

HEAD SPIN

'TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING'.

Good mental health can include having a sense of confidence, positive self-esteem and wellbeing. If you have good mental health and wellbeing you are able to work, study, cope with everyday stresses, be involved in your community and live life in a satisfying way.¹

1. HeadSpace, <http://www.headspace.org.au/>

SO I'M OK, BUT WHAT ABOUT MY FRIEND?

Often we are scared to approach someone we think is experiencing a mental health problem because we don't know what to say or do. But really, it's simple. Here are some tips for checking in with a friend:

- » **Start a conversation.** Ask someone if they are ok and if they'd like to talk. Sometimes it may take a few questions and a bit of time for someone to open up to you. It may also be that they don't want to talk to you—this is okay, it's their choice. Let them know that you're there if they need you. You can also tell them about some places where they can get help (see below).
- » **Listen.** Most people just need someone to share their experience with, so just listen and don't judge. Try not to make promises that you can't keep (like keeping it a secret). You may need to tell someone who can help.
- » **Encourage** them to talk to someone who can help—a family member, doctor, counsellor, psychologist or teacher. If you're worried that the person is more than normally stressed or upset, a health professional has the experience and resources to assist in these circumstances.
- » **Take care of yourself.** Supporting someone through a difficult time can also have an impact on you and you need to make sure you look after yourself too. Talk to a friend, family member or other support about what's happening, take time out to exercise, go for a walk or hang out with friends, and get plenty of sleep. If supporting someone gets too much the best medicine is to talk it out.

This resource is brought to you by the Australian Youth Advisory Network.



The full Head Spin resource can be viewed at ayan.org.au

So who can i talk to?

- » A counsellor or youth worker
- » Health professionals
- » Community group leader
- » A friend, family member or colleague
- » Teachers or work managers/supervisors
- » A member of your division or other St John member