



Supporting Your Child's Wellbeing During NAPLAN

April 2021

While some children cope well with participating in NAPLAN, others may find the processes stressful or overwhelming. Parents can have an important role to play in supporting their child's well-being through the NAPLAN process.

Different Children Will Cope Differently

Your child's temperament will be one of the predictors for how they will cope with NAPLAN. If they are generally relaxed and cope well with new situations or challenges, they may take NAPLAN in their stride. If your child tends to worry or does not cope well with change, they may find this time more challenging and stressful. These children may need some extra support during NAPLAN time.

Respond to Your Child's Needs

Try to let your child lead the conversations around NAPLAN. Constantly talking about it when they are not worried can create concern when there was not any.

If your child shares with you that they are feeling worried, overwhelmed or stressed, listen and acknowledge their feelings. Support your child to name their own feelings if they



can or reflect the feeling you think they might be experiencing to show them that you empathise with them and to build their emotional literacy. This may be as simple as "It sounds like you are feeling worried about doing NAPLAN. Having to do a test can make me a bit worried too." or "I can see why you are feeling worried about this". Reassure them that feeling worried or stressed before tests is normal. You may wish to give them an example of a time that you were worried and how you managed those feelings.



Consider in advance the range of emotions that you could expect from your child based on their temperament. Be prepared to respond calmly if they acknowledge big or difficult emotions. When

they tell you their concerns, try to avoid jumping in and problem solving for them. The simple act of empathising with them will start to soothe their feelings. You may then want to help them to problem solve.

If you are worried about your child participating in NAPLAN try not to convey these feelings to your child. Your child will take your response to NAPLAN as a model for their reaction, so be mindful of your language and try to maintain a calm, positive, and supportive attitude. Paying attention and naming your own feelings of stress and worry can help you manage these feelings and reduce the likelihood of them impacting on your child.

If you are concerned about how your child is coping and they are not talking to you about it, watch for signs of stress. This may include behaviour changes, difficulty sleeping, early waking, or nightmares. Try to act before signs of stress become worse. Encourage them to talk about what may be worrying them. You may need to prompt them with statements about what you are seeing. For example, you may say "You seem to be having difficulty falling asleep. I'm wondering if there is anything that you are worried about?"

You may wish to talk to your child's teacher or Year Coordinator if you are noticing significant signs of stress at home. Ask whether your child is showing signs of stress at school and ask the school for support for your child.

Reassure Your Child

Be clear to your child that they are only expected to do the best they can on the days that they have NAPLAN. Remind your child that the information only tells how they did on one day of the school year, and the information is used to make sure all students in Australia are receiving the education that they need.

Prepare for the Day

The night before your child has NAPLAN ensure they go to bed early, or on time so that they are well rested. Offer them a nutritious and healthy breakfast. Some children may also benefit from some physical activity in the morning before they get to school.

Be calm and positive when you drop them at school. Tell them that you know they will do their best and that is all that you want.

Seek Additional Help if Needed

If you feel that your child needs more support with stress and worry related to NAPLAN than you can provide, you can ask the school for support. You can also find helpful information about worry and anxious feelings at:

kidshelpline.com.au

raisingchildren.net.au

BeYou.edu.au