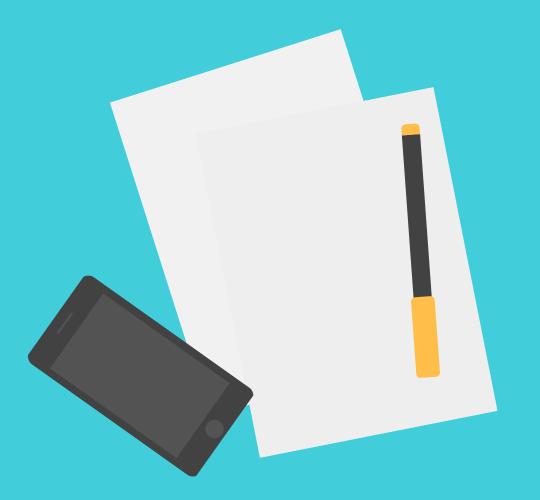


A students' guide to

SURVIVING YEAR 11 & 12





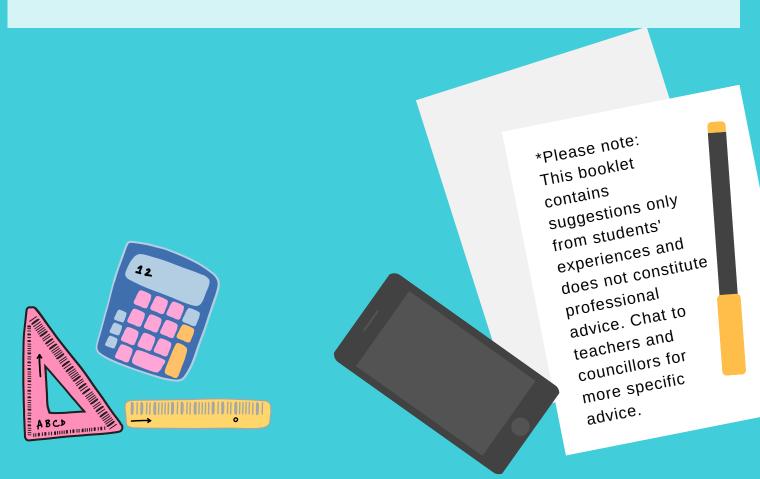
Before we begin...

This booklet aims to help students through their final years of school, achieving the results they're after while having a more enjoyable experience.

It is a compilation of advice, tips and stories from past students who have gone through what your are experiencing now and want to share their knowledge.

Please remember, everything included in this booklet aims to help you succeed in your studies, however, not all tips discussed may work for you. It is important to remember that what works for others may not necessarily work for you. Give it a go, and see if you pick up any new handy hints.

Happy studying!



Important Facts to Remember

1. Year 12 is not the end of the world

This year will be stressful and full of challenges you will need to overcome but you will survive. There is so much more to life than the results you achieve in Year 12. Try and remember to make memories and create life-long friendships along the way.

2. There is more than one way to get in to University

There are so many ways to get in to university. There's the direct pathway, a bridging course, portfolio entry or transfer into your desired degree later down the track. If you really want to get in to university, there are ways to get there!

3. Every Year 11 and 12 student is going through the same thing

You may feel like you are the only one going through this crazy, stressful time but there are thousands of young adults going through the exact same crazy, stressful period as you. Talk to your peers, check in with each other and become a support network for this tough time.

4. University isn't the only option

There are now more opportunities and options than ever before including TAFE, working straight out of school and gaining experience and apprentiships or even a gap year to help develop your growing mind and experience what the world has to offer.



1. Have a specific area where you study

Try not to study on your bed or in a noisy area as you will be tempted to do other things, such as check your phone or watch TV rather than do your work.

2. Have a clean workspace

It is very easy to get distracted if your study area is cluttered, impacting your ability to focus on the task at hand.

