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| Codes | Extracts |
| Ret**urni**ng to school | * On my first day back, September 1, I noticed that many changes had been made, it felt like a different place. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * The premises were quieter and cleaner. When I entered the classroom, my classmates were seated according to the physical distancing rule of 1.5m apart from one another. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Being children it was, f course hard to follow the rule [social distance] (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * The classroom atmosphere was different, having done both online and school learning, the pressure many felt in having to settle down could be sensed in the air as we prepared for a new term of unexpected events. There were fewer questions, fewer movements, and fewer voices. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * The high levels of substance abuse, depression, fear, loneliness, domestic violence and child abuse will also reduce now that most of the children are back at school. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Pupils abused the system- many decided to stay home if they were not ‘feeling well’ on a day when they did not feel like coming to school. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * The return to school did not lead to an increase in infection rates, with less than 2% of schools reporting more than two Covid-19 cases despite the fears of parents. (Business Day: Oct 1, 2020, pg.3) * Sadly, the most affected are the poorest learners for whom education is the only key out of poverty. There was also no effort from the department to encourage learners to return to school. (Daily Dispatch: Dec 1, 2020, pg.4) * We will maintain the delicate balance of health and safety in schools and also ensure that we plug gaps for curriculum recovery, which we have been able to do successfully during the 2020 academic year. (Pretoria News, Jan 5, 2021, pg. 2) * Some learners from indigent families may have found ways to help their families during the unpredictable times of Covid-19 and could have valid reasons for not going back to school, including that they are now putting bread on the table. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) * Quite a number of learners have bad memories about schooling this year, and they come back to school for the first time after the lengthy lockdown, some of their teachers had departed. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) * When Grade 12 pupils returned to school, we managed to complete the outstanding work and we then moved on to revision. (Sunday Tribune, Jan 10, 2021, pg.6) |
| Schools reopening | * Schools are open, but Covid-19 is still with us. Looking at the decreasing number of people testing for the virus and the death reported doesn’t guarantee people’s safety. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * By June, a phased reopening was introduced, as emerging evidence showed that children, especially young children appear less likely to contract Covid-19, are at particularly low risk of becoming severely ill and are not super-spreaders of the virus. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Schools reopening had been an enormous logistic undertaking, involving the development and publication of a series of plans, guidelines, protocols and interventions. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Schools were able to apply to education authorities to open additional grades under the lockdown. Many wealthier suburban schools did so and reached an attendance of 50% for all grades; schools serving the poorest 80% of the population had rates of attendance for other grades of 15% to 20%. (Business Day: Oct 1, 2020, pg.3) * They only partially reopened in June, despite teacher unions’ concerns about the timing and lack of adequate protection for teachers and learners. (Pretoria News, Oct 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Emotions felt around returning to school | * When schools started opening, there were many families who were cornered about contracting Covid-19, especially those with comorbidities or other underlying conditions. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * This explains why my siblings and I had mixed feelings about going back to school after almost six months. We had sleepless nights, anxiety and fear during the days leading to our return. But after a week of going to school, we all seem fine. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * I had a hard time fitting in with the crowd, seeing that I’ve been isolated for six months. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Due to the fear of Covid-19, some parents have decided to home school their children and some have decided not to send their children to school for the rest of the year. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * 72% of the respondent reported being very worried about learners returning to school. However, this varied significantly: more affluent households had a lower concern, while there was higher concern among larger households with very young children and pensioners. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Parents are extremely anxious to get their children to school. (Pretoria News: Sept 2, 2020, pg.3) * I am fearful of the day I lay a loved one to rest because of this virus and that is why I’m not sure about sending my angel to school unless the department can assure us of our children’s safety. (Weekend Argus, Jan 9, 2021, pg.5) * I have one daughter; she has one life. I refuse to risk my baby girl's life when every day we hear of someone dying. (Weekend Argus, Jan 9, 2021, pg.5) * Returning to school can be traumatic for parents and children alike. (The Star: Jan 11, 2021, pg.3) |
