

# Handy tips for your child starting secondary school (for secondary parents in Victoria)

Research has shown that children have better academic and social outcomes when their parents and teachers work together. Establishing a good collaborative relationship with a child's school community is even more imperative when you have a child with a condition such as cystic fibrosis (CF).

## Handy tips:

- At the beginning of the year, ask for a meeting as soon as you can with the key pastoral person or people involved with your child (Home Group teacher, Year Coordinator, PE teacher, school nurse etc.) Work out who the best person is for you to liaise with at the school, as your child will have many teachers.
- Make yourself known to the school office staff so that they know whom to contact and familiarise themselves if your child is unwell.
- Download a student support health plan for cystic fibrosis from the CFSmart website and send it to the school/take it to the meeting.
- At the meeting discuss the key points you want the school to know in regards to your child's health needs e.g. keeping your child away from other children who are unwell, allowing them easy access to toilets, setting up a system enabling them to quickly leave a lesson if needed etc. If the school is unable to arrange a meeting at the start of the year, send an email outlining the key points you want them to know.
- Ask them to make sure that the key points from the meeting are sent around to ALL the teachers who will be working with your child. Plus, if there are special systems that they put in place - make sure that this information is given to cover teachers. This can prevent embarrassing situations for your child.
- Inform the school about the CFSmart website and eLearning resources - [cfsmart.org](http://cfsmart.org). Ask if all the members of staff working with your child could complete the eLearning modules or at least some of the staff. (CFCC can send you further information/flyers about this if needed)
- Send the school the invitation from RCH/Monash Hospitals about the free CF Educator Education Day held in February each year. Teachers can attend RCH, Monash or a regional hub. It is ideal if at least one member of staff can attend each year, particularly in your child's 1st year.
- If your child is unwell and away from school/in hospital, inform the school as quickly as you can and let them know the expected length of the absence. This is especially important when they are away for some time and you want the school to organise work to be sent home or to the hospital.



- Your child will need to manage their food/lunchbox and ensure they take their enzymes, if required, salt tablets, as needed etc. Talk with them about how they will manage this and liaise with the school if needed.
- Have a conversation with your child about whether or not they want to let their friends and classmates know about their CF. For more information about this see CFSmart flyer 'Should I tell my friends and classmates about my CF?'
- Your child may feel awkward about eating different foods to their classmates. For more information and ideas about this see CFSmart flyer 'CF Diet – Talking to your friends about what you are eating'
- Depending on how your child feels, you can get a copy of CFSmart's 'Be a hero and do the sleeve sneeze' poster to be placed in the classroom.



- If your child would like their teacher and/or them to run a session about CF for their classmates, there is a booklet of lesson activities for teaching students about CF on the CFSmart website. The booklet is called 'Teacher lesson activities and resources'.
- Let the school know about the CFCC Education Support Coordinator whom they can contact if they have any questions. Tel: 03 9686 1811 or email: [education@cfcc.org.au](mailto:education@cfcc.org.au)
- If you want to talk through any issues about your child's education, you are always welcome to contact the CFF Education Support Coordinator. They are there to support you and your child. They are also happy to liaise with the school at any time.

**[www.cfsmart.org](http://www.cfsmart.org)**

**for more information:**

**P:** (03) 9686 1811

**E:** [education@cfcc.org.au](mailto:education@cfcc.org.au)



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