

Dear Families,

Wodonga Senior Secondary College has partnered with local service providers to deliver an innovative project as a pilot in our school. The Wodonga Project is a structured way for our school to work with services to provide additional support and offer opportunities to our students.

The Wodonga Project is led by Junction Support Services in partnership with many other local organisations including Gateway Health, Headspace Albury Wodonga, Upper Murray Family Care, the Northeast Local Learning and Employment Network, Albury Wodonga Health and Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service. Wodonga Senior Secondary College has been working closely with these organisations for several years, as well as talking to members of the community, to develop the Project.

A key component of The Wodonga Project is a yearly survey that all students at our school will complete, usually in Term 1, called the Australian Index of Adolescent Development (AIAD).

The 2026 AIAD Survey is scheduled at Wodonga Senior Secondary College in **Term 1, Week 7 on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March** during the school day.

### **What is involved in the survey?**

The survey will take about 20-30 minutes to complete and will be administered by the school during normal school hours. Teachers will be present when students complete the survey.

The survey asks some questions about the student and their life and relationships at home, at school and outside of school. It also asks for identifying information including name, gender, date of birth.

### **No one at school, in Wodonga or in the Government sees the survey answers.**

Once a student completes their survey, they will place it in a confidential envelope, which will be collected by a staff member of Junction Support Services. The surveys are packed and sent to Upstream Australia, who oversee the secure processing of the surveys, the management of the data on students and the preparation of reports. The surveys are processed by a computer to generate the data.

The results are analysed and sent back to The Wodonga Project. Initially identified (based on the survey results) **Year 11 students** will be provided with additional supports and opportunities by the Wodonga Project team. No one except The Wodonga Project staff and school wellbeing staff see this list on a needs-to-know basis. Based on this list, a member of The Wodonga Project team will contact identified Year 11 students to have a conversation with them about possible support. Students can decide whether they would like to participate in The Wodonga Project, or not. Wherever possible, families will be contacted as well.

Year 10 and 12 survey results will also be analysed for themes. The school will receive a profile of their student body as a whole. This profile does not identify individual students. We will use the survey and pilot outcomes as evidence to try to secure long term project funding for all public-school students in Wodonga from Year 7 to Year 12. The AIAD will also help us to understand how effective The Wodonga Project has been in supporting students' year-to-year. The overall results may be reported or published publicly; however, students will never be identified in this process - it is about overall numbers and effectiveness.

### **Participation in The Wodonga Project**

We hope that everyone participates in The Wodonga Project because we think it is a positive opportunity for young people. *Wodonga Senior Secondary College encourages all students to complete the AIAD survey as it provides valuable information about how we can best support all students as well as identify young people who may need additional help.* But participation is not compulsory:

- Parents/carers can **opt out** of their student participating **by completing the attached form and sending it back to school, or by calling the school on the number provided (additional details below)**.
- Students can decide not to complete the survey, at the time of the survey.
- Students can say no to participating in The Wodonga Project if they are contacted.
- If a student is participating in The Wodonga Project, they can withdraw at any point.
- There are no consequences for deciding not to participate.

Students will complete surveys on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at the school.

If parents/carers return the opt out note by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026, their child will not undertake the survey.

If parents/carers return the opt out note after this date, their child's survey will be removed from processing and destroyed.

Opt out notes must be returned by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026 for surveys to be removed from processing.

### **What exactly does the survey tell us?**

High school is a complicated time in a young person's life. The Wodonga Project is all about helping young people and families to work through the more challenging times, supporting them to stay on track to becoming a thriving adult.

The survey results provide us with an indication that a young person **may** be experiencing something in one or more of the following areas:

- Stress or some kind of complication at home and/or school, or in life.
- The types of relationships and connections that a young person has in their family, school, and community.
- If a young person is currently engaging in behaviours that could be considered 'risk taking' (remember, **they will not get into trouble** from providing this information and the results don't detail anything specific about these behaviours).
- If a young person is currently experiencing, or is at risk of developing, a mental health concern.

*Once we receive the results, The Wodonga Project will speak with the young person to confirm whether the indicators were accurate. The results are used only to tell us who might benefit from the support offered as part of The Wodonga Project.*

Experience of these factors can range in severity. Sometimes, they can lead to more severe outcomes like homelessness and school disengagement – but that does not need to happen.

We know that if we can support young people earlier on, before things become serious, the chances of a severe outcome are significantly reduced. That is why we are a part of The Wodonga Project.

### **Some notes about data**

The data collection process will comply with Information Privacy Principles (IPP) and Health Privacy Principles (HPP). The University of South Australia's internal data management processes are drawn from and consistent with the Australia Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research as well as the University's own Ownership and Retention of Data policy.

The data will be held for 15 years in line with The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018). It will be used to evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of The Wodonga Project.

Additionally, the AIAD data and Wodonga Project client records will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of The Wodonga Project.

Students who have and have not participated in The Wodonga Project may also be contacted about voluntary participation in this evaluation.

**Contact information**

If you would like to speak with someone about The Wodonga Project or if you would like to seek some support, please contact:

**Lana Melbourne**

Director Wellbeing and Pathways

Phone: (02) 6043 7500, Direct: (02) 6048 7671, Mobile: 0429 420 706

## Notice to Opt Out of The Wodonga Project AIAD Survey

If you do **not** want student/s in your care to participate, please complete this form and return it to the front office.

If you are happy for student/s in your care to participate, please don't return this form.

*Wodonga Senior Secondary College encourages all students to complete the AIAD survey as it provides valuable information about how we can best support all students as well as identify young people who may need some additional help.*

**I DO NOT** give consent for the following student/s in my care to participate in the **Australian Index for Adolescent Development (AIAD) survey**.

Name of student ..... Year level and Roll.....

Name of student ..... Year level and Roll.....

*(add additional students below)*

**Name of parent/carer** .....

**Signature of parent/carer** .....

**Date** .....

### **Additional Students**

Name of student ..... Year level and Roll.....

N.B It is a standard obligation under Victorian legislation that school and service staff must report cases of abuse or neglect that come to their attention at any time during the performance of their duties.