

# Managing Mental Well Being in Young People

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# What are Young People Doing?

- 95% of 15 to 19 year olds are in full time study with 96.3% of these young people planning to complete year 12
- 85% of young people go on to finish year 12
- 66.7% of young people aim to go on to university after completing year 12
- 41.2% are working part time

# What Young People Value

1. Family Relationships (61% of young people rated their family relationships as very good to excellent and 6.5% as poor)
2. Friendships
3. School or study satisfaction
4. Physical and mental health

62.3% of young people are happy or very happy with their lives and 62.2% are very positive or very positive about their future

# Issues of Personal Concern

1. Coping with stress
2. School or study concerns
3. Mental illness and body image concerns

# Most important issues in Australia for Young People

1. Mental Health
2. Alcohol and drugs
3. Equity and Discrimination

# Where do Young People go for Help

1. Friends
2. Parents
3. Family Friends
4. GP or health Professionals
5. Teachers

# Mental Illness in Young People

Research tells us that mental illnesses are a brain disease .... while the symptoms are behavioural, these illnesses have a biological core with genetic components (and) changes in brain activity and neural pathways ....

# Mental Illness in Young People

- Approximately 14% of children or adolescents suffer from a mental illness
- Males are more likely than females to suffer from a mental illness
- Most common mental illnesses in adolescence include:
  - Anxiety Disorders
  - Depression
  - Behavioural Disorders
  - Eating Disorders
- As young people get older Anxiety, mood disorders, eating disorders and substance abuse become more common and behavioural disorders less common



# Early Warning Signs

1. **Trouble coping with everyday activities**
2. Sadness, tearfulness and **irritability**
3. Decreasing motivation and feelings of hopelessness
4. **Deteriorating school performance** and refusal to attend school
5. **Social withdrawal**
6. Sudden changes in behaviour
7. Unexplained physical symptoms
8. **Difficulty with sleep**
9. **Concerns about weight or physical appearance, significant changes in eating and unexplained weight loss**
10. Increasing risk taking behaviours

# When to become worried

1. Changes are persistent and sustained
2. Changes are having a significant effect on day to day function
3. Withdrawal from close friends and peers
4. Increase in risk taking behaviours

# Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety is a normal and useful emotion
- Anxiety disorders are not simply too much worry but inappropriate concerns characterised by irrational fears and avoidance of feared situations leading to impairment in day to day functions and prolonged and intense distress
- Anxiety includes:
  - Physical symptoms
  - Excessive worry, obsessive thinking or catastrophising
  - Avoidance

# Depression

- Depression is not only a disturbance in mood but is accompanied by significant physical, psychological and behavioural impairment
- Early warning signs include
  - Tearfulness and sustained low mood
  - Anger and irritability
  - Lack of pleasure in normal activities
  - Social withdrawal
  - Sleep disturbance (reversed sleep cycle)
  - Functional impairment and deterioration in school performance
  - Loss of energy
  - Substance abuse

# Eating Disorders

- Effect up to 1 in 10 young women and about 1 in 20 young men
- 3<sup>rd</sup> most common chronic illness in young women
- Early warning signs include
  - Unexplained weight loss
  - Eating in private and avoiding meals with other people
  - Changes in food preference with increasing restriction and rigidity in food choices and pattern of eating
  - Preoccupation with healthy eating and exercise
  - Chaotic eating

# Protective Factors

## 1. Personal Factors

- Self efficacy
- Optimism
- Social skills
- Problem solving
- Competency
- Physical well being

# Protective Factors

## 1. Family Factors

- Positive parent child relationships
- Authoritative parenting
- Family meals

# Protective Factors

## 1. Social Factors

- Positive peer network and role models
- Participation in school or training
- Participation in sport or extra curricular activities



# Risk Factors

## 1. Personal Factors

- Poor Social skills
- Learning difficulties
- Impulsivity
- Trauma
- Alcohol and drug uses
- Chronic health problems

# Risk Factors

## 1. Family Factors

- Family Conflict
- Parental mental illness, drug use or chronic physical illness
- Authoritarian parenting
- Unclear limits
- Domestic violence
- Socio-economic disadvantage

