

helpful information for parents and carers

about headspace

headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation provides tailored and holistic support to young people aged 12 to 25 years to navigate the big issues in life, their mental health, physical and sexual health, alcohol and other drugs issues, as well as work and study.

More than 75% of mental health disorders begin before the age of 25 (Kessler et al, 2005) and by working with young people at such a critical time in their lives, we aim to prevent a disorder from occurring or to reduce its severity.

headspace values collaboration. We work with schools, sporting clubs, local health services and communities. We provide resources for school communities, family and friends. We engage with the young person's world to support them along their journey towards adulthood.

headspace is available to young people through local centres that are located in 124 communities across Australia.^[1] Young people can come into a centre and connect face-to-face with professionals such as General Practitioners (GPs), psychologists, counsellors, occupational therapists, social workers and nurses who can support them. headspace centres have been designed with young people, for young people. Centres provide a unique space where young people can trust the support they receive from the professionals working there, because they genuinely have their interests at heart. The headspace centre network is supported by a national framework, which ensures that a young person can go into a centre anywhere in Australia and receive the same standard of high-quality care and support.

In addition to headspace centres, eheadspace connects young people to youth mental health professionals 365 days a year. eheadspace provides a free, secure and anonymous service for young people who cannot access help in person, or who prefer to interact online or over the phone.

^[1] As at 20 September and inclusive of headspace centres, satellites and outposts

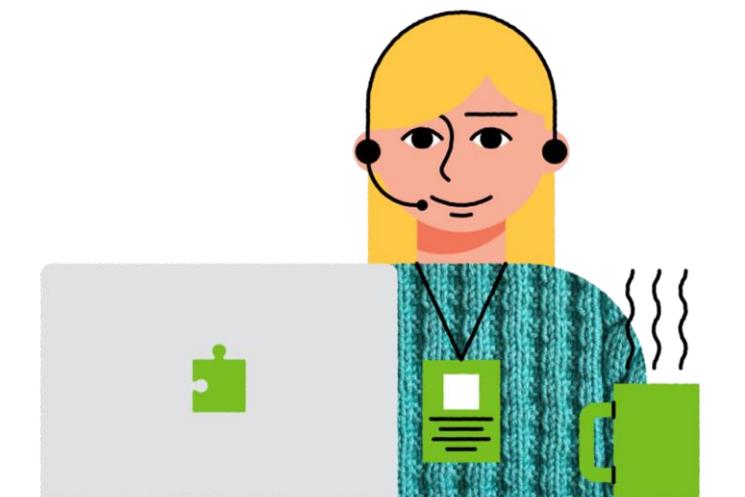
national supports

Support for young people:

- [headspace](#) National Youth Mental Health Foundation: information and resources for young people, family and friends.
- [ehheadspace](#): 1800 650 890, available 9am to 1am, seven days a week
- [ReachOut](#) Australia
- [Kids Helpline](#): 1800 55 1800, available by phone, email or web chat, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Support for adults:

