



**headspace**

National Youth Mental Health Foundation

welcome pack

**we're here  
for you**









**everyone  
is welcome at  
headspace**



# how we can help

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing mental health services for 12-25 year olds. Each year, headspace helps thousands of young people in communities across Australia access support.

**Many things contribute to someone's mental health. That's why, at headspace, we provide information, support and services across four key areas which may affect a young person's health and wellbeing.**

## Mental health

We can help if you're:

- feeling down, stressed or worried
- experiencing relationship problems or difficulties with your family or friends
- wanting to talk about sexuality or gender identity
- just not feeling yourself, or if you've noticed changes in your thoughts, feelings or behaviour.

## Physical and sexual health

Many headspace centres have youth-friendly doctors and nurses who can assist you with:

- any physical health issues
- contraception and sexual health advice.

If your nearest headspace centre doesn't have a doctor or nurse, they can still recommend a youth-friendly doctor in your area.

## Work, school and study

We can help if you're:

- struggling at school or work and feeling anxious or stressed
- unsure of what course you want to do
- needing a hand writing a resume
- searching for a job.

## Alcohol and other drugs

Alcohol and other drugs can affect things that matter to you, and also to your emotional, physical and mental health. It can impact on your work, your study and the relationships in your life. If you're having a hard time stopping, or cutting back, we can support you with:

- developing a plan to tackle your challenges
- connecting with supports, including professional help like GPs and counsellors
- identifying triggers, and provide you with tools and advice on how to avoid them.

## What is good mental health?

Good mental health is a state of wellbeing where you feel able to work and study, feel connected to others, are involved in activities in your community and 'bounce back' when life's changes and challenges come along.

## Do you need urgent help?

We are not an emergency service.

If you are hurt, you are worried about someone's safety, or you need immediate support please call 000 (Ambulance, Police, Fire Brigade) or present to your closest emergency department.

If you are having thoughts about suicide, thoughts or urges to self harm, or self harming behaviour, contact the following National 24/7 crisis services:

### Lifeline:

**13 11 14 or [lifeline.org.au](https://lifeline.org.au)**

### Suicide Call Back Service:

**1300 659 467 or [suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)**

### beyondblue:

**1300 224 636 or [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)**



# which service is right for me?



## headspace centres

headspace centres provide face-to-face information, support and intervention (where appropriate) to young people aged 12–25 for anything affecting their health and wellbeing.

Support may be offered across any of the headspace four key areas (read about these areas on page 4).

Many headspace services also offer group support/programs in addition to individual support.

To find out about the services that are available or to make an appointment you can call, email or drop into your local headspace centre. You can also ask a friend or family member, health worker or community agency to make an appointment for you.



## eheadspace

eheadspace is a national online and phone support service for people aged 12–25, their families and friends. eheadspace is staffed by experienced and qualified youth mental health professionals.

Web-chat and phone support operates from **3pm – 10pm (local time)**, every day of the year. All you need to do to access eheadspace is create an account at **headspace.org.au** (for web-chat or email support) or call 1800 650 890.

**We have many resources on our website ([headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)) to help you take care of your health and wellbeing.**

Read more about our website on pages 12 & 13.

**If you've been using these resources for some time without improvement it's important to get the support of a professional.**

**Here's more about our services to help you work out what might be right for you.**





## Work and Study

headspace Work and Study is an online and phone support service for people aged 15–25 years who need support with work or study. It is staffed by work and study specialists.

The service operates within business hours, and we will try and find an appointment time that works for you. Work and Study sessions usually take an hour.

To access the Work and Study service, all you need to do is register at **[headspace.org.au/workandstudy](https://headspace.org.au/workandstudy)** (for web-chat and email) or phone 1800 810 794.

All Work and Study services are free, but if you call from your mobile your usual call charges will apply.



## Career Mentoring

Career Mentoring is an online and over the phone service that connects young people aged 18–25 with an industry mentor in their field of interest. Mentors work with young people to help them find, maintain and enjoy work.

Mentoring occurs every two weeks, for up to six months.

To register your interest in Career Mentoring, you can visit **[headspace.org.au/mentoring](https://headspace.org.au/mentoring)**

All Career Mentoring services are free. If you're connecting with your mentor by phone, you will be given a toll free number to call.



## headspace Telehealth

In regional and rural areas, getting access to expert psychiatrists is difficult. headspace Telehealth addresses this by providing 12-25 year olds in these areas access to highly-skilled psychiatrists via video consultations.

The low cost service ensures young people get high quality mental health care, while continuing their treatment within their local community.

# who provides services at headspace?

At headspace, you can meet with a range of workers, including:

- psychologists
- social workers
- occupational therapists
- mental health nurses
- doctors
- psychiatrists
- intake workers
- youth workers
- family workers
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers
- alcohol and other drug workers
- career and education workers
- support workers
- peer support workers
- and other health professionals.

