It's normal to feel angry at times and sometimes it can motivate you to do better, stand up for yourself or protect you. When anger is intense or frequent, it may become a problem.

**What are some warning signs of anger?**

- **Mentally**
  you can’t think straight, your thoughts get cloudy, you feel a loss of control

- **Emotionally**
  you feel rejected, humiliated, jealous or afraid

- **Physically**
  your heart beats faster, your adrenaline picks up, you start to feel tense

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**If anger is a problem, you may also find yourself:**

- Making bad decisions
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Having regular arguments
- Feeling depressed and/or anxious
- Acting out in a violent way

This in turn can affect your family life, friendships and study.

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**There are three styles of responding to anger:**

- **Assertive**
  expressing anger in an assertive, non-aggressive manner while standing up for yourself and communicating clearly.

- **Passive**
  blocking out or pretending anger isn’t there because it makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened. This can then lead to other problems and the underlying issue is not addressed.

- **Aggressive**
  acting out aggressively or violently toward other people and as a result damage relationships and create problems with work/study or alcohol/drug use.

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**When you are angry, you have choices:**

- Listen and work out what it means
- Motivate yourself to find a solution
- Talk to someone about how you feel

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It’s important to get help before your anger gets out of control. If you are getting angry more often or if other people are worried about your anger issues, contact headspace.
Your body image is the way you think and feel about your body. It can be positive or negative.

Most young women and girls are worried about their body — in fact it’s their number one concern.

Of Australian high school girls:
- **76%** wish they were thinner
- **50%** have tried to lose weight
- **16%** are happy with their body weight

Poor body image can be associated with depression, anxiety, alcohol and other drug abuse and eating disorders.

Some warning signs that you or someone you know might have body image issues:
- Distorted eating habits
- Obsession with weight and exercise
- Being continually self-critical
- Constantly comparing body size

Guys have body image issues too. One third of males want to be thinner and one third want to be bulkier.

More than **1 in 5** young men say body image is their number one concern.

Tips for better body image:
- Focus on yourself as a person, not just how you look
- Aim to get healthier rather than lose weight
- Focus on the things you like about your body
- Stop being critical about others’ appearance
- Remember, real bodies aren’t perfect, and perfect bodies are almost always airbrushed

Bullying is intentional and repeated negative behaviour by a person or group. It can lead to:

- Depression and/or anxiety
- Poor performance at school and work
- Poorer social skills
- Low self esteem
- Suicidal thoughts

1 in 8 young people have experienced verbal bullying

1 in 10 young people have experienced cyber-bullying

1 in 5 young people in Australia say bullying is a major concern for them

We can all help stamp out bullying.

If you see someone being bullied, don’t be a bystander. You can:

- Report it
- Talk to trusted people
- Change the subject
- Be supportive
- Comfort and include the person being bullied

headspace.org.au/bullying
DEPRESSION

Depression is one of the most common mental health problems facing young Australians.

By the age of 18

1 in 5 people will have experienced depression

If not treated, depression can lead to:

- Alcohol and/or drug misuse
- Poor physical health
- Underachieving at school or work
- Losing contact with friends and family

Warning signs someone you know could be suffering from depression:

- Moodiness and irritability
- Loss of interest in life
- Withdrawing from friends & family
- Changes in appetite
- Irregular sleeping patterns
- Lack of energy and motivation
- Difficulty concentrating

References – all at http://www.headspace.org.au/what-works/research-information/depression#5A

For more information go to headspace.org.au/depression
Up to 11% of young people are same sex attracted or unsure about it.

That means at a school of 1000 students, 110 will be experiencing feelings of same sex attraction.

Being same sex attracted doesn’t cause problems. It’s the abuse and rejection of same sex attracted people that’s the problem.

Someone who has been the target of homophobia is up to 6x more likely to complete suicide than their straight friends.

- 80% say school is the most common place where they experience abuse.
- 61% say they have experienced verbal abuse.
- 18% say they have experienced physical abuse.

What makes things better for a same sex attracted young person?
- Support from friends
- Acceptance by family
- Being part of something (like a community/social group or sports team)

headspace.org.au/homophobia
Mental health is about being able to work and study to your full potential, cope with day-to-day stress, feel connected to others, and live your life in a free and satisfying way.

Mental ill health is the single biggest health issue facing young Australians.

75% of mental health problems emerge before the age of 25.

**WARNING SIGNS** of a mental health problem include:
- Loss of interest or feeling ‘low’
- Doing ordinary things gets harder
- Taking more dangerous risks
- Withdrawal or feeling overwhelmed
- Using alcohol or drugs to escape
- Changes in sleeping and eating

1 in 4 young people experience depression, anxiety or substance use disorders in a given year.