| Positive Feelings/ motivation | * I write this article to encourage every single learner to stay positive. Parents and many adults also have to remain hopeful. Yes, there is hope post-Covid-19. For instance, I am glad that learners at public schools are getting free meals and this will reduce hunger. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Matric of 2020, I want to remind you that you got this- you came too far to back down now! (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * President Cyril Ramaphosa has commented on the bravery of the class of 2020 for enduring many months of Covid-19-induced lockdown and the mental strain that came with social isolation, which meant no school and playing with friends for long periods. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6); (Pretoria News: Nov 3,2020, pg.1) * The class of 2020 matric pupils to summon their reserves of courage and strength as they start their exams this week. (Pretoria News: Nov 3,2020, pg.1) * This matric class of 2020 is perhaps one of the most resilient of all. (Sowetan: Nov 3,2020, pg.15) * Confidence in pupils’ resilience and ability to succeed. (Cape Times, Nov 5, 2020, pg.2) * A positive message needed to be sent to make sure pupils did not become depressed from anxiety about their results. (Cape Argus, Jan 5, 2021, pg.5) * People should remember the class of 2020 for persistence and bravery (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) |
| Nutrition | * Call on Education departments to ensure that pupils who are back in the classroom on certain days, or who have permission to stay at home, are still able to get school nutrition (Cape Argus: Sept 10, 2020, pg. 3) * Monitor education departments in fulfilling their duty to uphold the right of pupils to basic nutrition (Cape Argus: Sept 10, 2020, pg. 3) * Every child on the feeding scheme, regardless of whether they are attending a school that day or not, should be afforded the opportunity to receive a meal. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg. 3) * Covid-19 pandemic continued to affect vulnerable families, food security remained an enormous threat. (Cape Argus: Sept 10, 2020, pg. 3) * Many learners will not be at school every day…. Because of this, it is critical that departments develop innovative ways to ensure that food reaches learners, which may include fixing problems with scholar transport, providing learners with take-home meals for ‘off’ days on the days when learners are in school, or delivering food for learners who are not at school. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg. 4) * Concern that schools do not provide transport for pupils who stay far and need to collect food. (Cape Argus: Oct 9, 2020, pg.2) * The School nutrition programme was still not reaching pupils on the days when they stayed home because of rotating timetables. (Cape Argus: Oct 9, 2020, pg.2) * Of those who said they only attended school someday, 71% said they went without meals when they missed school. (Cape Argus: Oct 9,2020, pg.2); (The Citizen: Oct 9, 2020, pg.4) * Of the pupils surveyed, 78% said their school did not provide transport for those who stayed far away and needed to collect food from school. (Cape Argus: Oct 9, 2020, pg.2) * 53% said they know of other pupils in their community who were not getting food from their schools on days when they stayed at home. (Cape Argus: Oct 9, 2020, pg.2) * Children across the country are still going without food. (The Citizen: Oct 9, 2020, pg.4) * In July, the court ordered the department to ensure all qualifying children got meals. (The Citizen: Oct 9, 2020, pg.4) * Provinces needed a plan for the provision of food to children who had not yet returned to school full time or at all. (The Citizen: Oct 9, 2020, pg.4) |
| Structure/ routine | * the most challenging part of schooling this year was self-discipline as we spent most of the year studying at home. (Daily Sun: Nov 3,2020, pg.2) * factors like a change in routine, loss of safety and security and breaks in learning are some of the factors that experts have named as having an impact on children during the pandemic. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) |
| Work/School- Home Balance | * Many parents had to take aspects of their children’s education into their own hands. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * My parents are illiterate so they couldn’t help me when I was struggling. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Schools Closing | * Grade 12s, along with all other pupils, lost more than four months of academic time. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * About 12-million learners attend more than 25 700 schools in SA. On March 18 all those schools closed as part of the government’s response to Covid-19(Financial Mail: Oct 1, 2020, pg.29) * The biggest cost of school closure- increased inequality in access and learning losses- has not received sufficient attention. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Also important is that schools are not only locations for learning; they also offer social protection and support for learner well-being. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * School closures also contributed to child hunger. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Considering both the low health risk posed by schools opening and the high risks to learning and child wellbeing posed by closures. