

Mental health and wellbeing

“There is no health without mental health” – [World Health Organisation](http://www.who.int)

There are many ways to understand mental health and wellbeing.

In general, when people talk about mental health and wellbeing they are talking about how you think, feel, interact with others, enjoy and take part in life.

As you go through life, you will experience ups and downs and face different challenges. This includes feeling sad, angry, worried and even overwhelmed at times.

Sometimes however, difficult thoughts and feelings last a long time. They can even start to impact your day-to-day life, and make it hard to do the things you would usually do.

You might start to notice changes in how you think, feel and get along with others, as well as physical symptoms like changes in your sleep or eating habits.

The time and place you grew up and your past experiences can shape what you think about mental health and wellbeing, as well as what you do when you feel stressed or unwell. This includes whether or not you seek help.

If you are not feeling well, there is no shame in asking for help. In fact, seeking help takes courage and can make a big difference in your life and the lives of those around you.

There are many things you can learn about and do if you want to improve the mental health and wellbeing of yourself, your family or your community.

There is also support available to anyone who needs it, to help work through any mental health or wellbeing challenges you may be experiencing.

If you need help now

If you think someone could hurt themselves or others, get urgent help.

Call emergency services

Dial triple zero (000)

Call Lifeline

Dial 13 11 14

Seeking help

If you need help for the mental health and wellbeing of yourself or a loved one, the options below can help.

Remember, if you are currently in crisis please **call 000**.

Your privacy is important.

There are laws to protect your privacy whenever you use a health or mental health service in Australia.

This means that what you say to your doctor, counsellor, interpreter or other health professional is confidential and will not be shared with anyone else without your consent.

The only exception to confidentiality is the rare situation where someone is at serious risk of being harmed or harming others, to keep everyone safe.



- Seeing your doctor and other health professionals
 - Doctors are there to help look after the health of you and your family, and this includes your mental health and wellbeing
 - Your doctor is a good place to start if you or a loved one have been experiencing issues with your mental health and wellbeing
 - Your doctor can talk through what has been happening with you, and what might help. You can let your doctor know if you have preferences about what you do and don't want to do, or if you are unsure about anything and would like more information. You can also bring someone with you such as a family member, for support
 - Your doctor might connect you to another health professional for further help, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, group program or others. Let your doctor know if you would prefer to see someone who speaks your language, or who is male or female. You can also ask for assistance to book appointments or fill in forms if you need it
 - When you are booking an appointment with your doctor or another health professional, remember to ask for an interpreter if you need one – it will make it easier for you both to understand one another and work out what to do next
- At home and in the community
 - There are also many things you can do at home and in the community to improve your mental health and wellbeing, as well as work through any challenges or issues you may be experiencing
 - Talking about what has been happening with someone you trust, such as a close family member or friend, a teacher or a religious or community leader, can help you to better understand what is going on and how you feel about it. This can help reduce your stress as well as give you hope and another perspective
 - Doing things that bring you meaning and happiness are important both when you feel well and when you might be struggling. Different things work for different people – some people enjoy music, cooking, sports, art, friends, faith, community activities... It is about what is most important to you and what you enjoy
 - Our bodies and minds are connected. Taking care of your physical health alongside your mental health helps to improve your overall wellbeing. Developing healthy eating, sleeping and exercise habits is a good place to start
 - Learning more about mental health and wellbeing can also help you improve your mental health and wellbeing over time – find out more using the resources below
 - If you have tried doing things at home and in the community, and are still feeling stressed and unwell, it might be time to seek help from someone else such as your doctor

Factsheet produced by:

Embrace Multicultural Mental Health

Mental Health Australia

Published in 2020