**Tips to maintain good mental health**
- Exercise regularly, eat well and have adequate sleep
- Explore relaxation and coping strategies
- Catch up with friends and loved ones
- Make time to do things you enjoy

Get help early, before a smaller problem becomes a bigger problem.
If you are concerned about your own or a friend’s mental health, contact headspace.
If you often have negative thoughts about yourself, you may be experiencing low self-esteem.

**Low self-esteem can lead to unhelpful behaviours such as:**

- Engaging in risky behaviours (e.g. excessive dieting, substance abuse)
- Withdrawing from friends, family and social situations
- Avoiding taking on new challenges or risks due to fear of failure or rejection

**Tips to build your self-esteem:**

- Re-engage with simple activities that used to make you feel good e.g. help a friend, cook a meal
- Be aware when your negative thoughts get in the way of more important things
- Try not to avoid situations that make you nervous
- Try to practice more balanced ways of thinking about yourself e.g. instead of thinking “I’m a failure” remind yourself “Everyone makes mistakes I did well and will learn from this for next time”

Self-esteem is about how we see ourselves and judge our overall sense of self-worth.

Positive self-esteem is about valuing yourself and seeing yourself as being “good enough”.

When we experience positive self-esteem we can:

- Feel confident in taking chances
- Feel comfortable asking for help
- Stand up for ourselves
- Share and create positive relationships
- Accept both compliments and negative feedback

Low self-esteem is associated with developing anxiety, depression, eating disorders and substance abuse.

If you or someone you know is experiencing problems with self-esteem, contact headspace.
SORTING FACT FROM FICTION ON SELF-HARM

Self-harm is when someone deliberately injures themselves. The most common type of self-harm among young people is cutting.

Most self-harm is related to intense emotional pain, distress, or overwhelming negative feelings, thoughts or memories.

Some things you can do to help someone who is self-harming include:

- Remain calm and try to be in control of your emotions
- Ask them if they are okay
- Support them to get help early
- Recognise that self-harm might be their coping tool and don’t expect them to stop today
- Don’t agree to keep secrets — if their safety is at risk, you may need to tell someone

MYTH
"Self-harm is an attempt at suicide"
FACT
Most self-harm is a way of trying to cope, but those who self-harm are at higher risk of trying to end their life.

Another myth is that self-harm is a way to get attention or is just a ‘‘trend’’ or ‘‘emo’’ thing.
MYTH
"It’s just attention seeking"
FACT
Most young people actually go to great lengths to hide their self-harm from others, rather than to seek attention.

The numbers don’t lie. Most people who self-harm are not trying to end their life. Self-harm is a form of coping.

MYTH
"If someone self-harms, they must have a mental illness or a personality disorder"
FACT
Self-harm is a form of coping. It may not be a sign of mental illness or disorder. It may be the result of underlying issues that need to be addressed.

For some young people, self-harm is a ‘‘once off’’ event, but for others, it is repetitive. Over 50% of self-harm is repetitive.

Young people with depression or anxiety symptoms are 5 times more likely to self-harm.

Self-help strategies can be helpful and include:

- Talk with a trusted adult
- Distract yourself e.g. exercise or hit a punching bag
- Try to do things that make you feel good e.g. write in a diary or journal

Getting professional support for the underlying distress might be helpful.

If you’re not ready to talk to someone you know about self-harm, contact headspace.

headspace.org.au

headspace
National Youth Mental Health Foundation
Sexual health encompasses physical, mental and social wellbeing, and how it relates to sexuality.

Positive sexual health includes:
- Feeling good about your sexuality
- Making informed decisions on sexual activity, free from coercion, discrimination and violence
- Avoiding Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies.

Thinking of having sex?
Whatever sexual activity you’re considering, make sure you both:
- Give willing and informed consent
- Talk about your expectations. You should be able to express your wants, needs and limits
- Practice safe sex
- Carry protection – this doesn’t mean you expect sex.

Almost 1/3 of young people surveyed reported that they had experienced unwanted sex. The two most common reasons were being too drunk or being pressured by their partner.

Practicing safe sex
Safe sex reduces the risk of STIs and unplanned pregnancies.
The most common and effective way of preventing STIs and unplanned pregnancies are condoms.
Contraceptives like the pill or implant do not prevent STIs.
Around 500,000 young Australians estimated to have Chlamydia¹; 83,000 cases of Chlamydia were diagnosed in 2012².

Testing
Having a sexual health test is simple and confidential. There is no single test for all STIs.
Common procedures include testing your urine or blood, having a swab or a simple physical exam.

You can get help and support for sexual health, mental health and wellbeing at headspace.
headspace.org.au