

# WELLBEING

Our wellbeing is the balance in our lives of our physical, mental, social and emotional health. When we take care of all of these aspects of our lives we build a positive sense of self and support our own wellbeing.



What are some of the things that you might find support your positive wellbeing?

**Stay active** – keeping our body moving is good for our physical health, but also for our mental health and wellbeing. Fresh air, fitness and movement can bring a sense of balance and generate endorphins, as well as help us focus our mind and live in the moment.

**Being Social** – Connecting with people we care about and who care about us helps maintain a positive sense of self and belonging. Engaging with others can also help us destress, by sharing experiences, sharing a laugh or enjoying some quality time.



**Eat well** – maintaining a balanced diet is good for our bodies, our brain function and our mood. Eating more fresh fruit and vegetables is the simplest way to achieve this and planning ahead helps you to make sure to put them on the menu.

**Good Sleep** – getting adequate quality sleep improves mood, and helps you think more clearly through the day. This can help in decision making, handling stress and communicating well with others – as well as just having more energy in your day!



**Me Time** – Self-care is not selfish. Self-care is vital to maintain and restore our wellbeing but can be one of the first things to fall off when life gets busy – make sure to make time for you. It is important to spend regular time doing something you enjoy and that brightens your day – paint, read, play games, sing in the shower or even go for the full spa pamper experience!

When you make your wellbeing a priority, you are more likely to feel positive, know your worth and relate to others in a more positive way – all of which cycle back to your wellbeing too!

Head to MIEACT for more resources on self-care for wellbeing: [mieact.org.au/mieact-resources/](https://mieact.org.au/mieact-resources/)

# TALK



When you're going through a difficult time, or have feelings of anxiety or depression, or thoughts of suicide, talking about it can be hard. But going through it alone can be even harder. Support from your friends, family and health professionals will help.

Start with finding someone you trust, and who you feel will be understanding. This can be a professional if you don't feel ready to talk to those close to you yet.



When you are ready to, only share as much as you are ready to, you are in control of how much you share. When speaking to a health professional, it helps to be open about what you are thinking and feeling, and how it impacts your daily life.

Head to Beyond Blue for more resources on talking about your mental health.

Talk about it:

[www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/have-the-conversation/talk-about-it](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/have-the-conversation/talk-about-it)

Know your options:

[www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/have-the-conversation/know-your-options](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/have-the-conversation/know-your-options)

# SUPPORT



If you have someone in your life that you are worried about, it can be difficult to know what to say and where to start the conversation. It's usually as simple as asking them how they are going, but it's important that this is done in an environment that is supportive of the conversation, without distraction. Make sure that your conversation respects the need for privacy too.

The next step is taking time to listen. Patience and having an open mind ensure there is no need to rush or sense of judgement. Allow time for silence and encourage explanations where needed.



Consider how you can encourage them to take the next step and seek support, if they seem ready. Appreciate that they will need social support as they start their journey of recovery. You can line up a time to check-in and have another chat or get in touch afterwards to let them know you care.

Head to RUOK and Beyond Blue for more resources on supporting someone in their mental health journey:

How to ask "Are you OK?"

[www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask](http://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask)

Supporting someone - Beyond Blue

[www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/supporting-someone](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/supporting-someone)

# NAVIGATE



Where to go for further resources, help seeking and professional support...

If you, or someone you know, is ready to seek help – where do you start?

The best place to start is to talk to your GP, as they are equipped to offer advice on treatments, support services and other options.

Find a professional:

[www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/find-a-professional](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/find-a-professional)

There are also a range of online portals, assessment tools and directories that can help you better understand your needs and where to go for support.

Self-Assessment:

[onlineclinic.blackdoginstitute.org.au/?s=w](http://onlineclinic.blackdoginstitute.org.au/?s=w)

[moodgym.com.au/](http://moodgym.com.au/)

[www.mycompass.org.au/](http://www.mycompass.org.au/)

[www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/newaccess](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/newaccess)

Online Portals/Directories:

[headtohealth.gov.au/](http://headtohealth.gov.au/)

<https://cnct.directory/>

<https://www.emhprac.org.au/directory/>

The Community Mental Health Sector is full of service providers and programs that often accept self-referrals for their services or can be referred to by your GP or other specialist also:

ACT Community Directory: [mycommunitydirectory.com.au](http://mycommunitydirectory.com.au)

Home - Community Services: [www.communityservices.act.gov.au/](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/)

# HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



Exercise and healthy eating are good for your physical health – and your mental health too. There is a strong link between what we eat and how we feel!

Studies have shown links between a healthy diet that includes a range of fresh fruits and vegetables and improved mental health.

Eating well and exercise can help you get a good night's sleep, give you more energy, improve concentration, improve confidence, boost your mood, release stress and lower anxiety.

So how do I start?

Start small – make small changes and set small goals to start – this will help them be more achievable and keep you motivated

Do what you enjoy – find delicious healthy recipes, and exercise options that are fun for you!



Make incremental changes along the way – add in a new way to move, or add more fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and gains to your weekly menu.

Make time and set a routine – planning ahead for meals or scheduling in exercise – even when times are stressful – will help you cope with these situations.

Don't go it alone – think about ways you can get your friends or family involved – share recipes, go for walks together or join a class to help with motivation, and increase positive impacts from more social time too!

Find out more here:

[www.healthdirect.gov.au/food-drink-and-mental-health](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/food-drink-and-mental-health)

[www.eatforhealth.gov.au/](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/)

# MENTAL WELLBEING AND COVID-19

2020 and 2021 in Australia have been dominated by the impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic – our family, social and work lives have all been affected by the health crisis.

In managing the pandemic, major changes have been made to schooling, commerce, recreation and work, particularly during periods of lockdown. Families have been home-schooling their children, employees have transitioned to working from home, business has moved online and many people have lost work. People are also feeling isolated and worried about the future.

While governments and service organisations have created new support payments and services to address the emerging needs of the community, there is no doubt that many people are still experiencing high levels of mental and emotional distress.

For some people this may be the first time that their mental wellbeing has been seriously affected, and therefore it is critical that mental health awareness and access to support and resources is widely promoted.

For others, the pandemic may have triggered new episodes of mental illness or exacerbated existing problems. Each person has their own story, their own challenges and their own path to wellness and recovery.

Mental Health Month in the ACT is therefore a great time for everyone in our community to take the time to recognise and reaffirm the importance of mental wellbeing to our quality of life.

Let's spread the word about the key factors that sustain mental wellbeing to encourage illness prevention. Let's encourage everyone struggling with their mental health to reach out and seek support and information, and let's create a community reputation for stepping in early when we notice others in difficulty and showing where to find the right help.

The Beyond Blue sub-site dedicated to all members of the community affected by the impacts of Covid-19 is a comprehensive portal for information, referrals and discussion about mental health, managing stress and finding support.

**<https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/home>**