

What to expect at a headspace centre?



headspace helps thousands of young people across Australia



headspace
National Youth Mental Health Foundation

Young people can go through many different changes as they grow up. It can often be hard as a parent or carer to know the difference between normal behaviour, such as moodiness, irritability and withdrawal and an emerging mental health problem.

Mental health refers to a person's emotional and social wellbeing. When someone's mental health declines it can affect their feelings, thoughts and actions. This can affect their day-to-day life and participation in activities such as school, work and relationships.

Mental health problems are common and are usually understandable reactions to personal and social issues. They can affect anyone regardless of age, sex, race, religion etc and is not something to be ashamed of. When mental health problems last for long periods of time and severely affect someone's everyday life, it may be that the problem is becoming an illness. If a young person develops a mental health problem it is important that they get help early.

At a **headspace** centre, young people can access help for a range of health problems by talking to the right type of health worker for their needs. This could be a doctor, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, occupational therapist, youth worker, alcohol and drug worker, or Aboriginal health worker. **headspace** centres are located throughout Australia.

headspace offers services for people who are aged between 12 and 25, and...

- need some help with any type of health issue
- are having difficulty with something in their lives
- are feeling sad, anxious or worried
- are concerned about the use of alcohol or drugs
- are worried about a friend or a family member
- need advice about education and/or finding work
- would like to discuss relationships or their sexual health

Finding a headspace centre

To find out if there is a **headspace** near you visit '[headspace centres](#)' on our website.

If there's not a **headspace** nearby, you can find out about [other services](#) on the **headspace** website.

Making an appointment

Young people can call **headspace** directly or ask a teacher, parent, other family member, health worker or community agency to contact **headspace** for them. Making an appointment is simple; just phone **headspace** to find a time that is convenient.

Your local **headspace** centre may also see young people without an appointment through their 'drop in' service where a young person can visit anytime in their visiting hours. Call your local **headspace** to find out more about what services they offer.



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Visiting a headspace centre

It's not unusual for a young person to feel nervous about getting help for the first time, and talking to a stranger about their feelings and thoughts may take some time to get used to. It sometimes helps for them to bring along a friend or a family member for support.

Depending on the reason for visiting the young person may discuss how they are feeling, and how things are at work, school or study. They may also talk about how they are sleeping, how they are eating, and how they are getting on with their family and friends.

It is important that the young person feels safe and comfortable with their **headspace** worker. Some people prefer to speak to a male, others want to talk to a female. Some prefer to speak to someone who understands their cultural background. **headspace** will do its best to make sure the young person is seen by someone they are comfortable with.

The first appointment is usually the hardest because they don't know what to expect. They will probably be asked a lot of questions on their first visit. This is to make sure that all the important issues are covered, and to help develop the best solution. Over time it gets easier to talk, as the young person gets to know and trust their **headspace** worker.

Appointments with a **headspace** worker usually last 50 minutes to an hour. Sessions with a doctor might be shorter.

A young person may visit **headspace** to talk about their concerns just once, or return for multiple visits. The **headspace** worker might also suggest other people who could help, such as employment workers. **headspace** will help establish contact with these other supports.

A young person may want to hear other young people's experiences about getting help in the '[Your Stories](#)' section on the **headspace** website.

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

Confidentiality

When a young person talks to a **headspace** worker nothing they say can be passed on to anyone else without their permission but there are a few exceptions: If safety is an issue, and in some circumstances as required by law.

If a **headspace** worker is seriously worried about a person's safety they must – by law – try to keep everyone safe. This means they might have to share their concerns with someone else.

Websites and further information

headspace service provision is in English. In some cases interpreters can be arranged in advance to support the young person and the **headspace** worker in their consultation. Call your local **headspace** to find out more.

All websites referenced in this document link you to an English site and may be a great source of information and support to the young people you know. There is also additional information available for parents and carers.

For more information on mental health in your language please ask your local **headspace** centre or visit [Multicultural Mental Health Australia](#).

For more information, and to find out if there is a **headspace** centre near you, visit the **headspace** website: www.headspace.org.au