

YONDR POUCH IMPLEMENTATION

Dear Parents,

Ballina Coast High School is writing to share the exciting news that we are partnering with Yondr to make our school a phone-free space from the **beginning of Term 1 2021**.

We understand that mobile phones are a great utility, but mobile phone use has increasingly become a source of distraction, anti-social behaviour and conflict both at home and at school.

Ballina Coast High School believes in maintaining a safe and effective educational environment for all of its students. Research shows that the mere presence of mobiles in the classroom can be detrimental to student performance. According to a survey and report from Common Sense Media that involved 1,240 interviews with parents and their 12 to 18-year-old children, 50% of teens feel attached to their mobile devices, and 59% of their parents agree that their kids have a problem putting their devices down (U.S. News & World Report).

Yondr is currently used across the world in hundreds of classrooms and schools, at concerts, comedy shows, weddings and special events of all kinds. The goal of these spaces is to encourage people to engage with each other and their surroundings.

The Yondr program employs a simple, easy-to-use case that stores a mobile and requires an unlocking base to open. When students enter school grounds they will place their phone in a Yondr case which is then locked. Students maintain possession of their phones but will not be able to use them until they are unlocked at the end of the day. During lessons that require or would be enriched by the use of mobile phones, unlocking stations would be provided for educational purposes.

We believe this will allow our students to be:

- Engaged in classroom activities and assignments
- Engage more successfully with the BCHS BYOD policy in completing classwork
- Less likely to engage in conversations around bullying
- Less likely to be distracted and procrastinate on assignments in class

In an effort to best serve your child, we will need your full support in adoption of the Yondr program at our school. We want to assure our families that you can reach your student at the Front Office on 02 66810100.

It is important that the students do not feel like their phone is trapped, however, some students will struggle during the transition period. We thank you for your continued support in ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment for our students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly.

Sincerely,

John Parker
Relieving Principal
Ballina Coast High School

How Yondr Works



POUCH

As you enter the phone free space, your phone is placed in a Yondr pouch by our staff.



SECURE

The pouch is closed and secured. It is handed back to you. You'll keep it throughout the event.



EXIT

When leaving the space, you'll tap the pouch on an unlocking base to release your phone.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I want to reach my child during the school day?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning. Please refrain from contacting your student during the school day unless it is an emergency. Contact the school's main front office on 02 66810100 to reach your child.

What if there is an emergency?

In case of an emergency, we direct our students to safety first. School staff will be able to unlock a Yondr pouch in a matter of seconds for students once they are in a safe and secure location.

Will my student's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks where it is completely safe.

What if the pouch gets damaged?

The Yondr pouch belongs to Ballina Coast High School just like any other school supply. If a student damages a Yondr pouch, he/she will be held responsible. The student's phone and pouch will be confiscated and discipline processes will be followed (See BCHS Mobile Phone Policy).

Some Worthwhile Reading

Phones reduce the amount of time students are bored. Whilst this sounds positive, research has tested and shown that boredom is a driver of creativity and productivity. Boredom allows the mind time to wander, consider complex ideas and form opinions and perspective. People exposed to small periods of boredom for example give more to charities, are kinder to others and actively become more involved in their physical and social environment. Reducing student screen time might increase some boredom but will improve their life.

Andrew Bastawrous, an ophthalmologist says, “There’s definitely a myopia epidemic. Many more people are becoming short-sighted than they were a decade ago”. This is thought to be a combination of mobile phone usage and a reducing in focusing outside on people and the environment (also affected by mobile phone usage). “The growth of the eye tends to slow down in your late teens and stop. But what’s happening is that it isn’t stopping. It seems to continue”. The implications of this are not just that there are more people needing glasses, potentially severe visual impairment can result in glaucoma retinal detachment and another retinal problems.

According to recent research people tap, swipe, and click an average of 2,617 times per day. For the top 10 percent of users, this number doubled to 5,427 touches per day. Data collected from Apple and Google show that average users unlock their phones 110 times per day. That is equivalent to six to seven times per lesson regardless of if the phone is on the desk or on silent in their pocket or bag. This shows the ‘old’ strategy is not helping our students succeed.

In the second half of last year more than a quarter of incidents recorded by teachers relate to inappropriate use of mobile phones. Over the same time the phrase “mobile phone” was written 1224 times in relation to negative student behaviour. According to research, (conducted by Spears, Keeley, Bates, & Katz), one in five young people under 18 (20%) reported experiencing online bullying in any one year and of those incidents almost a fifth of victims are exclusively bullied through devices such as mobile phones.

The biggest lament of teachers in regard to mobile phones is that they lead to student distraction and off task behaviour. Texting a friend is a tempting diversion that many students select over being part of the lesson. Observations of student toilet usage during class time indicate that 1 in 10 toilet breaks appear to be coordinated between friends in different classes through the use of mobile phones. The amount of time students are spending out of the classroom to relieve themselves has doubled.

Teenagers who spend five or more hours a day on electronic devices [are 71% more likely](#) to have a risk factor for suicide than those who spend less than an hour a day. Young people who use screens this much are also 52% more likely to sleep less than [seven hours a night](#) – a significant amount of sleep deprivation with potential consequences for both physical and mental health. The more time young adults spend on social media, the [more likely they are to be depressed](#) or [lonely](#). (The Guardian – 12 January 2018)