

push for better student mental health

We recognise that not all teachers can be mental health experts, however they can play a role in opening up conversations about wellbeing and mental health and encouraging help-seeking behaviours in their classrooms.

Our friends at headspace, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation, have shared the following tips to help teachers encourage students to look after their mental health and wellbeing during The Push-Up Challenge.

How can we boost our mental health?

To keep our bodies healthy, we eat healthy food and exercise regularly—but there are also lots of things we can do to strengthen our wellbeing and mental health.

To help with this, headspace has developed “7 tips for a healthy headspace”. You can use these tips as easy, actionable examples to help your students better understand how to maintain their mental health.

They include:

- create connections
- get into life
- eat well
- stay active
- get enough sleep
- cut back on alcohol and other drugs
- learn skills for tough times.

You can read all about them at headspace.org.au/tips.

Looking out for your mental health

It is normal to feel stressed, sad, angry, worried or down sometimes, especially during times of uncertainty. But sometimes, even if we are doing everything we can to look after our mental health, we still don't feel good, and we may want some extra help. It is important for your students to know how and when to ask for help.

Help your students understand that there are many services within the school and outside of the school environment where they can seek additional support.

Consider where they might go for help at school?

- School Wellbeing Team
- School Counsellor
- Trusted Teacher
- Year Level Advisor.

Consider where they might go for help in their community?

- Their local headspace Centre
- headspace.org.au/eheadspace
- Their local GP
- Or have a chat with a trusted adult in their life.

For more information and support for your school check out these two national initiatives:

Be You

Be You is a national initiative for ALL Australian educators, school leaders, and schools. Be You is aimed at promoting and protecting positive mental health in children and young people.

To find out more visit the Be You website beyou.edu.au.

If your secondary school is currently responding to, or recovering from, a suicide or attempted suicide, please contact your Be You state or territory manager at headspace.org.au/schools/contact-headspace-in-schools.

Mental Health Education Program (MHEP)

The MHEP program delivers free mental health education workshops to secondary school communities across Australia. The workshops have been developed to increase awareness, knowledge and skills in mental health literacy, accessing support and improving wellbeing in secondary students and their parents and carers.

Workshops are free, interactive, strength-based, evidence-informed and timed to fit a standard school lesson. Workshops are facilitated onsite at schools, and/or via webinar.

These workshops complement mental health and wellbeing strategies that schools already have in place, including the Be You National Initiative for educators.

headspace.org.au/mental-health-education-program

Other useful links

- headspace Schools: headspace.org.au/headspace-schools
- headspace Schools Evaluation: headspace.org.au/research-and-evaluation

During The Push-Up Challenge, please also see the daily mental health facts released each day.

You may like to involve your Secondary School's Wellbeing Team or other suitably qualified school staff member in discussions around the daily mental health facts.