3. Keep up, don't catch up

Try and do you study notes earlier rather than later as it takes some pressure off when exams role around. Also, make sure you schedule when your assessments and tests are due so you are prepared and not cramming the night before.



4. Have a schedule

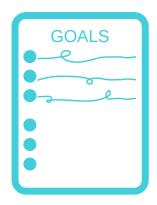
If you can, have specific times where you sit down and get some work done. This will help you get into a routine.

5. Write To Do Lists



To Do Lists are an easy way for you to see everything you need to get done and prioritise what pieces of work you need to do first. It can also help you see how much time you will need to complete your tasks and you can plan accordingly.

Set Yourself Goals

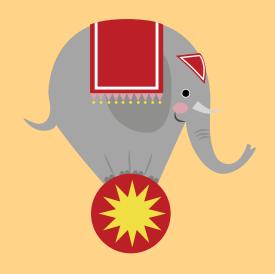


- 1. Aim as high as you can, but create realistic steps to achieve them.
- 2. Rank your goals from most to least important (all goals should be important but some goals you will want to achieve more than others, these goals are the most important).
- 3. Write a plan of how you are going to achieve these goals. These plans can be simple dot points or proper action plans, it's up to you.
- 4. Stick you goals above your work space or somewhere you will see them everyday. You are more likely to achieve your goals if they are written down and you regularly see them.
- 5. Don't be disappointed if you don't get there think of everything you learnt and how you developed as a person throughout the process. Go back to the drawing board and pursue something new!



Sleep is always better than caffeine.

Make sure you get a good night sleep,
especially before tests or exams



How to have a balanced life

It is important to have a healthy, balanced life during Year 12.

It may be an option to cut back a bit on your extra activities outside of school to maintain a healthy balance, however, you don't have to stop them completely. Make sure you still catch up with friends and keep up any sports training you have as this will be a good break from homework.

The important thing to note is understanding when you maybe need to miss a training session or miss going out with your friends to keep on top of your work. Don't try and do everything all the time as this will leave you tired and burnt out.







What is your number one goal you'd like to achieve this year?

What steps can you take to help you achieve this?	
Any other goals here:	

Staying Motivated

There is so much pressure to do well and work hard in your last two years of school, but we tend to forget that two years is actually a really long time! It can be hard to stay motivated and keep on track with your studies without getting drained and fatigued. Here are some tips to stay focused (and pace yourself):

STAY ACTIVE

1

This doesn't mean you have to commit to a marathon training club, or become a gym junkie, but just remember to keep your body moving. When studying, try and get up every hour to re-focus and get your blood moving again. I found it made me stay focused for longer and put off that brain fog from setting in.

This can be a brisk walk around the block, playing with your dog, or even a quick walk to the fridge for a (nutritious) snack!

Check out the City of Kalamunda's website for all kinds of activities for youth to stay physically and mentally healthy. www.kalamunda.wa.gov.au/community/community-support/youth

IT'S OK TO REWARD YOURSELF

2

If your favourite TV show releases a new episode each Wednesday- watch it! Not only does it give you something to look forward to, but you can use it to escape from your studies for an hour and unwind. As long as you aren't binging on Netflix instead of writing that pesky essay, some time-out is OK.



CREATE A PLAYLIST



Some people love to listen to music while studying, others prefer silence. I prefer to work in silence, however, when I feel myself getting distracted I stop work, turn on my motivation playlist, jam for 5 minutes and get motivated again to study. You choose the music that makes you happy- mine was Disney's soundtracks (karaoke to Hakuna Matata would make anyone happy right?).







VISUAL MOTIVATION

If you struggle to stay motivated, have someone else do it for you. Having post-it notes around your study area of different quotes is an effective way to boost motivation.





"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending" -Maria Robinson

Tips to Staying Healthy



1

SPEND TIME WITH OTHERS

Make sure to take time out to spend with your family and friends as well as getting involved in community activities. Community activities give you the opportunity to have a fun day out with those you know or meet new people.