These professionals work together to make it as easy as possible for you and your family to get the help you need.

Each headspace centre caters for their local community, and may not have all of the workers listed here. Make sure to check with your headspace centre about what services they provide. If they don't have the exact service you're looking for, they will be able to help recommend or suggest another service.







## How long will an appointment take?

Appointments usually take around 45-50 minutes. Sessions with a doctor might be shorter. You can confirm the length of your appointment when booking.

## How much will an appointment cost?

Services at headspace are either free or have a low cost. This will be confirmed when an appointment is made.

You may need a Medicare card to access free or low cost services. We can help you work out how to apply for a Medicare card or access your Medicare details.

If you need further professional support, we may recommend you see a doctor to get a Mental Health Care Plan (MHCP). To work out what this might mean for you, talk with us.

# what might happen if I visit headspace?

## at the first visit

Your first visit may be in person, or on the phone.  
At the first visit you will:

1

Fill in a registration form



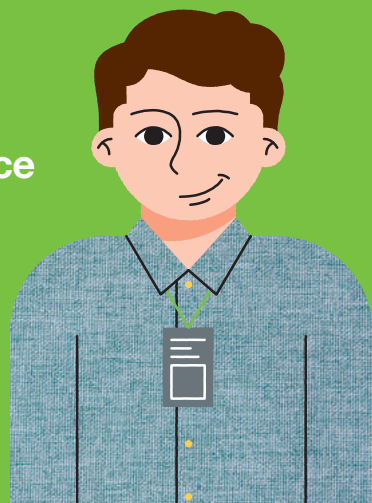
2

Complete a brief online survey



3

Talk to a headspace worker



4

Be given the opportunity to:

- share what's been impacting your wellbeing
- talk together about what goals you might want to work on.

If you feel comfortable, family members are encouraged to attend.

## after the first visit

If you choose to continue at headspace, together we might work on goals you've identified as important to you. We would work together to plan the next steps which may include:

- access to a doctor and/or mental health nurse for physical or mental health difficulties
- study or vocational assistance with a work and study specialist
- sexual health information and support
- alcohol and other drugs assistance from an Alcohol and other Drug Support Worker
- referral to other agencies best suited to you and your family's needs. If you need a referral from a doctor to access a particular service, we can arrange this
- mental health support, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), problem solving, supportive counselling and group therapy.



We take your confidentiality, privacy and safety seriously. Read more about confidentiality and our duty of care on page 16.



# headspace.org.au

## free online support, wherever and whenever you need it

**As a young person, there are lots of things to think about like school, study, work, relationships, physical and mental health.**

In between your sessions, you can also get support for your mental health by creating a headspace account.

headspace offers young people a choice of digital supports to help with mental health and work and study concerns.

Through headspace, you can:

- Manage your own mental health by finding information and resources, and creating your own self-help toolkit
- Join chat groups led by professionals or peers
- Get individual support from headspace professionals

Go to [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au) to create an account.

### Develop your self-help skills

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

Discover tips such as improving your sleep, understanding emotions, getting active or problem-solving, just by doing one of these exercises.

You can also create your own personal space on headspace where you can curate your own personalised content, and have one space to keep all of the information, tips and advice that's relevant to you.

### Join the community

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

Our regular group chats bring young people together and explore topics that are important to the community. Our peer-led chats are held four nights a week, where you 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 your skills.

### Chat privately with professionals

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

### Get support with your Work and Study

You can get support with your work and study goals by speaking with our work and study specialists via webchat, video chat, email or phone, and it's free. We can help you with everything from writing resumes and job applications through to planning course options, practicing interviews and managing your mental health with your work and study.

Visit [headspace.org.au/workandstudy](https://headspace.org.au/workandstudy) to register or call 1800 810 794.

### Resources and tips

Want to do your own research? There are heaps of resources available which can be a great starting place to gather information that's relevant to you.

**Interested in finding out more? Visit us at [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)**



## Your journey, your choice

There are many ways you can get the support you need just from visiting the headspace website and creating an account.



# why should I get support?

**Research shows that 75 per cent of mental health challenges emerge before the age of 25.**

**By getting support early, you can reduce your distress, build on your existing strengths and supports, and work towards achieving the goals that are most important to you. You can also reduce the chance of mental health challenges developing into more serious difficulties later on.**

## Committed to inclusive practice

We get that if you're from a different or diverse background you might find it more difficult to access support for any mental health concerns.

We are committed to inclusive practice. Inclusive practice means that we're responsive to the needs of, and actively welcoming and accepting of, all young people, irrespective of your culture, language, gender, sexuality, lifestyle, values and beliefs, abilities, appearance or socio-economic differences.

