

Dear Families,

Here we are, together but apart, trying to find our way through these unusual and stressful times. As the school's Counsellor, I am committed to continue to support you and your child as best I can. The ways in which I do this may shift and grow as I discover new and meaningful ways to connect in this new virtual world.

In the meantime, I invite you (parents and/or students) to email me with any questions, thoughts, or even just a hello. The Covid-19 pandemic can cause many worries for children, in addition to struggles they may have adjusting to a new normal. Students may also have other concerns that are unrelated to this pandemic that they wish to speak to a trusted adult about. Please know I am here to check-in, offer resources or a 'listening ear'. As I support two elementary schools, I will try my best to respond within 48 hours.

In addition, I have developed a website that includes some resources for students, families and staff. I will keep this site updated with resources and activities for relaxation, coping, and emotional support.

If your family needs more critical support, I am able to offer suggestions that are within our school and/or community. If your child is seeking immediate support, the Kids Help Phone is available 24 hours a day/7 days per week by phone at 1-800-668 - 6868 (<https://kidshelpphone.ca/>).

Ways to contact me:

1. Email: smckay@hrce.ca
2. Website: Available on the school staff directory
3. Phone: Send me an email and we can make arrangements for me to call you back
4. Google Hangout: For students who might like to have a face to face chat, I will be available on Google Hangouts every day from 10-11am. Please note that this is just to chat and say hello and cannot be used for confidential conversations.

Do not hesitate to reach out. We're in this together!

Take care of each other and stay connected,

Ms. McKay

Nova Scotia Mental Health Resources:

<https://www.mentalhealthns.ca/our-news/mental-health-resources-during-covid-19>

Coping Tools with Covid-19

<https://curriculum.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resource-files/Coping%20w%20COVID19.pdf>