty related to the start of the new school year and the complexities raised by COVID-19. Support through Kids Help Phone is available 24/7/365 via text, telephone and live chat. Attached you will find some really useful information to share with the young people in your life who may be experiencing stress, anxiety or trepidation about their return to school.

As always, help and resources are available to you by contacting Homewood Health at [Homewood.ca](http://Homewood.ca) or at 1-800-663-1142, 24 hours a day.

### **About Kids Help Phone**

Kids Help Phone is Canada's only 24/7, national support service that offers professional counselling, information and referrals and volunteer-led, text-based support to young people in both English and French.



# COVID-19: Back to school support for kids

## Kids Help Phone and Homewood Health

Young people and the adults who support them may experience a range of reactions to going back to school and/or work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kids Help Phone is there to support the young people in your life with back to school this year, whatever that may look like for them.

Some people get a little weirded out when they hear the word “counselling.” That’s OK. Basically, counselling is talking to someone who knows a lot about many different issues that young people face. We think of counselling as a conversation with someone you can trust, who won’t judge you, and who wants to help.

If you think the adults at home could also use some support, remind them that they also have access to help, 24/7/365 by calling Homewood Health at 1-800-663-1142 or by accessing [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca).

**Kids Help Phone is always here for you. No matter what you want to talk about, we’re here to listen. No judgment, totally private, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**



### Text

Get support right now  
through our texting service  
**Text CONNECT to 686868**



### Phone

Call us for support through  
our phone service  
**Call 1-800-668-6868**

Kids Help Phone is a confidential platform where you can speak with a non-judgmental, impartial person. At Kids Help Phone, we want to help and we’re here to listen.