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Grade 12 lost 17% of school days. (Business Day: Oct 1, 2020, pg.3) * Most schoolchildren in SA will lose half their learning time this year and richer children will lose less than poorer ones. (Business Day: Oct 1, 2020, pg.3) * Schools were closed for several months from late March as the government enforced a lockdown to contain Covid-19 transmissions. (Cape Argus: Nov 3,2020, pg.4) * It has been a disruptive year with school closed for months. (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * Many missed out on critical classroom time for days, and even weeks. (Daily Dispatch: Nov ,2020, pg.10) * Schools provide an important safe haven for young girls. Teachers generally keep an eye on girls and con intervene if they identify signs of abuse. (The Mercury, Jan 12, 2020, pg. 4) * When schools close, children are often left unsupervised and, in the worst cases, can be exposed to predatory family members and neighbours. (The Mercury, Jan 12, 2020, pg. 4) * Confusion, anxiousness and the joy of being homeschooled. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Panicked when schools were temporarily closed. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Mixed emotions when schools were closed. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * As a result of the covid-19 pandemic, schools were on lockdown in South Africa from March 2020. (Pretoria News, Oct 5, 2020, pg. 6) * The 202 academic years were engulfed by long school breaks posed by Covid-19. That reduced the contact time between learners and teachers. (Pretoria News, Sept 16, 2020, pg. 3) * Experts had warned that if pupils stayed too long out of school there could be more drop-outs due to pregnancy and other social ills. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Effects of the pandemic on schools/ education | * At Impaq…. Thousands of new pupils sign up for us this year in their bid to achieve more structured learning at home. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * Lockdown affected us a lot at times we couldn’t catch up, but we are thankful to the teachers who kept pushing us (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * The 2020 academic year will have significant implications and consequences for generations to come, according to leading educational experts (Weekend Post: Sept 26, 2020, pg. 4) * The quality of education afforded pupils in 2020 will be sub-standard, with dire consequences for those not fortunate enough to have access to online teaching methods. (Weekend Post: Sept 26, 2020, pg. 4) * Before the pandemic, year marks had been determined by a weighted scale in which 25% of the pupil's final make was attributed to school-based assessments while 75% would come from year-end exams. But since the department tweaked this, final marks were calculated on 60% from school-based assessments and 40% from end-of-year exam contributions. (Weekend Post: Sept 26, 2020, pg. 4) * Reinforce inequality and have an impact on generations to come. (Weekend Post: Sept 26, 2020, pg. 4) * Covid-19 had brought with it a magnitude of implications on the right to education, especially with regard to pupils from previously disadvantaged schools. (Weekend Post: Sept 26, 2020, pg. 4) * The nationwide lockdown we had to impose in March to contain the spread of the coronavirus caused immense disruption to everyday life and cost valuable hours of learning and studying. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6) * It was always going to be that in an unequal society such as ours, the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic would have a far-reaching impact, even more so on people living in conditions of poverty and the working class (Sowetan, Sept 4, 2020, pg. 20) * Expected the matric pass rate to be lower than in previous years, but it will be a good pass rate. (Cape Argus, Jan 5, 2021, pg.5) * Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, matriculants of 2020 were robbed of critical class time. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Like all sectors, education has been hard hit by the scourge of Covid-19 and the Grade 1 learners who will start their examinations next week face this hurdle during the worst and wickedest of times. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) * The covid-19 has presented countries with a number of challenges that may impact Grade 12 examinations preparations and results. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) |
| Dropout rate | * The department informed parliament that it was projecting a drop out of 75 452 pupils from grades 7 and 12 because of the Covid-19 pandemic this academic year. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4); (Pretoria News: Sept 2, 2020, pg.3) * This happened as the fear of the virus among pupils stood at 34 565 country-wide. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Reported that at least 75 000 grade 7 and 12 pupils are projected to drop out of school this year. (Sowetan, Sept 4, 2020, pg. 20) * Previous studies have shown that when children drop out of school, especially under difficult economic circumstances, chances of them returning to the system are slim to none. (Sowetan, Sept 4, 2020, pg. 20) * It means there is the likelihood that tens of thousands of young people may stand to lose an opportunity to study and develop in order to gain meaningful economic opportunities as adults. (Sowetan, Sept 4, 2020, pg. 20) * In terms of Grade 12, the department’s figures showed there was a projected 2 362 dropout number from this academic year. (Pretoria News: Sept 2, 2020, pg.3) * It affected my studies negatively because as deaf learners we couldn’t do the self-studying from home. It was difficult. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * What is terrifying about the dropout rates is that countless of those who do not reach matric are more likely to burgeon the cycle of poverty. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) |