Some resources and programs that run to help involvement of the community are Act Belong Commit, Live Lighter and the Heart Foundation.



DO SOMETHING CREATIVE

Keeping up with extracurricular activities like sports and arts can have a positive impact on your mental state and gives you a break from studying.



FOCUS ON YOUR STRENGTHS, NOT YOUR WEAKNESSES

Focusing on what you're good at rather than what you find difficult or challenging can boost self-esteem and confidence. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Try and partner with someone who has opposite strengths so you can combine your skills and tackle projects and assignments together.



TAKE TIME OUT

It is okay to take some time for yourself and relax. Giving yourself a breather allows your mind and body to recover from the stress of the day and re-focus on the task at hand. Have a go at mindfulness - take 5 minutes to do a colouring in, stare at the clouds passing over, or see how many times you can bounce a ball on your foot.



SLEEP WELL

You cannot function properly without a good night sleep. Sleep gives our mind and bodies a chance to repair and recover, ready for the next day of work. Everything seems more challenging and out of reach when you're tired. If you are feeling completely snowed under and the workload is unachievable, some times the best response it just to sleep. The morning will bring a fresh start and you'll be ready to tackle anything.



KEEP ACTIVE

Being physically active can help reduce stress and improve your mood. Not to mention is good for your fitness.



NUTRITION

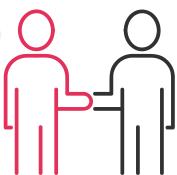
Having a balanced diet is vital to make sure your body is getting all the nutrients it needs to function properly. Make sure you're eating enough fruits and vegetables to give you energy and promote healthy brain function.



Make your own Timetable Don't forget to block out time for things like sports training or cooking dinner!

SUN																
SAT																
FRI																
THUR																
WED																
10 E																
NOW																
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It mill pe ok!



Advice from students who have lived through the experience!

EMMA W. (ATAR Student)

Current position: University Student, currently completing her second degree

Achievements: President of Rotaract Club of Kalamunda

High School Experience:

I had a very positive and empowering high school experience. I felt the pressure to perform but I also had the student, staff and peer support I needed to do well and achieve the goals I set myself. I was heavily involved in leadership at my school and I did a fair few extra-curricula activities such as debating and netball. Although every now and then I thought my head might explode from the amount of new knowledge I was trying to cram in, I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of senior school and ATAR. Right now I am achieving the goals I set for myself back in high school, and I think a lot of that comes down to the positive experience I created for myself when I was in my final few years of formalized schooling.

"You know yourself best and you are the best person to identify when it is all a little bit too much"

Tips and tricks on Senior School Survival:

My number one tip has always been and will always be to take care of yourself first and foremost. You know yourself best. You know how you work. You know what does and doesn't work for you and you are the best person to identify when it is all a little bit too much. So when it is a bit too much, and you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed or any of the associated emotions, give yourself a chance to take a breath and calm down. Make a list of activities that make you feel calm and display them near your study area. Each time you feel overwhelmed, stop, look at that list, choose an activity and DO IT! For me, I would stop what I was doing and go and talk to my family. They were and still are my greatest support structure and taking a break from my math homework to go and talk to my Mum about a new TV show she was watching helped me relax and calm down. Within 10 minutes my anxiety had reduced significantly, I felt rejuvenated and I was ready to tackle the challenges again. Do what you need to do (within reason) to get by and always prioritise your health and wellbeing.

CHRIS A. (VET STUDENT)

Current position: University Student

Achievements: Best Actor in the State 2018, Performed as the lead role for a musical at the Regal

Theatre

Congratulations, you've made it!

Twelve years of schooling have led you up to the big one—Year 12. Months of tears, tantrums, summary sheets, parties, procrastination and a few full-blown breakdowns teach you quite a lot about yourself.

