

Hi. What can we help you with today?  
**I'm a young person -  
and I'm looking for information -  
about mental ill-health -**

Go

# headspace fact sheet toolkit



We're here  
to help



# GOT A LOT GOING ON?

NO SHAME IN TALKING IT OUT



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National Youth Mental Health Foundation

## MENTAL HEALTH IS LIKE A TREE

To stay strong and healthy it needs looking after. You need to take care of the roots of the tree for it to grow tall and stand strong.



### SPIRITUAL

rites culture elders  
identity language  
country ceremony pride  
beliefs language totems  
aboriginality tradition  
sacred dreaming lore

### MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL

healthy headspace  
positive thinking resilience  
feeling deadly strong  
support thoughts  
healing feelings

### FAMILY

friends  
aunties and uncles  
kinship parents  
belonging support  
safe place mob  
clan role models

### PHYSICAL

healthy body  
exercise good sleep  
sport good tucker  
healthy lifestyle  
looking deadly dance  
fishing hunting

Adapted from Menzies School of Health Research – Aboriginal and Islander Mental Health Initiative.

## YOU MIGHT NOTICE CHANGES

When we've got a lot going on we can feel sad, weak, tired, stressed and angry. Everybody has these feelings when life is tough, but when these feelings go on for a long time it can weaken our body, mind and spirit. When this happens, there are some changes you might notice, like:

- Feeling sad inside and no interest in doing things
- Feeling like everything is an effort
- Wanting to be alone
- Not eating good tucker
- Not being able to sleep
- Feeling nervous or jumpy
- Feeling guilt or shame
- Being so sad nothing can cheer you up
- Crying and you don't know why
- Having trouble focusing or remembering things
- Having too much alcohol, gunja/yandi and other drugs
- Having bad thoughts or thinking of dying



# YOU CAN KEEP YOURSELF STRONG BY

- Yarn with friends and family about what's going on
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating good, healthy tucker
- Staying connected with family and friends who give you strength and support
- Practicing culture through local totems and stories
- Spend time with local Elders to learn history, go on country, and learn art and crafts
- Reconnecting with country by going camping, hunting, fishing, swimming or surfing
- Taking time out for yourself to do things you enjoy like a hot bath, bush walk or drawing
- Making deadly choices and good changes
- Setting yourself goals
- Staying connected to your physical body by playing sports, music or dancing

Having ways to practice culture, language, and spiritual beliefs can make you feel proud and keep your spirit strong and your mind positive and resilient. Sometimes your community isn't on traditional country but you can still get involved in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by sharing stories with local Elders and discovering local history.



## LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

If you have noticed a change in yourself or a friend, it can be helpful to yarn with someone.




## AGED 12-25? HOW HEADSPACE CAN HELP

**headspace** is your space to yarn safe. **headspace** can help you or a friend with any problems you have with; physical health, mental health and wellbeing, drugs and alcohol, work, school and study.

**headspace** has centres where you can yarn to someone face-to-face, or you can contact our online and telephone support service, [eheadspace.org.au](http://eheadspace.org.au) or 1800 650 890. Remember, if you or a friend have a big worry and need urgent medical help, you need to call 000 straight away.

### FIND OUT MORE AT [WWW.YARNSAFE.ORG.AU](http://WWW.YARNSAFE.ORG.AU)

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**headspace** National Youth Mental Health Foundation is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health



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## STRESS AND PRESSURE

Stress can come from many things and cause all sorts of problems.



### STRESS CAN COME FROM

FEELING DISCONNECTED  
 RELATIONSHIPS **MONEY**  
 YOUR BODY **JOBS** SORRY BUSINESS  
 BULLYING **GRIEF** **SCHOOL**  
**UNIVERSITY** DRUGS AND ALCOHOL  
 COMMUNITY JUDGEMENT  
 TRYING TO MEET YOUR OWN EXPECTATIONS RACISM  
**RESPONSIBILITY TO FAMILY** FIGHTING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS  
 DISCRIMINATION **INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA**  
 FAMILY EXPECTATIONS HAVING TO SUPPORT YOUR MOB  
 BRINGING HOME MONEY TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY **WORK**  
 DEALING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS

### STRESS CAN CAUSE

**BAD THOUGHTS**  
 FEELING SAD INSIDE **FEELING LONELY**  
 BLAMING YOURSELF FOR THINGS EVEN IF IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT  
 WANTING TO BE ALONE ALL THE TIME  
**STAYING AWAY FROM MOB**  
**FEELING LIKE EVERYTHING IS A HASSLE**  
 FAMILY CONFLICTS QUICK TO GET WILD  
**FEELING TIRED AND FED UP**  
 THINKING THE WORLD IS AGAINST YOU  
**FEELING LIKE NO ONE UNDERSTANDS**  
 BEING UNABLE TO THINK PROPERLY OR MAKE GOOD CHOICES

## BE A YOUNG LEADER

Find good ways to cope when feeling stressed out and show your mob that it's ok to yarn to someone when you have lots of stress and pressure. There's no shame in talking it out.



# WORRY ME NOT

Everyone has worries in their life but it becomes a problem when your worrying goes on for a long time. It's important to look after yourself so you can overcome your worries and feel strong in your mind, body, spirit and culture.



## SPIRITUAL

VISIT COUNTRY  
RIVER, BUSH OR  
SOMEWHERE PEACEFUL  
**RELAX AND CHILL**  
SIT UNDER A TREE TO  
BE WITH NATURE

## MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL

WATCH MOVIES THAT  
MAKE YOU LAUGH  
**DRAW AND PAINT**  
WRITE POEMS, SONG LYRICS  
OR THOUGHTS IN A DIARY

## FAMILY

YARN WITH YOUR MOB  
CHILL WITH YOUR FRIENDS  
**STAY INVOLVED WITH  
FAMILY, FRIENDS,  
COMMUNITY**  
MOB AND CULTURE

## PHYSICAL

**PRACTICE BREATHING  
AND RELAXATION EXERCISES**  
LISTEN AND SING ALONG TO MUSIC  
AVOID ALCOHOL AND DRUGS  
**TRY TO GET MORE SLEEP**  
BE ACTIVE AND DO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
**EAT GOOD TUCKER**

Adapted from Menzies School of Health Research – Aboriginal and Islander Mental Health Initiative.

# LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

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AGED  
12-25?

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## STRONG AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Good relationships can make you feel happy and confident. They can help get you through tough times. It's deadly to share, care, laugh and love with your mob and bond over culture, community, kinship and family.



### FAMILY

KINSHIP COUSINS  
**SAFE PLACE**  
ROLE MODELS SUPPORT  
CLAN PARENTS  
AUNTIES AND UNCLES  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS

### PARTNERS

LOVE TRUST  
TRUTH HONEST  
RESPECT  
UNDERSTANDING  
CARING KIND  
LOYAL STRONG

### MOBS

FRIENDS SPORTS TEAM  
ELDERS SCHOOL  
MATES MENTORS  
WORK PEERS  
YOUTH GROUPS COMMUNITY  
CULTURE GROUPS

## MAINTAINING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Family relationships can sometimes break down because of many reasons. Disagreements, arguments and fights with family can leave you feeling down.

Maintaining your relationship with your family and keeping it strong can be really important in helping you feel deadly. Relationships with family can sometimes be tough, so there's no shame in talking to someone you can trust about what's going on and how to get things back on track.



# SIGNS OF AN UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARTNER

**POSSESSIVENESS** – when they're checking up on you all the time and controlling where you go and who you see.

**JEALOUSY** – when they accuse you of cheating, keep you from seeing your mob or talking to other people.

**PUT DOWNS** – when they run you down, shame you up and say stuff that makes you feel like you're no good.

**THREATS** – when they make threats that they will hurt you, your mob or your friends. Yelling, sulking and breaking things are forms of abuse.

**PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE** – shoving, hitting, forcing you to have sex or do things you don't want to do.

When relationships aren't good, and close friendships and relationships break down, it can be really hard to deal with. You may notice that you feel down, have less motivation to do things, have trouble sleeping or lose your appetite.

Maintaining friendships and keeping them strong is not always easy. Some friends make you laugh, some are always there for you, some have been around for as long as you can remember.

Different friendships will keep you happy and strong in different parts of your life. Friendships will change over time and sometimes they can turn into unhealthy relationships. Not all friends are good for you and it's important to figure out which ones are strong and which ones you are better off without.



## LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

If you're having worries about a friendship or relationship, it can be helpful to talk to the person about it or yarn with someone that you trust.



AGED 12-25?

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## ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Drugs and alcohol can make you feel good for a little while, but in the long run will make you feel much worse. Drugs and alcohol can also weaken your spirit and your connection with family, community and culture.

It's important to stay safe. These are some signs of when drinking or drug use could be becoming a problem.



**STOP DOING THINGS NOT EATING EATING TOO MUCH FEELING ANGRY OR IRRITABLE STAYING IN BED UNUSUAL SADNESS OVER-SLEEPING FIGHTING WITH FAMILY CAN'T SETTLE DOWN SAD FEELINGS HAVING NO MONEY FOR FOOD LACK OF ENERGY HAVING TROUBLE SLEEPING FIGHTING WITH FRIENDS NO MOTIVATION CAUSING FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO WORRY FEELING GUILTY DARK THOUGHTS CAN'T CONCENTRATE LOSING INTEREST IN THINGS THAT YOU USE TO ENJOY FEELING LIKE YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT IT FEELING BAD RISKY ACTIVITIES YOU WOULD USUALLY AVOID STRESSED OUT**

## ALCOHOL

Alcohol is stuff like beer, cider, wine, spirits or homebrew but you might know it as grog, charge, booze, drink or piss. Alcohol dulls the senses and affects the way you think, feel and act. For most people, alcohol will relax you, slow down your reflexes and affect your balance and coordination. When you're feeling down, alcohol can make you feel even sadder or more angry.

## YARNDI, GUNJA

Yarndi or gunja is also known as cannabis, marijuana, grass, pot, dope and weed. Yarndi can change your mood and slow down thinking, feeling, movements, memory and concentration. After using yarndi, you might find it difficult to think straight, remember things and solve problems. In the long term, yarndi can make you feel less motivated and feel worse if you are feeling down.

## ICE (CRYSTAL METH)

Ice can be called crystal meth, amphetamines, shabu, and it is the strongest form of speed. These drugs speed you up and make you have lots of energy. They can also make you feel invincible, and this can lead you to do unsafe things that you wouldn't normally do like have unsafe sex or drive dangerously. It can make you lose your appetite, make you sleep less and run you down. Ice might also make you feel worried or suspicious or aggressive. Some people might see or hear things that aren't there.

## STAY SAFE

There is no safe level of drug and grog use. Use of any drug always carries some risk – even prescribed medications can cause unwanted side effects. If you choose to use drugs or alcohol here's some ways to stay safe;

- Sip on your drink, don't hook into it
- Take a little bit of the drug first to see how strong it is
- Don't mix your drugs. It can be very dangerous
- Use clean drug utensils
- Don't drive - keep enough money for a cab or organise a lift with someone you trust
- Make sure you have a feed before you start drinking or using drugs and drink lots of water
- It's not safe to drink and use drugs while pregnant
- Avoid drinking or using drugs if you have school, university or work the next day
- Try drinking out of bottles with lids (safe from spiking)
- Look out for your mates
- Look after your health- remember to rest, eat well, sleep and take time out from drugs
- Call an ambulance (000) if things get bad



# STAY STRONG & HEALTHY



GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP AND EATING GOOD TUCKER

STAYING CONNECTED TO YOUR PHYSICAL BODY BY PLAYING SPORTS, MUSIC OR DANCING

RECONNECTING WITH COUNTRY BY HUNTING, CAMPING, FISHING, OR SWIMMING

PRACTICING CULTURE WITH LOCAL TOTEMS AND STORIES  
SPENDING TIME WITH LOCAL ELDERS TO LEARN STORIES, GO ON COUNTRY AND LEARN ART AND CRAFTS

STAYING CONNECTED WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO GIVE YOU STRENGTH AND SUPPORT

MAKING DEADLY CHOICES AND GOOD CHANGES  
TAKING TIME OUT FOR YOURSELF TO DO THINGS YOU ENJOY LIKE A HOT BATH, BUSH WALK OR DRAWING

## LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

If you are worried about yours or a friends drug / alcohol use, it can be helpful to yarn with someone you trust.



AGED 12-25?

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