| Support provided by school/ department during the pandemic | * BASIC Education Minister Angie Motshekga has revealed several initiatives by her department and provinces aimed at providing psycho-social support to pupils who fear going back to school due to the Covid-19 pandemic. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * The department made no significant amendments for us to adapt. (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * Provinces have put in place a whole range of measures to support the learners- this includes Saturday and Sunday classes. (Cape Times, Oct 2, 2022, pg. 5) * The department launched the Woza Matrics, in collaboration with the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT). This is an initiative designed to provide additional support to the matric class of 2020, as they prepare for the 2020 National Senior Certificate Examination. (Cape Times, Oct 2, 2022, pg. 5) * For matriculants, government support came in the form of TV and radio programmes and matric camps, among other initiatives. (Daily Dispatch: Nov ,2020, pg.10) * The country provided educational programmes on television. That helped. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * The education department makes available laptops, data and classes on TV and radio. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) |
| Negative Feelings | * Western Cape is leading the pack among the provinces with students with Covid-19 fears. It is followed by Gauteng with 1 468. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * It was a lot to take in, focusing on school while trying to keep safe from Covid-19. (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) |
| Online Learning/ teaching | * Teachers tried to adapt to online education, but the reality is that this wasn’t the core competency of many schools. Teachers had to brush up on online teaching skills and use some technology for the first time. This made for challenging times. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * …alternatives, such as structured home education, exist and have helped fill the gap for thousands of children this year. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * The lockdown has disturbed our plans and we had to turn to online teaching, which is not as effective compared with the traditional method of teaching. (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * WhatsApp became the mode of teaching for most of us (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Many learners did not understand the work we’ve sent vis WhatsApp as they had no one to explain the work to them (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Some had access to online learning platforms and other resources, many had to struggle with access to learning martial and teaching. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6) * The Covid-19 outbreak has forced the education system to undergo a massive reformation due to online teaching and learning. (Cape Argus: Sept 8, 2020, pg.7) * Online learning brings in a level of awkwardness: such as when a meeting begins and microphones functions are on mute because no one wants to speak when a question is asked and there is silence; also, students attend classes in pyjamas, and miss appointments. There is a great misalignment of disciplinary conduct between in-classroom participation and online education. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * The digital divide became abundantly clear while some struggled with the basic resources such as water and adequate sanitisation; both necessary during the coronavirus outbreak. (Daily Dispatch: Nov ,2020, pg.10) * Teachers have had to move from a space in which they have years of experience to the unknown and challenging world of online, remote, correspondence and social distanced teaching. (Pretoria News, Oct 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Teachers need to facilitate learning with the help of digital tools such as e-learning platforms, online videos and audio tutorials. (Pretoria News, Oct 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Access to Online Learning/ teaching | * Not having wifi/ data added to our stress, because at the end of the day the work had to be done (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * Very poor access to computers and unstable home internet connections have meant that online learning has not been possible for most schools. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * When level 5 of the lockdown was implemented, many students were left without computers/ laptops, smartphones, internet connectivity and adequate coverage, and insufficient working spaces at home. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * Lockdown restrictions with many pupils not having access to online learning or other resources (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * He said children who went to schools with resources and had unlimited access to data would fare well compared to those who did not have access to data, who would be the worst off. (Cape Argus: Jan 5, 2021, pg.5) * I had to leave what I didn’t understand because I needed data to communicate with my teachers. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I live in a rural area and there was no money to access resources for learning online (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * When schools had to offer online teaching, the gap between former model C schools and those in rural and townships was visible. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Despite The education department making available laptops, data and classes on TV and radio. In most cases, pupils in the hinterland struggled with network connections, rendering the tablet devices useless (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Even before the pandemic, there were challenges with the use of technology in public schools that included inadequate infrastructure, poor internet connectivity and a lack of digitally competent teachers. During the lockdown, this reality was made clear as many public school teachers who didn’t have the experience, knowledge or infrastructure to facilitate online learning found it challenging. (Pretoria News, Oct 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Many learners who did not have the opportunity for remote learning or no adequate support at home may feel that they are behind the syllabus, hence they are likely to feel despondent. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) * The majority don’t have access to online learning. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Mental Health- feelings of stress/ anxiety | * The remaining months are anxiety-ridden with academic stress. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * With grade 12s having had a challenging year due to Covid-19 lockdown, anxiety and panic have kicked in. (Daily Sun: Nov 3,2020, pg.2) * For those who are facing this final step in their 12-year or more schooling career, feeling stress and anxiety are normal. But for the class of 2020, the angst is understandably more amplified. (Daily Dispatch: Nov ,2020, pg.10) * My anxiety levels were quite high in the beginning but with my school working hard to finish the syllabus before prelims (trial exams), the levels have decreased exponentially. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * When I found out about the coronavirus I was so scared because I did not know anything about the virus. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I started to become anxious and scared. But will remain positive that I will pass my matric finals and go to tertiary next year. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * This year has been very stressful. I lost my uncle to covid and couldn’t attend his funeral because I’m disabled and had no one to assist me. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Heading into 2020 as a matriculant was enough pressure because we had a whole year’s work to complete in a short amount of time. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * When I heard of Covid-19 I was stressed because I thought this academic year would go to waste. I thought we wouldn’t be able to go back to school. That was scary because I have goals that I want to achieve. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * The coronavirus will leave a permanent scar. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * The past few months have had a tremendous impact on the mental and emotional well-being of most people and young children have not escaped the effects of Covid-19 and the lockdowns. (The Star: Nov 26, 2020, pg.10) * There has definitely been an increase worldwide and in South Africa of children struggling to manage anger and anxiety- outbursts that are quite distinct from run-of-the-mill so-called tantrums that some children exhibit under normal circumstances (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * All these factors, and many others, mean that children have had to deal with a major and historical life event at a very young age when they are still learning to process feelings and emotions. Unusual behaviour may have arisen as a result. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * Children had to learn to grow up and face the fear of death, uncertainty and the fallout from their parents’ fears and anxieties before they were mature enough to handle these big changes and big feelings. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * There were a lot of times when I felt like this year was a lot to handle and I felt like the work and pressure were craving in on me. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Confused and anxious when the academic year was abruptly disrupted. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * They were a bit scared because of everything that happened this year and weren’t sure what they should expect. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) * Important to take care of your mental health during this frustrating time. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| MH Services | * BASIC Education Minister Angie Motshekga has revealed several initiatives by her department and provinces aimed at providing psycho-social support to pupils who fear going back to school due to the Covid-19 pandemic. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Motshekga said her department has partnered with the National Education Collaboration Trust and Unicef to mobilise psycho-social support to pupils who were anxious to go back to school due to the pandemic. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Unicef has contracted Childline to provide services to children through their call centre. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * The minister said provincial departments had historically employed psychologists and social workers to support learners and teachers. However, there are server shortages. (The Star: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Motshekga said the sector had placed a strong emphasis on psychosocial support for learners and teachers. (Cape Argus: Nov 3,2020, pg.5) * The department of education has sent a team of counsellors to support schoolchildren who tested positive for Covid-19. (Dispatch, Sept 22, 2020) * Psychological support for pupils who were affected by the virus. (Dispatch, Sept 22, 2020) |