It's no secret that Year 12 can be stressful at times, and most students will notice that at one point or another, they start to feel the pressure. I certainly did. If you're struggling with something, maybe a certain topic in class or just school and study in general or you might also be feeling stress in your personal life with relationships and family. This is all perfectly normal, and I found that It's a good idea to talk to someone early before anxiety and stress starts to build up and you're at rock bottom where it's harder to pull yourself out. Getting help is simple. It can be easy as seeking out your teacher before class or chatting with your parents about home life and how they can help you best throughout Yr 12 . Assistance can also come from your careers counselor, year-level coordinator or pastoral care coordinator, former students and friends.

It's also important to learn to say no to things when you really have no time to spare — you'll find that most people understand how stressful Year 12 can be. This isn't saying stop everything and study. This just means find a happy medium. Having a hobby like sport, painting or catching up with mates can be a good way to break up study and make sure your still spending time looking after yourself. Don't lose yourself to study.

Study and Get Organised!

At the start of Year 12, it may seem like your staring down the barrel of a gun, but organising your study can reduce stress. Get organised is something you've probably heard time and time again, but it really does help! Here are a few key tips to help organise your study:

- Try making up a study schedule before exams
- Set aside time for each subject throughout the week
- · Start assignments as early as you can
- Set yourself goals to complete work
- Make the most of free time.

Remember everyone studies differently. What works for your friends may not work for you. Think about switching between different study methods to keep your focus and make it more enjoyable. For example:

- Use flashcards or mind maps
- Write summary notes
- · Watch online tutorials
- Get someone to quiz you.

Studying doesn't have to be a solo sport, make a team of friends in your class and all work towards a goal or through a chapter together.

"Just remember that this will all be water under the bridge one day so enjoy every crazy moment while it lasts"

CHRIS A. (Cont.)

How to view your situation:

It can be hard to look past graduation and into the future. My advice: Year 12 is an important year, but it will not dictate the rest of your life. There is always more than one pathway into a course or job you want. I didn't achieve an ATAR score at high school, yet I am studying at one of the leading universities in WA and have worked in job of my dreams and continuing to work towards having that as my full-time job. There are millions of ways to get to where you want to be, but your dream doesn't work unless you do. Put all your effort in pursuit of short term goals and eventually you'll find yourself exactly where you want to be.

My final point for thriving in year 12 is to enjoy it! Year 12 is an amazing, crazy and intense year full of starts and ends all of which will affect us differently for a lot of us. Saying goodbye isn't always easy, just remember to focus on all the amazing adventures you're going to have once school is over. You might think actually... you miss school? Blasphemy, I know, but it happens. So, next time you're stressed out of your mind, just remember that this will all be water under the bridge one day and to enjoy every crazy moment while it lasts. Embrace every moment and never forget to laugh because for many of you, you'll be laughing and sharing funny stories with new University. TAFE or work friends with a sense of that odd melancholy feeling thinking that it wasn't really that bad and you'll miss it.

So embrace it and enjoy every minute!

MATILDA F. (VET STUDENT)

Current position: University Student

Achievements: Runner-Up General DUX, Portfolio entry into Curtin University for Bachelor of Fine Arts and Arts Leader for McAuley House in Year 12

I was a General student throughout year 11 and 12. School for me was always about learning, making lasting friendships and of course enjoying your time. I knew I only had two years left of high school and I wanted to make the most of my time.

While I could have chosen the ATAR pathway, I figured I'd rather get high marks in General (which was all I needed to get started out of school anyway) than just scrape past in ATAR. This was a hard decision for me as every single one of my friends had chosen ATAR.

I ended up choosing to study four General subjects, one ATAR and a Certificate II. This was a wonderful combination for me as I could challenge myself just enough in my ATAR Applications class as well as enjoying my time in my other, more stress free classes.

I was extremely proud of myself when graduating as I received the Runner up DUX for General, as well as top of my class in English, Sport and Visual Art General. This, among other things, is why I am where I am today. I was accepted into a Bachelor of Arts at Curtin University through portfolio entry, and I am hoping to later study Primary Education.

