

CASE STUDY: WELLBEING AT MAC He waka eke noa

Emily's story

Emily was a 15-year-old student who had been feeling overwhelmed by school pressures, friendships, and personal issues at home. Over several weeks, her mood had been low, and she was often anxious about upcoming exams and social situations. She found it difficult to concentrate in class and had withdrawn from her friends. Emily's mother noticed the change in her behaviour and encouraged her to talk to someone. Emily wasn't sure where to turn.

Emily felt low and anxious and was having trouble concentrating.

Seeking help

Emily's teacher noticed her disengagement in class and approached her gently after a lesson, asking if everything was okay. Emily confided in her teacher about her struggles. The teacher suggested she speak to a guidance counsellor and offered to set up an appointment for her. Emily agreed and felt relieved knowing someone was looking out for her. The counsellor contacted Emily directly via her school email address to confirm the appointment.

Understanding confidentiality

At Emily's first appointment, the counsellor explained that what they talked about would not be shared, but if the counsellor felt concerned that Emily might seriously harm herself or someone else, or if Emily knew of harm being done to someone else, then the counsellor would need to tell someone. The counsellor explained that this would likely be a trusted person in Emily's life, such as their parent or caregiver, or another trusted adult who could support Emily.

During the counselling sessions

Emily and the counsellor spent most of their time together chatting, with the counsellor asking Emily questions so she could get to know Emily and understand what was going on in Emily's life. The counsellor could see that Emily was experiencing some anxiety and low mood, so she worked with Emily to identify the thoughts that were triggering her anxiety, and helped Emily recognise the warning signs that she was becoming anxious. Together, they worked out a plan with the skills and tools Emily could use to help manage her anxiety.

Moving forward

After four sessions with the guidance counsellor, Emily felt confident that if she started to feel anxious, she could handle the situation using the plan she and the counsellor had worked on. She also felt ready to talk to her Mum about how she had been feeling, and knew that if she needed more support, she could make another appointment to see the counsellor.



When students feel valued and supported, it helps them feel confident in who they are, engaged in their learning, and optimistic about the future.

- The public health nurse provides students with confidential and free healthcare support.
- Students can drop in for a chat or make an appointment.
- We are waiting for Health New Zealand to appoint a new nurse to visit our school.
- PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

CLASSROOM TEACHERS

- Our teachers can help with enquiries about student learning.
- Our <u>online staff directory</u> has teachers' contact details.

WHĀNAU TEACHERS

- A whānau teacher mentors a student throughout their time at MAC.
- Talk to them about student wellbeing.

• Parents can seek assistance for students.

- Students can contact external services.
- The school can also refer students to external services.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Our students and their whānau



YOUTH WORKERS

DEANS

- We have a junior and senior dean for each house.
- Talk to deans about a student's wellbeing, behaviour or learning.

 This is for students who need additional learning support in small groups or with a teacher aide.

- The school's pastoral care team manages referral of these students.
- Students who exhibit challenging behaviour or anxiety may be referred.
- Parents cannot refer students.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

- Teachers refer students to our special education team.
- Our staff can apply to the NZ Qualifications Authority to seek permission for a student to have support during exams.
- Please speak to a student's teacher before contacting our special education team.
- Contact our Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator Dan Frost to share information about a student's additional needs: frostd@mtaspiring.school.nz

LEARNING SUPPORT FOR EXAMS COUNSELLORS/ KAIĀRAHI

- Our youth workers are friendly adults students can talk to.
- Students are welcome to visit the hub and ask to speak to a youth worker.
- Deans can also refer students.

• Our <u>guidance counsellors</u> are trained mental health professionals.

- They can help students deal with mental health and wellbeing issues.
- Parents and students can contact a counsellor directly.
- Our counsellors are bound by privacy law and a professional code of ethics.
- A guidance counsellor cannot disclose information to parents unless they have a student's consent or there is an imminent threat to the wellbeing of a student.

THERE IS HELP.

Talk to a teacher or dean. | Visit the Wellbeing Hub near student reception.

Contact a MAC guidance counsellor. | Monday to Friday during school hours in term time.

E: dept-guidance@mtaspiring.school.nz | T: 03 443 0496