As an inclusive service, we:

- acknowledge and respect all people
- treat all people fairly
- do not discriminate against or judge people
- challenge negative stereotypes
- help young people to attend to their immediate basic needs before engaging them in treatment (like food, housing, safety, employment and daily living skills)
- offer flexible, tailored and culturally safe approaches to treatment.

## real stories

"I finally felt empowered, sitting in a counselling session where I was given control over all my treatment and everything I wanted to say."

Trent, 25 years

"I was able to talk to someone about how I was feeling with everything, which was good because it's important to get the stuff in your head out. It helped me to see that it wasn't just me feeling like this, like that there were other people that I could relate to and that I could share this journey with. Once your mental health is better you start feeling better about yourself, you're stronger with who you are and you just feel like you're on top of the world."

"So if you're feeling stressed or anxious, you can come down to headspace and yarn with the mob here and talk about your problems. It's a safe environment and you don't have to worry about anyone else knowing what's going on. You can just have a good old yarn and let it all out. Bottling up your emotions and feelings isn't good for you or your community... There's no shame in talking it out."

Taz, 19 years



## Youth participation

We believe that having young people involved in the work we do is the key to delivering the best services for young people. We aim to give young people meaningful opportunities to get involved with our centre and local community through our youth reference group.

Young people in this group have the opportunity to be involved in a number of ways – like providing input into our services, programs and resources, and planning and helping out at community events.

For more information or to join, visit our webpage or speak to a headspace worker.

## What are my rights and responsibilities?

It's important that you know what to expect from us and what your responsibilities are while you're receiving support.

We're committed to respecting your rights, and we want to work with you to make sure that you receive all the support you need to achieve your goals.

For more information about your rights and responsibilities, speak to a headspace worker.

## What's shared decision-making?

We encourage you to be involved in all decisions about our work together. Our workers will discuss all service options with you and allow for your preferences (along with evidence about what works) to guide decision-making about your care.

## Do I need to provide permission for treatment?

We are a voluntary service. Our workers can only provide you with support if you say it's OK (if you give consent). This is something we'll ask you when you attend.

You can generally make decisions on your own about your treatment but in some cases we may need a parent or legal guardian to give consent for you to access a particular service (e.g. if you are under a certain age).

If you would like more information about our consent process, please speak to a headspace worker.

## How do I get the right support for me?

When you talk with us, it's important that you feel safe and comfortable. You might prefer to seek support from someone of the same gender, or someone who understands your cultural background. We'll do our best to make sure this happens.

If you don't think your headspace sessions are working out, there could be a few reasons. It can be hard to talk about what's on your mind, or sometimes, it may be that you and your worker are not the right fit.

Whatever the reason, don't give up. You have the right to work with someone you connect with. If you feel comfortable, you can talk with your worker about how you are feeling and together you can find a way forward. If you don't feel comfortable talking to your worker about this, that's OK. You can let one of our admin staff know and we'll take it from there and get back to you.

## Should I involve my family and friends?

We believe that your family and friends play an important role in your path to better wellbeing.

We understand that there may be many different types of family and friends that are important in your life.

Research shows that involving family and friends in a young person's care can lead to better health outcomes<sup>1</sup>. Wherever possible, we support and create meaningful opportunities for your family and friends to directly participate in our services, in ways that you are comfortable with, and that are likely to be beneficial to your wellbeing.

**All involvement of family and friends at headspace is done with your privacy and confidentiality in mind.**

1. Hopkins L, Lee S, McGrane T, Barbara-May R. Single session family therapy in youth mental health: can it help? *Australasian Psychiatry*. 2017;25(2):108-11.



## What if English is my second language?

Our services are provided in English. In some cases interpreters can be arranged in advance to support you or your family and friends to communicate with a headspace worker during a session.

For more information, please speak to a headspace worker or visit Mental Health in Multicultural Australia at <https://embracementalhealth.org.au>.

## How do you collect my personal information?

To provide you with the best possible support, care and treatment, and continue to improve our service, we collect some information about all of the young people who access our services, the services they receive and the outcomes they achieve.

Before you access our services, we will ask you to provide us with some personal information about yourself. We may also ask your permission to collect information about you from other health workers, such as your doctor.

## What personal information will be collected?

We will collect personal information that helps us provide services to you. This includes your:

- full name and title
- date of birth
- address and contact number
- gender and sexual identity
- sexual preference
- emergency contact
- country of birth
- language spoken at home
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status
- highest level of education.

We understand that you might not want to answer some of these questions, and that's OK.

At the centre, you will also be asked a few questions on a tablet about your health and wellbeing. To help both us and you track whether you feel you are improving, you'll be asked the same questions before each service you receive.