| Final Exams | * For pupils in their final school years of Grade 11 or Grade 12, we saw many parents become concerned about whether their children may struggle to catch up with their studies in preparation for their final exams. (Cape Argus: Sept 10,2020, pg.10) * Pupils say they are excited but nervous before matric trial exams (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * The pupils said that despite the disruptions due to Covid-19, they were prepared for the exam (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * Despite the negative impact of Covid-19, they managed to finish the syllabus and do revisions thanks to the efforts of the school’s teachers (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * The NSC exam papers were already set up before the pandemic. And according to the Department f Education, standards would not be lowered because of lost time. Teachers were, therefore, expected to teach the same amount of work as previously in half the time. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * According to the department, it is all systems go ahead of the commencement of the NSC final exams (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * Due to Covid-19, the department was unable to run the June examinations, which result in the combined examination for all candidates. (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * Despite the abnormal context, the Class of 2020 will be subjected to the same high-quality examination that previous cohorts were. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6); (Pretoria News: Nov 3,2020, pg.1) * The class of 2020, despite the disruptions of the academic year, are fully prepared for this examination, Motshekga said. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6) * Life Science final exam: “the exam was simple and the questions easy to understand. I’m sure I’m going to pass it, but I can’t predict what symbol I’ll get”. “The exam was way easier than we expected and I’m certain everyone is going to pass it.” “I enjoyed it because I was ready, I downloaded past exam papers and watched YouTube videos on how to answer questions. I am happy with myself” (Daily Sun: Dec 1, 2020, pg.6) * The pupils said they were anxious about their results as the year hadn’t been an easy one. (Daily Sun: Dec 1, 2020, pg.6) * Pupils writing their matric exams from this week will be subjected to the same high standards applied to previous years, despite the disruptions. (Cape Argus: Nov 3,2020, pg.4) * When you enter the exam room in the days ahead, you will be carrying not just your own hopes for success and those of your families. You will also carry the hopes of us, the South African people. (Pretoria News: Nov 3,2020, pg.1) * To accommodate the disruptions, the June Senior Certificate exams were postponed and would now be written together with the National Senior certificate (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * The upcoming final exams are causing uncertainty but with prelims being so close to finals it feels like one exam with a long break in the middle, causing some relief. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I’m anxious about the final exams, we didn’t prepare well for them because we had no time. I wasted a lot of time at home. We couldn’t attend extra classes because the location of those classes are not wheelchair friendly. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I’m frightened about the final exams approaching. We are going to write a full national paper but the examiner who set the paper two years ago did not know we were going to be affected by Covid-19 (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Pupils said it was difficult to prepare during lockdown but with their teacher's help, they managed to write well. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Final Exams Protocols | * Candidates who present a temperature above 38 during the screening process will write exams in isolation and will not be allowed to associate with others after the exam. (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * New writing centres were identified to accommodate the large number of candidates who will be taking part in the combined examinations. (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * This year’s exams will be written under unprecedented conditions as the country is in the midst of a global pandemic. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6) * Pupils presenting a body temperature of above 38 would be allowed to write exams in isolation and will not be allowed to associate with other learners even afterwards. (Cape Argus: Nov 3,2020, pg.4) * With such a large group of learners writing, it is vital that no unnecessary disruptions occur. Our matrics are already going to have to cope with some unusual safety measures because of Covid-19, and will understandably be nervous as a result. We cannot afford to cause them any additional anxiety. (Cape Times, Nov 5, 2020, pg.2) |