"I knew I only had two years left of high school and I wanted to make the most of my time"

JACOB W. (ATAR STUDENT)

Current position: University Student

Achievements: Oblate Father Scholarship to Notre Dame University Australia, AIS Local Sports

Star Award and Multiple Mountain Bike Junior State Champion

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

No matter how intellectually talented you may be, year 12 has a way of chewing you up and spitting you out with an overload of stress and anxiety! Point is, everyone is going through the same stress, pressure and hardships, so always remember, everything you are feeling is normal, and everyone else is going through it with you.

In my own ATAR experience, it was a long undulating road leading to where I am now. Quite honestly, it began in year 11. By the close of semester 2, year 11, I had a predicted ATAR of 74 and an attendance rate of 52%. Due to sporting and family commitments, essentially, I missed out on an entire term. For the first time in my life, I felt like I was a colossal failure, it was mentally tormenting. Also note, I am not advocating that a 74 ATAR constitutes being a failure, more specifically for me, I was significantly underachieving. Looking back, the significance is minuscule. With so many of my friends attending the same university as me, who didn't even receive an ATAR, it seems trivial to be upset over a 74 ATAR. Hence, lesson number 1, and arguably the most important, ATAR does not dictate your future!The way I like to think of it is that if there's a "will, there's a way!" A strong enough commitment makes anything possible!

So, being left in a rather long game of 'catch-up' I had a clear-cut pathway to get from where I was, to where I wanted to be. Thankfully, I had the chance to start fresh, regroup and asses where I was at mentally. This is something that I cannot stress enough! Taking time to talk with parents, friends, extended family, whomever, about your mental health and brainstorming strategies to improve your situation and maximize results. From there on out I had a shift in mindset, I had a newfound hunger for results if my test result was less than 100%, I needed to push harder, as there was still room for improvement. In the second half of the year, my results soared to new heights and following are some of the key tips that helped me get the most out of my ATAR whilst maintaining a manageable workload.

TIPS & TRICKS TO OBTAIN A HIGH ATAR

- 1. Listen in class. Now, when I say this, it doesn't mean just sit in class and hear what the teacher has to say, it means you need to pay attention to what the teacher is trying to communicate to you and process it as you hear it. You don't need to think particularly hard, just listen.
- 2. Never stop until you know the answers. This means to simply never let yourself go into a test or exam, feeling like if a certain topic came up, you wouldn't know the answers. This is much easier said than done, however, it is what sets apart the top achievers from the average achievers. The simplest way to apply this tip is to ask questions when you don't understand a topic or concept.
- 3. Lastly, never be afraid to ask for help. Something that is massively underrated is maintaining good mental health. To get through Year 12, you need to work very hard to build a support network of people you can trust, as to be able to lean on them and get their help when you feel a lack of; motivation, happiness, self-esteem, general positivity, or any other detrimental emotions and thoughts that could hinder your studies.

MITCHELL D. (APPRENTICESHIP)
Current position: University Student

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Flexibility is key, no matter what you think you're going to go into, everything could change in the blink of an eye so keep your options open!

I left high school in year 11 because of the high pressure stress and I went into an apprenticeship as a heavy diesel mechanic. I loved the apprenticeship but it didn't quite feel right for me. I decided to leave the apprenticeship and try and to get straight into the workforce. After having a couple of jobs and them not really fitting what I wanted, I decided I wanted to go back to study and give schooling another try.

I spoke to a careers advisor about getting into university. After I realised how simple it was I couldn't not try! I am now going into my first semester at university doing a 6 month bridging course and could not be happier. As much as I regret not being able to finish high school, my ability to be flexible and keep all my options open allowed me to try out different opportunities. I got to try out different pathways which allowed me to see what pathway I wanted to pursue.

