



School Recruitment

RECRUITING LOCAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO RECEIVE *MENTAL HEALTH AND US* PROGRAM

The School Focused Youth Services across the Local Government Areas of Knox, Maroondah, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges have worked in collaboration with stakeholders to develop the new *Mental Health and Us* program and are now recruiting local secondary schools to receive the program in 2016.

Key Program Information

- Developed to support improved mental health outcomes
- Aimed at Year 9 and 10 students
- Four modules of approximately 50 minutes which can be delivered in a flexible format
- Train the trainer model with local services and school staff being trained to deliver the program
- No cost to schools to receive the program or attend facilitator training.

School Commitment Required

- At least one school staff member with wellbeing responsibility to be present at all sessions
- An appropriate space in the school
- Time and support in completing the pre and post evaluation activities
- Strong consideration that at least one staff member completes the one day facilitator training and co-facilitates the program.

For further details outlining the *Mental Health and Us* program please see the information on the reverse. To express your interest in receiving the *Mental Health and Us* program in 2016 and to discuss the possible implementation in your school, please contact your local SFYS coordinator.



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Mental Health and Us is an educational program specifically developed to support improved mental health outcomes for year nine and ten students. It recognises the reality that the majority of young people are most likely to seek support about a personal problem from friends rather than teachers, school counsellors or community based support services. It seeks to add a peer-focused dimension to the suite of valuable resources available to support mental health in schools, many of which are focused on the important areas of skills development for school staff or educating parents.

Mental Health and Us respects young people. It respects the fact that friends play a critical support role for each other, but doesn't expect young people to manage that on their own. It seeks to empower students to gain skills in self-care and in being supportive friends. Importantly, it seeks to provide students with an understanding of when support from a trusted adult or support service is important and to give them the confidence to seek that support from local services.

The program is divided into 4 modules of approximately 50 minutes which have all been aligned with the national curriculum. It is designed to be delivered in a flexible format over 4 periods, or 2 half days or possibly in one full day (although this is the least preferred option). Ideally the program would be facilitated through a partnership between the school and an external facilitator with a ratio of two facilitators to one class sized group of students. The facilitator's manual is clearly laid out with activities, handouts and resources needed for all the activities.

Module 1: Friendship and mental health

Examines the way in which healthy friendships support mental health and considers some of the key social/emotional skills that support positive relationships.

Module 2: Understanding mental health and the value of self-care

Focuses on developing a deeper understanding of the concept of mental health and signs to look out for in friends or themselves that they need support.

Module 3: Building a support base for yourself and your friends. Who is there to help?

In this session students explore the value of self-care, undertake some guided collaborative online research to find support and practice conversations with friends who are having a tough time.

Module 4: Managing tough times – when some extra support is needed

Here students learn some strategies for managing conversations with friends or family they are concerned about that get tough and when it's time to get the support of a trusted adult or support service. They are provided with information and a chance to ask questions about what to expect when seeking help. They are reminded of the importance of looking after yourself when supporting others.