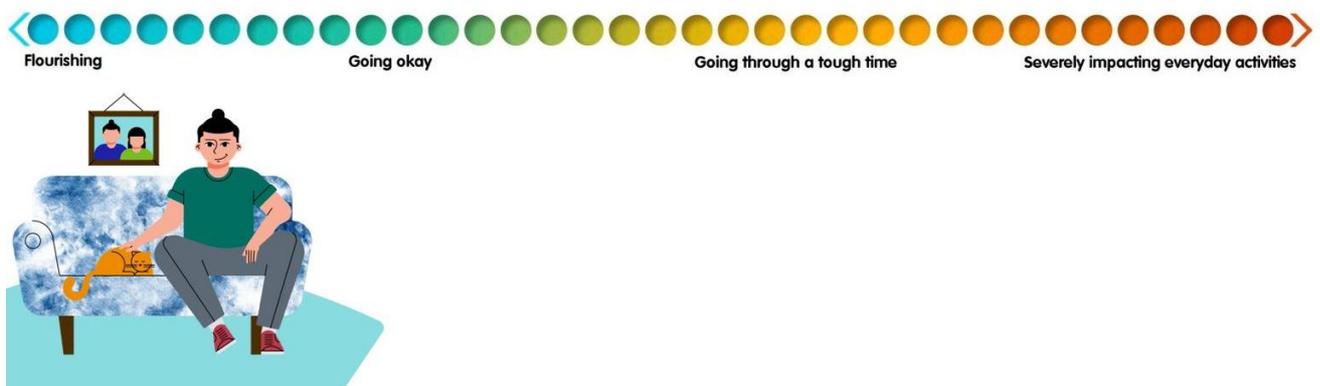
- [1800RESPECT](#) 1800 737 732: National sexual assault, domestic family violence counselling service, available by phone or online chat, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- [Lifeline](#): 13 11 14, crisis support available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Lifeline Text: 0477 13 11 14, available from 12pm to midnight (AEST)
- [Lifeline Chat](#): available 7pm to midnight (AEST)
- [Beyond Blue](#): 1300 22 4636, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- [Beyond Blue](#): webchat is available 3pm – 12am (AEST), 7 days a week
- [eSafety Commissioner](#) Australia <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>
- [MensLine Australia](#): 1300 78 99 78, available by phone, online chat or video chat, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- [QLife](#): 1800 184 527, available 3pm to midnight, 7 days
- Police and Ambulance: 000
- [National Relay Service](#): 1300 555 727, chat call and captions call options available
- [National Translation and Interpreter Service](#):
- [Butterfly Foundation](#): Eating disorders help line 1800 33 4673, 7days



what is mental health?

Mental health is defined as “a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”² Rather than it being about ‘what’s the problem?’ it’s really about ‘what’s going well?’

the mental health continuum



Mental health isn't a fixed state: it can be thought of as a continuum that we move along, depending on how things are going in our lives.

The [mental health continuum](#) demonstrates a stepped care approach to supporting young people. Having productive conversations with young people as they move along the continuum, such as how they can maintain their mental wellness, rather than waiting until it impacts on their functioning, can be an example of this.

You may have noticed during COVID-19, that some young people displayed changes in their relationships, behaviour and learning that significantly impacted their daily activities. This might suggest they may be in, or are moving towards, the far-right side of the continuum.

What does the continuum look like in real life and what conversations can be helpful?

seven tips for a healthy headspace

There are small steps that you and your family can take to support your family's mental health.

1. Get into life

Set a goal or task that you want to achieve for the day; it can be something small like making your bed, going for a walk or calling a friend. Try some new hobbies and keep doing the things you love as best you can like reading, drawing or exercising.



2. Learn skills for a tough time

It might be helpful to learn new coping skills to maintain and improve wellbeing. Try journaling thoughts and feelings, practise some breathing exercises, explore mental health apps or websites, create a new routine, or take a digital detox.

3. Create connections

When we can't physically connect with friends and loved ones, there are so many other ways to stay connected. Try connecting by video chat or phone with friends and family. Online video and board games can also be used to connect with others.



4. Eat well

Minimise unhealthy snacks. It's good to develop coping strategies that are not related to food. Be sure to nourish your body with things like fruits and veggies, foods high in fibre, fermented foods like unsweetened yoghurt, olive oil, and fish.

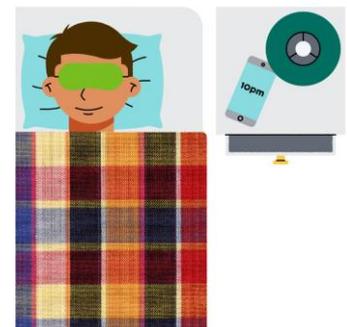
5. Stay active

Try doing a fitness program or a yoga class, challenge your friends to a push-up challenge, get outside for fresh air or have a living room dance party; all great free ways to keep up physical and mental health.



6. Get enough sleep

Try to stick with a sleep routine. Go to bed and wake up at the same time as much as possible and aim for at least eight hours of sleep a night. Switch off electronics 30-60 min before bed.