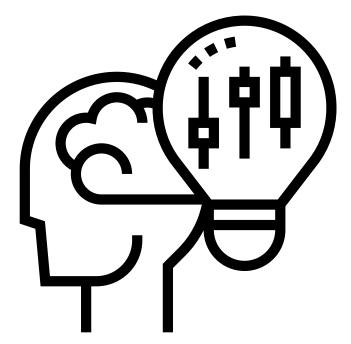
If I could give any advice to current year 11 and 12 student it would be to push yourself, but not too hard. Know your capabilities and stick to them, don't over stretch yourself. Stay open minded and always say yes to new opportunities.

TIPS & TRICKS CHOSING YOUR PREFERRED PATHWAY

There are so many different options to choose from. If you don't get into one, don't stress! There's TAFE, university bridging courses, traineeships, apprenticeships, or you could go straight into the workforce!

Everyone learns differently and learns at different speeds, so whats right for your best friend might not be right for you. As well as that, what was right for your parents or siblings might not work for you. Find what works for you and keep your options open. Some people don't work well with high school, but thrive at university, and some people have their heart set on university but find that they enjoy hands on apprenticeships more!

Use your networks to find out what works for others and try out your different options.



ELIZABETH B. (ATAR STUDENT)

Current position: University Student

Achievements: Has worked with the Starlight foundation, Perth Fashion Festival, Hopman Cup,

Paramount Nightclub, David Gardiner PR and Lingue Senza Frontiere to name a few.

I'll be honest, I didn't take school very seriously in my upper school years. I pulled a lot of all nighters and spent so much time doing all of my work last minute so I would advise not to do the same as it makes for some very bad habits in the future. I spent my time volunteering, and working three jobs part time because I put higher value on gaining experience than on my education. I did well at school but I'm very happy that I didn't put all my energy to just focusing on my studies. My one regret is not treating my mental health as seriously as I should have.

Currently, I'm in my final semester of Uni studying PR and Event Management. I've worked a million events, juggled four jobs and have completed uni full time. I've had the opportunity to travel to Italy, the UK and Portugal for my degree and for my work and I love the amazing experiences I've had since.



"My one regret is not treating my mental health as seriously as I should have" My five top tips for surviving upper school would easily be:

- 1. Think about whether this will matter in three years. Seems like a long time but any time I was upset, disappointed or annoyed, I did this. I found that if I thought about whether or not it would matter in three years, it helped me put it into perspective and could clear my head.
- 2. Grades aren't the only option being in high school in Australia gives you so many different educational opportunities. Through vocational training such as TAFE, you can enter university by doing a Cert IV (70 ATAR) or Diploma (84 ATAR). It's also possible through your portfolio work! So if you've been working during your upper school years you're able to apply for internships and university through this!
- 3. Take a break no like seriously, if you're stressed and are freaking out you are so much better off to take a break for an hour. You stressing for an hour isn't going to help. It's okay to walk away. You deserve it. It's better your mental health is okay.
- 4. Talk to your teachers I made sure I had good relationships with my teachers and always told them the honest truth if an assignment could potentially be late or if I was freaking out about an upcoming exam! They are there to help you (they're not there to be your therapist but they want you do to your best!).
- 5. You are talented Your talent could be Math or Music, but it could also be how thoughtful you are, how kind you are, how trustworthy you are. We are all talented in so many different ways, could be our personality and it could be our academia. You are capable of so many things!

Senior School Survival

Tips from those who've been there and done that!

"Apply for scholarships even if you dont think you will get the ATAR" -Emma "Make sure you understand concepts, rather than just memorising a bunch of words" - Mahima "Dont underestimate your potential!" -**Celine**

"Make sure you get involved in the school as much as possible.."
- Alanna

"Staying up too late to do homework or study can do more damage than good " - Alex

"Put in the hard yards now and then you will reap the rewards" -Brayden "Fight for every single mark you deserve. Every mark counts" - **David**

"Don't leave everything to the last minute!" -Megan

"Do subjects because you want to do them, not because you think they will make you 'look smart'"- **Brody**