Your health worker will also create a file for you, to document all care you receive.

### We can only collect this information from you if you give consent.

To help you decide whether you'd like to give this information, our consent form will tell you how we collect, protect and use your information, how you can apply for access to your personal information and how to make a complaint about our use of your personal information.

If there is information you don't want us to collect, please tell us. It's no problem, and we can chat it through.

## How is my personal information kept private and secure?

We're committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. The privacy of your information is also protected by law.

We make sure that your information is managed according to all current privacy and information security legislation, which sets standards for the collection, access, storage and use of the information we collect as part of our normal operations.

We also destroy, delete or de-identify this information when it's no longer needed.

If you would like more detail about how we collect and manage personal information, download a copy of the headspace Privacy Policy at [headspace.org.au/privacy-policy](https://headspace.org.au/privacy-policy) or speak to a headspace worker.

## Confidentiality and our duty of care

When you talk to a headspace worker what you say is kept confidential. This means nothing you say can be passed on to anyone else without your permission, unless we are seriously worried about your safety or the safety of someone else. This is because we have a duty of care to try to keep everyone safe.

In these cases we'll provide only necessary information to appropriate support people and services that can protect you and/or others, such as a parent or nominated support person, a crisis service or the police. Where possible we will be open about this with you and let you know if our concerns reach the point where we need to involve other services.

There are some circumstances where, when directed by the courts (such as in a legal case), confidential material may be required to be released. If this happens we will endeavour to include the young person as much as possible.

If you have any questions about confidentiality or our duty of care, download a copy of the headspace Privacy Policy at [headspace.org.au/privacy-policy](https://headspace.org.au/privacy-policy) or speak to a headspace worker.

### Need to know more?

Ask us to explain this to you if you're still unsure.

## Feedback

We appreciate all feedback (compliments, suggestions and complaints) about the services and care we provide to you. This feedback is used to make sure that you, and others like you, have the best possible experience.

You and your family can provide feedback about your service experience in a number of ways, including:

- in person at our centre
- by phone
- via our headspace centre webpage.

We take all feedback seriously and will do our best to respond to your feedback quickly.

## Further information and support

The following agencies also provide information and support to young people.

### National agencies

| Agency        | Contact details                     |                                                                                                           |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kids Helpline | kidshelpline.com.au<br>1800 55 1800 |                                                                                                           |
| SANE          | sane.org<br>1800 187 263            |                                                                                                           |
| QLife         | qlife.org.au<br>1800 184 527        | Online chat & phone counselling for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex (LGBTI) young people |
| ReachOut      | reachout.com                        | Information, tools, forums and apps to help cope with tough times and improve wellbeing                   |

### Further support

If you think your parents or carers could use some support, you can encourage them to visit [ehheadspace.org.au](http://ehheadspace.org.au) or call the Parentline 13 22 89.



# seven tips for a healthy headspace

**Taking steps to maintain your mental health and wellbeing helps you live your life in a positive and meaningful way, and also supports you to bounce back when times get tough.**



## 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 (like reading, drawing or exercising) as best you can.



## 5. stay active

Staying active can help you sleep better, manage stress and boost your mood.

Make time to take a break from study or work to do some exercise, whether it's going to the gym, kicking a ball around with a friend or just going for a walk.

Start small, and make sure it's something you enjoy.





## 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

Feeling connected to others is an essential part of being human. Spending time with friends, family and people in your community can really strengthen your mental health and wellbeing.

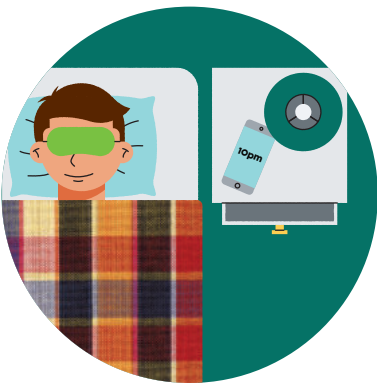
Planning a catch-up with friends, joining a club, or participating in a team sport or safe online community can help you feel connected and meet new people.



## 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.



## 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 from electronics 30-60 mins 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.



headspace services operate across Australia, in metro, regional and rural areas, supporting young Australians and their families to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.



headspace would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.



headspace is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. headspace welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.

**For more details about headspace  
visit [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)**

## Acknowledgement

This welcome pack was developed with the support of the headspace Youth National Reference Group and headspace centres and local youth reference groups, notably, headspace Bondi Junction, headspace Queanbeyan, headspace Redcliffe, headspace Swan Hill, headspace Taringa, headspace Adelaide, headspace Newcastle, headspace Albany, headspace Knox and headspace Berri.

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