



At school these things can make me feel upset

Things I can do to make myself feel better when I'm at school

Things that other people (staff and friends) can do to help me feel better when I'm at school

Places in the school where I can go to where I feel safe and supported

If my school support person(s) becomes more worried about me, we have agreed that they will contact the following people so that I get more support (i.e.: parents, GP, counsellor, mental health service)

This plan will be reviewed regularly so that it remains helpful. Review date / / 20

My signature

School support persons' signature

Parent signature

Have parents been advised of the plan and given a copy? Yes No

Other people who have access to the plan are?

Return to School Student Support Plan



Why have a Return to School Student Support Plan?

Returning to school can play an important part in a young person's recovery following an incident of self-harm or a serious suicide attempt, especially when the school has worked to create a supportive and protective environment.

A Return to School Student Support can help the school to establish a safe and supportive learning environment for the young person. It supports a young person's successful transition back to school as well as considering the needs of other students and staff members. The development of the support plan is a collaborative process between the young person, their parent/caregiver, the school and any other key health agency involved the care of the young person. It outlines what situations the young person might find difficult, and how these can be managed in order for them to feel safe and supported.

How to use the Return to School Student Support Plan

The support plan should be completed with the young person and their parent/caregiver before they return to school. Any mental health services or health professionals involved with the young person should also be invited to attend. An up to date risk assessment should also be available in this meeting as this will guide the level of support and care provided to the young person. If the school do not have access to a recent risk assessment then one should be completed by an appropriately trained staff member prior to the support plan being completed.

It is imperative that the young person has ownership of this support plan and that all elements are written with their involvement. Staff should guide discussion and suggestions around strategies but should not complete the support plan on the young person's behalf. Active involvement in the development of the support plan by the young person will ensure that the information is meaningful and helpful and more likely to be used when required.

Please refer to the fact sheet 'Returning to school following self-harm or attempted suicide' prior to completing this Support Plan with the young person as this will help inform some of the information to include in this document.

Return to School Student Support Plan



Key considerations

Identifying a key support person for the young person

Ideally this person would be a wellbeing staff member who has some mental health training and understands the needs of young people at risk. However the young person should be encouraged to choose someone who they trust and feel comfortable with. Encourage them to choose staff who are easy to approach, have time to offer support and who also understand how they can help. If the young person chooses a staff member who is not well placed to be a support person find other ways for this trusted staff member to be involved in the support plan.

Negotiating the details of the support plan

Allow the young person to lead the discussion about the details of their support plan, including when they return to school and how often they check in with their support person. If you believe that the young person's suggestions are unrealistic or unmanageable then

discuss this openly with them, giving clear reasons and alternatives. The duty of care of the school needs to be taken into consideration so it may also be necessary to talk about the limits of what the school is able to offer.

Strategies that help the young person feel better

When exploring the strategies that help the young person feel better use a positive and proactive approach by focusing the discussion on strategies that are healthy and appropriate for a school setting. Young people may want to include unhelpful strategies i.e. leave school or cut themselves. If this occurs explain that while these strategies may feel OK in the short term they are not healthy in the long term. Offer some helpful suggestions when required but encourage the young person to identify what works for them.

Exploring when more support is needed

It is important to be clear and honest with the young person about the potential need to involve other people or services if you are concerned about them. It might be helpful to offer examples, i.e. 'If I see you becoming more withdrawn I'll be concerned about you and will need to talk to xxx'. Reassure the young person that this is part of your obligation to them and that it is to ensure that they receive the best possible support.

Who has access to this plan?

Key school staff involved with the young person should be given *relevant* information about how to assist the young person in class time or while on school grounds. They do not need access to the complete support plan to do this – however should be provided with the information that affects how they approach or support the young person. It is not appropriate that all school staff receive a copy of this plan as it contains confidential information. It is important that the young person understands who will have access to the plan but also why this can be of benefit to them. It is also recommended that parents/caregivers receive a copy of the support plan.

Please detach this front sheet from the template before completing *My Return To School Support Plan* with the student.

My Return To School Support Plan



I have completed this support plan with my school support person(s). This plan will help me to feel safe and supported when I return to school. This support plan will only be seen by the people who need to know this information to assist me at school. Their names are listed below.

Name Date

My school support person/(s) is/are

Details of checking in with my school support person
Place When

My return to school plan includes the following changes to my attendance and/or workload.
I will attend school on the following days Mon Tue Wed Thur Fri
I will attend the following classes

When people start to feel upset, often there are early signs that we need to pay attention to, to stop things getting worse. It's helpful if others are aware of these early signs so they can also provide support.

When I start to get upset, I notice these things about myself

When I start to get upset, others notice these things about me