"Extra-curricular activities can save your life" -David "Apply for the National Youth Science Forum!" -**Daniel**

"Procrastination is like a credit card: it's lots of fun until you get the bill' - **Jen**

"Just generally remember to take a breath and see the bigger picture" - **David**

"Surround yourself with positive influences" - Emma "When picking subjects, do ones that make you happy" -Alyssa

"Make flash cards" - **Imo** "Force yourself not to stress out - that worked for me! - Max

"There's always different pathways into what you want to do. Don't stress if you have to take a

> different route" -Madison

"Get a good blood flow before an exam - jump around a bit or do pushups before going in" - Andrew

"Dont compare yourself to others" - Ash

> "Sleep is sacred" -Joan

"Dont underestimate the power of positivity"

- Emma

For the Parents/Guardians





We've produced lots of advice and tips for the students, but for parents and guardians this can be an extremely stressful time too. Here are some points to guide you so that this period can be a little less intense!

1. Listen to your child.

Sometimes they might choose a pathway or make a decision you do not agree with. It is important to talk with them about their choice. Listen to their reasons and try to understand their point of view, providing advice and support where you can.

2. Allow them to have external commitments.

Whether it be sport, work or friends, it is important for students to get external interactions during this intense year! Socialising allows them to talk with others who are going through the same thing about what they're experiencing, de-stress and allow them to take a break from studying. A social sport allows your child to stay fit and join a team environment, and a job allows them to learn vital workplace skills. Just ensure they can maintain this school/life balance and there is enough time to study.

3. If they ask for it, give them space.

Sometimes everything can become overwhelming and stress levels reach a peak. Instead of a heated argument or persistent questioning can make it worse. If you child asks to have some time alone, to give them some space, let them. Some time out alone on a walk, or listening to music in bed can do a world of good, and they'll come back calm and open to talk.

4. Remember, every mistake is a learning curve.

They will make mistakes but it is important you help them learn from them instead of getting angry or frustrated. They understand the importance of this year and the consequences of a mistake. Rather than dwelling on the issue, help guide them towards what they can do differently in the future. Positivity is always more effective than an argument.



For the Parents/Guardians





5. Remember, it's their future, not yours!

During this time your child will be thinking about what they want to become, where they want their future to go, what kind of career would they like. These are some very big questions which the child needs to decide for themselves, without any bias from their parents. You need to let them live their own life and choose their own path. It can be hard, and guidance is fine, but a choice made by themselves is far more likely to lead to happiness.

6. Be part of their support network.

Year 12 is a very stressful time. Sometimes this stress will get the better of them and they may lash out or misbehave. Understand that this is not their normal behaviour and they just need some support instead of punishment. We are not saying all actions out of character are due to stress, we are just saying be aware of the pressure they are under.

7. Create your own network.

Chat to your child's friend's parents to gauge how other families are going. You can also chat to your school - the teachers, chaplains and heads of school are great ways to get advice and insight.

8. University isn't the only option.

If your child's pathway does not consist of going to university, thats ok. There are so many other pathways such as TAFE or apprenticeships or even online alternatives for them to discover after high school.

9. Didn't get the ATAR you needed for university? No stress.

If your child didn't get the required ATAR to attend the course they desired at university, its no problem, other options include doing a course requiring a lower ATAR then moving to their desired course the next semester, or doing bridging courses lasting from 2-6 weeks that allow you to go straight into your course.

10. IT ENDS.

This crazy period will feel like it is going on forever, but it does end! Try and get through with a positive and helpful attitude and you'll come out with a strong relationship with your child.





Good luck in your studies! We hope some of these tips will help you out.

The City of Kalamunda's Youth Services host a variety of events and workshops throughout the year that can be great for skill-building or taking some time out for fun.

For more information on these programs: www.kalamunda.wa.gov.au/youth call 92579968 email: youth@kalamunda.wa.gov.au

f @cityofkalamundayouth / 'The Influence'

