

# Right at home in online world

A student at St Norbert College quickly picks up new skills as she adapts to a remote learning environment

Students from St Norbert College in Queens Park started remote learning at home in Week 9 of Term 1.

Year 12 Courtney McCrostie is on a vocational pathway, studying a Certificate III in Music Industry and Drama.

She reveals what she was enjoying and what was challenging by the end of her first week of at-home learning.

## How was your first week of remote learning from home?

At first, remote learning was very daunting, however with the guidance and support from our teachers, parents and peers, the transition has taken place with minimal difficulties. The online platform "Teams" is easy to use. I really like that we can voice call with our teachers (as if we were) in a normal class setting.

## Any technical teething problems?

No system is perfect but I feel that when the technical difficulties arise, they are addressed relatively quickly. It has been great to be able to give input and suggestions to our teachers about things that can benefit us and make the transition easier. We take for granted the ability to be in a physical schooling environment.

## What are you enjoying most

## about remote learning and what are the challenges?

### I'm enjoying:

- the independence that allows us to work at our own pace.
- learning how to adapt to a changing environment. Especially where our world is changing and becoming more digital, it's good to develop these skills.
- not having to get up at 6.30am, so I'm getting more sleep.
- I love being able to still talk and interact in classes. For example, teachers ask a question to the class, we are then able to turn our mics on and still participate and answer the questions.

### The challenges:

- Not being with my friends (even though we still keep connected). I'm a really social person, so I miss not being able to interact with everyone – even the little things like saying "hello" and "good morning" when you walk past someone.
- Time management skills. I'm not too bad with managing time, however I have once been caught up making a hot chocolate during recess, then doing a mad dash back for Period 3.
- Assessments having to be moved or changed.
- Technical difficulties such as some live videos/audio sometimes dropping out.
- Cancellation of events, for example, Kairos (retreat), cross



country carnival (though that is going online).

- More distractions at home, for example, sometimes it's hard if I'm sitting in one of my virtual classes studying when I could really be dancing etc. It's not like I'm going to be told off by my teacher. So it's that sense of self discipline.

## How are you adapting your music studies?

It has been a very different experience with the online learning in terms of the performing arts. Obviously, it's much harder to do cert band rehearsals as the lag (lip sync) would be crazy. Trying to get five or six people to stay in sync with lag is not really an option. So it's been a great opportunity for us to develop our skills. As I've recently just started learning piano (as well as vocals and guitar), remote learning has been great to get that extra practice in. The time I'd normally be sitting on the bus, I can now sit and practise or

rehearse. I really miss all the co-curricular activities that we can normally do at school, I miss the family-like atmosphere that we are normally exposed to throughout the day in the performing-arts classes (or even just in the centre). There's always people popping in saying hello and, let's face it, it's where most of my good friends are. In Term 2, our virtual instrumental lessons will start up, so we will get one-on-one tuition again. I know the school is trying really hard to get this up and running for us. School continues to give us opportunities to develop, especially in the performing arts. For example, "Drama Online" has been offered to us. Although new to us, we have already watched a few productions (which I have really enjoyed so far). These are brought to us by National Theatre Live. I'm mostly just taking this time to focus on both my studies and develop my piano playing skills.

**St Norbert College, Queens Park, student Courtney McCrostie.**



Isabel and Indianna Warren with some of their fabric face masks. Pictures: Jerabel Warren

## Isolation Inspiration

Sisters give their mum a hand making useful face masks to give away

While practising physical distancing at home during COVID-19, two resourceful sisters from Leda, Isabel, 12, and Indianna, 8, have been helping their mum, Jerabel Warren, make cloth face masks to give away.

Isabel says she doesn't mind the physical distancing because she gets to play video games, watch Netflix and video chat with her cousins in Malaysia, who are in a lockdown and cannot leave the house at all.

"I've started playing the piano more often too, so overall staying at home has been great," Isabel says.

"My mum recently got my sister and me to help make fabric

masks to give away. It's a way to get us to do things together. We each have a station where I measure and cut the materials, and also tie the elastic strings in a loop. Then I pass it to my sister, to do the overlocking and she passes it to my mum, who sews the mask together."

They have made about 40 masks to give away.

Indianna misses going to school and seeing her friends, and going outside.

"But I get to video chat with my best friend," Indianna says.

"When I can't go out, I do things like building a fort or cubby inside, making a dark cinema by using a cardboard box, plus other art and craft

stuff. My grandma bought me a sewing machine when I was five but I haven't learnt to use it properly yet. My mum taught me to use the overlocker and that is easier than sewing."

The girls' grandma taught their mum how to make the masks and she then showed them how.

"My job is to do the overlocking, so Mum can finish sewing the rest," Indianna says.

**What's your Isolation Inspiration? If you would like to be considered for inclusion in ED!'s Isolation Inspiration section, email [ed@wanews.com.au](mailto:ed@wanews.com.au) with "Isolation Inspiration" in the subject line, and attach a couple of high-resolution (1-4MB) photo options that have good lighting and a background that isn't too "busy", by 10am on Thursday.**