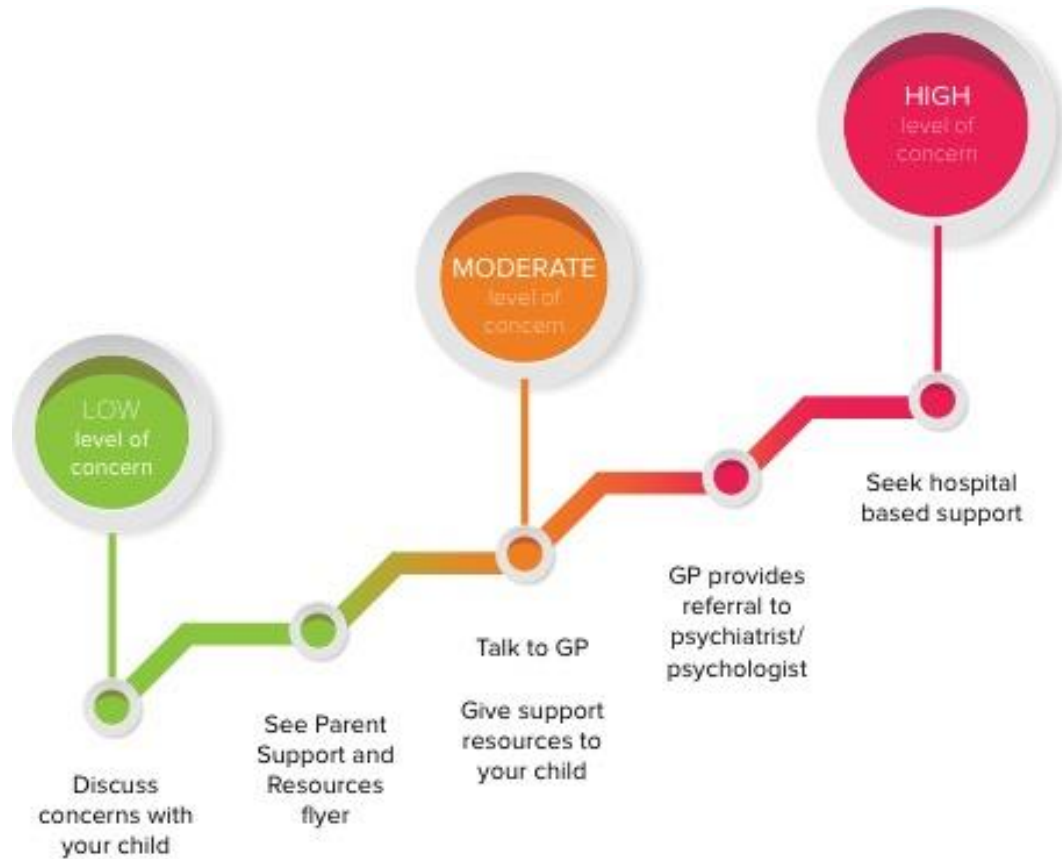
# Risk Factors

## 1. Social Factors

- Limited social network
- Bullying
- Failure of participation in school or training
- Peer rejection

# Promoting Good Mental Health

1. Eat well
2. Sleep well
3. Regular exercise
4. Self-soothing or pleasant events
5. Mindfulness/relaxation/distraction
6. Connection
  - Family
  - Peers
  - Community (sports teams, arts and drama)
7. Regular family meals



## Support and Resources for Parents

### Parenting and Relationships

#### Parent Line NSW

1300 1300 52  
9am-9pm weekdays, 4pm-9pm weekends  
[www.parentline.org.au](http://www.parentline.org.au)

#### Relationships Australia

1300 1364 277  
[www.relationships.org.au](http://www.relationships.org.au)

#### ReachOut Australia

[www.parents.au.reachout.org](http://www.parents.au.reachout.org)

### General Mental Health

#### Headspace

1800 650 890  
9am-1am, 7 days a week  
[www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

#### NSW Mental Health Access Line

1800 022 511 (24hrs)

#### LifeLine

13 11 14 (24hrs)

#### Suicide Call Back Service

1300 659 467 (24hrs)  
<https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/>

#### Mensline Australia

1300 789 978  
<https://mensline.org.au/>

[www.northsidegroup.com.au](http://www.northsidegroup.com.au)

### Eating Disorders

#### National Eating Disorders

Collaboration  
[www.nedc.com.au](http://www.nedc.com.au)

#### Centre for Eating Disorders and Dietetics

<http://cedd.org.au/>

#### Butterfly Foundation

1800 33 4673 (8am-midnight 7 days a  
week)  
[www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au](http://www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au)

### Family Violence

#### 1800RESPECT

1800 737 732

#### Domestic Violence Line NSW

1800 656 463 (24hrs)

#### Men's Referral Service

1300 766 491  
[www.ntv.org.au/get-help/](http://www.ntv.org.au/get-help/)

#### White Ribbon Australia

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

 Northside Group  
Part of Ramsay Health Care

[www.northsidegroup.com.au](http://www.northsidegroup.com.au) for the  
downloadable pdf of this resource  
handout