7. Cut back on alcohol and other drugs

Be mindful of your use of alcohol and other drugs. Try a short break; start with a few days and then try a week. Consider alternatives like herbal tea, water or a smoothie, and find new activities to keep you engaged.

starting a conversation

the “NIP it in the bud!” guide to support your young person

NOTICE

You might notice the following:

- A noticeable change in how they are feeling and thinking
- Feelings like anger, sadness, fear, not caring about anything, risk taking
- You might see changes in the way your child is behaving or acting
- They may not enjoy things anymore
- Changes in eating or sleeping
- Being easily irritated or having problems with friends and family
- Finding they can't focus on things or maintain attention
- Feeling down or that there is no hope or point to life
- Having trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Turning to alcohol or drugs to cope with feelings
- Having negative or distressing thoughts
- Feeling unusually stressed or worried
- Changes socially like withdrawal, being secretive, acting out of character

VIDEO: How to have the conversation

Beyond Blue:

[CLICK HERE](#)

INQUIRE

There's no perfect way to start a conversation about mental health – so it's ok if you're finding it hard.

It can help to do some research first and find a time and place where everyone involved is feeling safe to talk about it.

When asking, it can help to be specific about the things you've noticed. And remember, you're asking to understand.

Understanding your young person's experience can leave you in a better place to respond in a way that helps.

Some ways to try having this conversation might be:

- *I've noticed you seem to have a lot on your mind at the moment. I'd like to hear how it's been for you.*
- *I've noticed that sleep has been harder for you lately. Have you got some ideas about why that might be?*
- *I haven't seen any of your friends recently. How have things been going?*
- *What can I do to be help?*

PROVIDE

It's about providing what you think your young person might need at that time. This will include support, listening, and empathy. Responding in a way that shows you're really listening can make a big impact.

Here are some statements that might help:

- *“I can hear this is really tough for you”*
- *“It sounds like it's been impacting different areas of your life”*
- *“Thank you for sharing with me, I care about how you feel and what you're going through.”*

Taking the time to try to understand, can show the young person you're a safe place to go to for support and might mean they end up sharing more. In trying to find the best way to offer support, it can help to share the decisions with the young person.

Some statements that might help include:

- *“I'd like to find a way that I can be helpful for you. Would that be ok for you?”*
- *“It sounds like home is a bit stressful now. Would you like to have a go with me at figuring out some ways to take some of that stress away?”*
- *“I'm not feeling very confident about the best way to help at the moment. Would it be ok if we called a service to help us figure out the best way forward?”*

If you have immediate concerns, take them to your local Emergency department or phone 000 and stay with them.

free online support, wherever and whenever you need it

There are lots of things for a young person to think about such as school, study, and work, and relationships, physical and mental health. Whatever it is they're facing, headspace is here to help.

Develop self-help skills

There are interactive exercises that allow your young person to manage their own mental health. These bite-sized activities help them reflect on their own needs, build their everyday skills and set goals to improve their mental health.

Join the community

Our safe and supportive online community provides a great way to connect with others and share resources that are helpful.

Our regular group chats bring young people together and explore topics that are important. Our peer-led chats are held every week, where young people can share tips and experiences with others. There are also chats run by our professional clinicians who explore topics and provide resources, strategies and advice to help build their skills.

Chat privately with professionals

Young people can chat privately with our professional counsellors over the phone or webchat, seven days a week between 9am and 1am (AEST). It's a safe space if they want some advice, are unsure of what help they need or maybe just want to talk things through.

Get support with work and study

Young people can get free support with their work and study goals by speaking with our work and study specialists via web chat, video chat, email or phone. We can help young people with everything from writing resumes and job applications, to planning course options, practicing interviews and managing their mental health with their work and study. Visit headspace.org.au/workandstudy to register or call 1800 810 794.

Resources and tips

There are resources available which can be a great starting place to gather information that's relevant to them.



There are many ways young people can get the support they need by visiting the headspace website and creating an account.

headspace vocational programs

how does headspace help young people in work and study?

The headspace Work and Study Program is free and supports 15 to 25 year-olds plan their career, find employment and work towards further education. The program works with young people through webchat, video, email, or phone.

Each young person receives accessible, tailored, confidential and youth-friendly support headspace can also assist if mental health issues are getting in the way of work or study for the young person.

headspace Work and Study can assist young people with the following:

- Job search skills and applications
- Resume and cover letter preparation
- Career planning
- Study and enrolment
- Transitioning from school to work, or further study
- Navigating Centrelink or other government support options
- Balancing mental health and wellbeing with work or study

Learn more about the Work and Study Program at www.headspace.org.au/workandstudy.

