

Media release



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headspace Berri presents their new youth reference group hERO.

headspace is Australia's Youth Mental Health Foundation providing mental health and wellbeing support, information and services to young people aged 12 to 25 years and their families.

headspace Berri's newly revised and recruited **headspace** Berri hERO group (previously known as the Youth Reference Group), is a group of young people from our Riverland community that have made a commitment to regularly engage with, be responsive to and contribute their voice to their peers and to our headspace Berri centre.

Each of these hEROs recently completed the Youth Advocates training program which prepares them for their role as a hERO.

hERO is a concept developed after lengthy discussions with the belief that the young people **headspace** supports are coming to a point in their life where hero does not just mean superman.

A hero, demonstrates a degree of leadership, contributes to and challenges situations impacting on society in a positive way and represents the community in being a voice.

Using the word hero was a way to sound fun and approachable; to give us purpose to strive for.

The members of the **headspace** Berri hERO group aim to face every situation with the strength, courage and optimism of a hero.

headspace Berri Centre Manager Christy Kitto says '**headspace** believe it is important to involve young people in the planning of youth participation strategies and activities, to provide a greater sense of ownership and a genuine partnership. We want headspace centres to be inviting to young people and boosting community awareness of **headspace** services to the Riverland community is important says Ms Kitto.

Tania Manser, SA State Manager, **headspace** commented that "**headspace** Berri is committed to ensuring that young people are meaningfully engaged in all aspects of the organisation and work in collaboration with **headspace** staff to improve the service. Youth participation through hERO ensures that programs and services are appropriate and responsive. Participation empowers young people and allows them to own the decisions they have made about their lives."

A short presentation and introduction of the 7 young people will take place at 3:45pm over afternoon tea at the **headspace** Berri offices at 3 Riverview Drive Berri.

headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation was launched in 2006 in response to data that mental health is the single biggest health issue facing young Australians.

headspace Berri was established in 2008, and is one of seventy **headspace** centres currently in operation throughout Australia. **headspace** Berri provides services for young people aged 12-25 years, their families and friends. **headspace** Berri focuses on holistic care in four core areas: general health, mental health and counselling, alcohol and other drug services and education, employment and other services.

The primary objective of the **headspace** initiative is the mental health and wellbeing of all young Australians. 75% of mental health problems present before the age of 25. Receiving evidence based therapeutic services when symptoms first present, is the key to resolving these problems efficiently and effectively. To date, only one in four young people experiencing mental health problems seek professional help.