| Coping mechanisms | * For now, though, focus on what is on your plate, put in the hours, get into study groups and reach out for help. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * Don’t isolate yourself. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * Look for tutor platforms or people. Find out if your teachers are willing to help you or a group of other pupils on weekends or after school. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * Find a rhythm that works for you, keep a balance, eat healthily, squeeze in some exercise, clear your head, take a walk or jog, get your eight hours of sleep and communicate your study needs to your family. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * By now many pupils, if not all, would have established a study plan. However, maintaining a healthy balance during this period will be crucial. Take regular breaks and be sure to get enough sleep. Rest is just important during the exams as studying. Avoid burning the candle on both ends. Exercise or some form of physical activity will aid in maintaining stress levels. (Daily Dispatch, Nov 4, 2020, pg.10) * Developing a close connection with the child, spending quality time and developing language around emotions are the best ways to empower a child to manage their anger effectively. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * I had a good support system, my educators, parents, siblings, friends and their belief in me when I didn’t believe in myself kept me going. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Believing in Jesus Christ was my coping mechanism. I sit in his presence, I made a to-do list and he helped me get through everything I needed to do. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Minimise stress by having a checklist that can be followed every day. (The Star: Jan 11, 2021, pg.3) * Take care of yourself as well. Show your child that you get plenty of sleep, eat well and exercise regularly. (The Star: Jan 11, 2021, pg.3) * Given the fact that we’re going through changes, it's important to understand that the emotions children feel are very real. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) * Parents need to teach children self-regulation techniques and encourage them to ask questions and find ways to express themselves through meaningful activities. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) * Parents need to find ways to manage their children’s anxieties and difficulties, striking a balance between work and playtime while maintaining adaptive ways of social interaction. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) * Encourage parents to take care of their own well-being so they could take better care of their children. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Well-being | * Covid-19…. Enormous threat to the lives and well-being of children across the country (Cape Argus: Sept 10, 2020, pg. 3) * Also important is that schools are not only locations for learning; they also offer social protection and support for learner well-being. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) |
| Effects of pandemic | * I am sad for the learners whose parents lost their income or jobs and cannot afford to send their children to school, because they cannot pay school fees. (The Start: Sept 10, 2020, pg.4) * Matric pupils this year had had to endure conditions their predecessors had never had to confront. (Pretoria News: Nov 3,2020, pg.1) * The impact has landed differently for different people. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * The vaccination roll-out outlined by the government has essential workers, including teachers, in the second phase of inoculations, but that is unlikely to happen before the second term. (Pretoria News, Jan 5, 2021, pg. 2) * Teenage pregnancies and abuse are some of the negative effects of worldwide lockdown responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, experts have argued. (The Mercury, Jan 12, 2020, pg. 4) * Schools were closed for eight months during the outbreak, and according to some estimates, teenage pregnancy rates doubled. (The Mercury, Jan 12, 2020, pg. 4) * Covid-19 made a big impact on my life as well as the world we live in. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I lost my uncle to covid and couldn’t attend his funeral because I’m disabled and had no one to assist me. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * There are also reports about 14 teachers having died from Covid-19. (The Star, Dec 29, 2020, pg. 1) * The grieving over these holidays is too much. Many families have been left without loved ones during these holidays, arising from social activities. (The Star, Dec 29, 2020, pg. 1) * The loss of any school personnel will be really sad as they will not only be leaving grieving families but also families at school. (The Star, Dec 29, 2020, pg. 1) * It’s heartbreaking to watch someone you know go through the pain of burying a loved one. This virus has made things worse in that people are not able to comfort friends due to restrictions and how the virus spreads. (Weekend Argus, Jan 9, 2021, pg.5) * Covid-19 has changed lives, possibly forever. (The Star: Jan 11, 2021, pg.3) * 281 teachers, pupils and non-teaching staff have succumbed to Covid-19 since the start of the lockdown. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) * Covid-19 has disrupted the lives of many families and their children now face changes that they may not fully understand. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Forced to adapt | * Another pupil said it had been hard adapting to the new normal and new system of learning and the department made no significant amendments for us to adapt. However, we managed with help of extra classes and the dedication of teachers (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * Matrics of 2020 suddenly had to adapt (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * In 2020, our matrics were forced to grow up overnight. (Cape Times: Nov 10, 2020) * The Grade 12s had to adapt in real-time not just to finish the curriculum but to catch up with the learning hours lost (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6); (Pretoria News: Nov 3, 2020, pg.1) * The class of 2020 has had to endure conditions their predecessors never had to confront. They had to adapt in real-time not just to finish the curriculum, but to catch up with the learning hours lost. (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) * This year was by no means normal, some of you had to teach yourselves difficult concepts. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * It is not reasonable to expect all children to just absorb these changes and cope forthwith (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * The pandemic pushed me into a completely new environment where I would have to learn to stand on my own two feet and learn to be my very own educator. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) * Last year, when schools were closed, both parents and children needed to cope with home-schooling. (The Star: Jan 11, 2021, pg.3) |
| Ways of adapting | * Fellow matric pupil said the impact of Covid-19 and lockdown meant pupils needed more focus ad determination to cope with the workload. (The Mercury: Sept 1, 2020, pg.2) * I made new goals that focused on myself. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * Parents must help their children adjust to the so-called new normal. (Daily Sun, Nov 10, 2020, pg.5) |
| Sport | * They were not able to participate in sporting, recreational and leisure activities that are so essential to a well-rounded life and that relieve the stress of prolonged study (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.6); (Pretoria News: Nov 3, 2020, pg.1); (The Citizen: Nov 3, 2020, pg.7) |
| Expectations | * Your final year in your entire school career was supposed to be fun, exciting and impactful. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * The year where you are finally in the most senior class, the class everyone looks up to, the year where you are treated like adults by your teachers. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * The matric year, with all its benefits and splendour. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * The lavish matric dance, the matric blazers and jackets, the exclusive matric lawns, the fun and final high school sports days and concerts. The pandemic nearly took all of it away. (Sowetan: Nov 3, 2020, pg.15) * I looked forward to my matric year, but the experience was hectic. I had to adapt to online learning, which wasn’t easy at first as my marks dropped. I am very fearful, but I’m trying my best to stay positive. (Daily Sun: Nov 3,2020, pg.2) * I was looking forward to my matric year and having a matric dance, but it didn’t go as expected. (Daily Sun: Nov 3,2020, pg.2) * The coronavirus has changed almost every single expectation I had for the year 2020. The cancellation of our matric farewell, sports tournaments, cultural evenings and all other anticipated events has led me into an incomprehensible state of mind (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * As we all know, 2020 has not been the year we all expected it to be. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * We were looking forward to 2020, one of the biggest of our lives. It was a year in which many of us were ready to break the poverty chain in our lives. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Positive Outcomes | * Five Joburg-based high school learners have used their time in lockdown to drive positive social change. It’s a space for other people my age to explore their own feelings about issues that are affecting them. From race and sexuality to the changing nature of education. (The Star, Sept 4, 2020, pg.6) |
| Adapt teaching/ learning strategies | * Schools were forced to adapt to new ways of learning and teaching. (Daily Dispatch: Nov ,2020, pg.10) * There will be a shift, in time, as we the 21st-century educator and child adapt to the skills necessary in order to develop these relationships online. (Pretoria News, Nov 4, 2020, pg.6) * In most urban schools, e-learning is quite advanced after being introduced during lockdown last year, and blended learning models are established as the future. (Pretoria News, Jan 5, 2021, pg. 2) * My learning was affected very badly because we had closed schools. We started online learning, which was too difficult for me because my family lacked the financial means to afford data. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * My studies have been negatively affected by this pandemic (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Describe school year | * This year has been unusual and unsettling (Cape Times, Nov 5, 2020, pg.2) * At the start of the year, everything was normal. We had no stress except academic stress. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * At the beginning of the year, everything was just normal and exciting. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) |
| Feelings- Disconnected/ Isolated/ Lonely/ Social interactions | * My life has changed in numerous ways. I stopped communicating with my friends. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * I began to miss actual human contact. (The Herald, Dec 30, 2020, pg. 5) |
| Lessons learnt | * Covid-19 has taught me that procrastination is the biggest obstacle to success. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) * The Covid-19 virus has brought with it the mother of all struggles, it has been a huge teacher. (The Sunday Independent, Nov 1, 2020, pg. 8) |
| Home/Family during Lockdown | * Being in lockdown with my family in Ndabakazi was something we had to get used to. (Dispatch, Nov 5, 2020, pg. 6) |