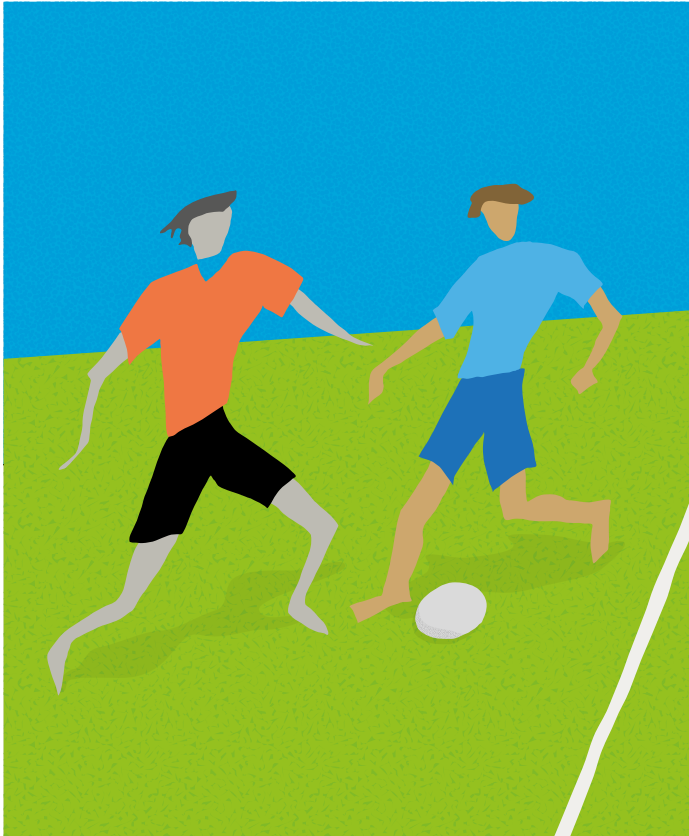


Brothers in arms

young men and the issues we face



headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, supports young people aged 12 to 25 at our local centres, online, or over the phone.

In an effort to support and advocate for young men's health, **headspace** Glenroy would like to share some common issues young men face in the hopes of starting a conversation about mental health in young people.

Social isolation

Social isolation is a serious problem for young men. Feeling socially connected is one of the most important ways to improve and take care of your physical and mental health.

When we find ourselves pushing or drifting away from the people closest to us, it creates a barrier that makes it harder to reconnect with our friends and family, which leads to loneliness and depression.

It's important to take the time to reach out and connect with the people closest to us when we're feeling down or stressed, so we can maintain a healthy mindset and social life.

Tackling social isolation

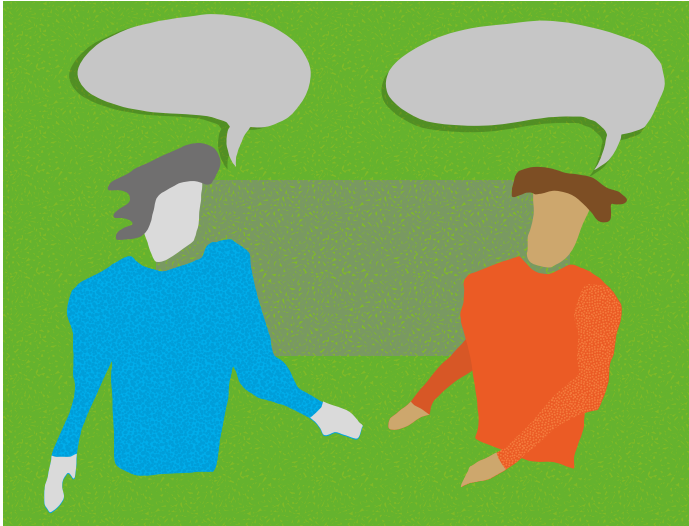
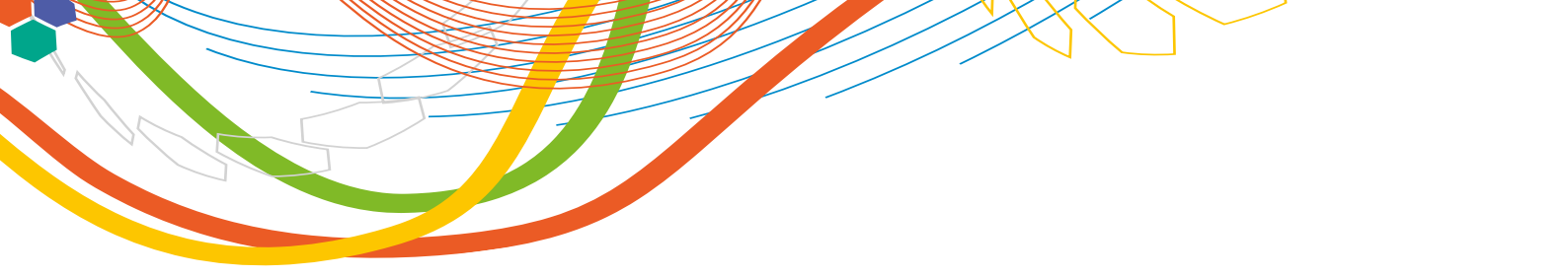
The simplest way to work through social isolation is to reach out and reconnect with your friends and family. Luckily, there are heaps of ways to reach out!

Some of them include:

- Joining a sport or social group
- Volunteering
- Making plans with mates

Defining male culture

Australian culture has given rise to stereotypes surrounding how a typical man should look and act. The beer-loving pub-goer, the hipster, or the provider for the family are common labels a majority of young men have adopted. It's important we take a closer look at what defines us as men and what we can do so we can live and grow into more than just a socially-accepted label.



Defining male culture and identity

There are a number of activities you can participate in to challenge the traditional concepts of what it means to be male. Some of these include:

- Getting involved in mixed sporting groups
- Taking a cooking class
- Appreciating friends who accept and respect you for you

Suicide

Suicide has become an increasingly visible issue for young men. Growing up in a culture where talking about our feelings is sometimes seen as 'weakness', it can be hard to open up to others about how things have been going. It's extremely important we understand when to get support and what we can do before we reach such a dire situation.

Stamping out suicide

If you're feeling really down, here are a few guidelines to follow:

- Be safe, act in ways that promote your safety
- Find your 'go-to' guy/s and start a conversation
- Let people know how things are going

Communication

Statistically, young men have the lowest rates of help seeking among all demographics.

This is a result of many of us growing up in a culture where men talking about their emotions or asking for help was frowned upon or considered 'unmanly'. Now, we're faced

with the problem where young men have been discouraged at an early age to communicate their needs and emotions.

It's important we understand how we can change our perception towards speaking out about our feelings so our needs can be better understood by our friends and family.

Encouraging communication

There are a few things we all can collectively do to begin changing our views about communicating how we feel and reducing the stigma associated with doing so. Some of these are:

- Share your own experiences
- Have open conversations about mental/emotional health with your friends and family; by doing so you are modelling that it is OK for men to talk about these issues.
- Whenever possible, encourage open discussion and help-seeking



headspace.org.au/glenroy

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