

# Mental Health

Young people will experience significant social, emotional, physiological and psychological changes as they develop. This can lead to considerable fluctuations in their health and wellbeing. However mental health issues are likely to be significant in many young people's lives with over 25% of young people aged 18-25 experiencing a mental health issue in any given 12 month period.<sup>17</sup> The median age of onset for many mental illnesses is under 24, highlighting the need to work with young people around mental health issues.

There is a lack of mental health services for young people in the ACT, particularly with mild to moderate mental illnesses. This means we should not be relying on specialist services to provide information and support on mental health. Stigma, myths and a lack of awareness surrounding mental illness can be a significant barrier to support and treatment. As a worker you can help young people become aware of the facts about mental illness and link them to appropriate supports. For young people, mental health issues can be their own, a friends, a siblings, a parents/carers or another family member.

In this section you will find:

- A glossary of youth-friendly mental health terms;
- Youth specific mental health services; and
- Resources including more services, information and some dates for your diary.

**Note:** This section should be read in conjunction with the Counselling section and Family Support section.

The following sections also contain mental health resources: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Counselling, Family, Health and Sexual Health, Multicultural, Peak Body, Some Key Government Services, Young Carers, Youth Support and Youth Support in Secondary Schools.

## Ways of Working

### Glossary of Mental Health Terms

This is a brief glossary of mental health terms written in a youth-friendly way for you to share with young people.

**Anxiety** is a feeling that something bad is going to happen. You may worry about failing tests at school, thinking that your friends don't like you or you're going to make a fool of yourself. As well as worrying all the time, your body does strange things like your muscles go all tense, you get stomach aches or headaches, feel sick or feel dizzy, you may even worry that you're going to faint, have a heart attack or die! The

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<sup>17</sup> ACT Mental Health Promotion Prevention and Early Intervention (PPEI) Plan 2004-2008 – Final Draft: December 2004

thing about all these worries is that they are very unlikely to actually happen. This is called Anxiety.

**Depression** is a mental illness, which affects people's ability to feel happy, and stops them from wanting to do things for long periods of time. Sometimes it makes them very tired and really grumpy for no reason. Sometimes it makes them cry a lot and hide away from people. Depression makes people feel sad, and hopeless for long periods of time.

A **disorder** is a condition that affects the way the mind works. A person with a disorder might think, feel or act differently to how they normally act when they are healthy. It is a serious health problem.

**Bipolar Disorder** is a mental illness, which affects how a person feels and behaves. There are two phases in a bipolar disorder. People often move between them both. One phase is where a person can be very emotional and highly excited, the person can have difficulty concentrating and believe they do not need much sleep. They can also overspend and believe very grand things about themselves. This stage is called a manic episode. The other phase is when they can feel very sad and lonely and feel bad about themselves. This stage is called a depressive episode. Occasionally people feel excited and sad at the same time. This is called a mixed episode.

**Personality Disorder** is a broad term and covers a few different types of personality disorders. Sometimes you may hear this disorder called Borderline personality disorder, or Paranoid personality disorder, or Antisocial personality disorder by Mental Health people. What a personality disorder means is the person interprets what other people do and say differently to how most other people would. For example, the person can seem to get very angry or very sad quickly, more so than other adults you know. This is called finding it hard to "regulate emotions". This is hard for the person, but is also hard for you as you may think you are responsible for them for feeling like this. It means the person may be very angry and fight a lot with other family members and friends (and even strangers).

They have such difficulty in regulating their strong emotions it means they can lose friends, or find it hard to have a job. Sometimes they feel very judged or rejected, so react very quickly. A delusion is when someone gets confused and they think that something is true and it isn't. For example, they might think that they are very sick and are going to die, even though the Doctor's have told them that they are healthy.

A **hallucination** is when someone hears something or sees something that isn't really there; it's like their mind is "playing tricks" on them. Some people might think they can hear people calling out to them, or see people that aren't really there. Experiencing a hallucination or a delusion can be very confusing and sometimes scary.

**Paranoia** is a symptom of mental illness. It can be very frightening for the person who may have beliefs that there are people who are trying to hurt them, or that they are being followed or spied on. It is very hard for people who are paranoid to trust others.

**Psychosis** is an illness that makes people think and behave differently to the way they usually would think or behave. For example, they might believe things that aren't true, see and hear things that aren't actually there, say things they usually wouldn't say, become really excited or really sad, and do things they normally wouldn't do.

When a person with **schizophrenia** is unwell, they can experience a lot of different things. They may think they see, hear or feel things that are not really there. Some people with schizophrenia think they can do things, or make others do things, that they really cannot do. They can also become afraid about what others may think or do to them. These experiences can be confusing and scary, and the person can act and talk in very unusual ways. Schizophrenia can also mean a person has trouble communicating, feels down, and is not able to do the things they normally do.

**Stress** is having lots of worries, tension in our body, and problems that just don't seem to go away. It can make us feel grumpy, sad, cross, and we can find it hard to have fun and enjoy things. Our bodies can feel stress, it can make us feel tight and achy and very tired.

A **Psychiatrist** is a qualified medical doctor who has obtained additional qualifications to become a specialist in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of mental illness and emotional problems. Psychiatrists are trained both to recognise and treat the effects of emotional disturbances on the body as a whole, as well as the effects of physical conditions on the mind. This is particularly important, as many emotional disturbances affect various parts of the body and physical illnesses can certainly affect the mind. A psychiatrist's medical and psychiatric training allows both the physical and emotional to be kept in perspective.

A **Social Worker** is a trained professional. Social Workers work with children and families to come up with ways to make their lives better. A Social Worker understands how lots of systems like hospitals, schools, families, friends, and people work and how this mix can effect how we think, feel and behave. A Social Worker will listen and talk to children, their parents and relatives and to their school and important people in their lives to help sort the problems out and to find the best ways of dealing with those problems.

A **Psychologist** is a professional person who has trained at university for between 4-6 years. They are qualified to provide support to people who may be experiencing problems with any aspect of their life, including school, family, and friends. Psychologists can assist by giving people skills so they can manage their problems and be happier with all aspects of their life.

A **Mental Health Nurse** is especially trained to care for people who suffer from mental illness. Sometimes they train first to look after people with physical illnesses. Then they do more study so they can have the special training to look after people who suffer from Mental illness.

An **Occupational Therapist** is a health care worker who works with people who are mentally ill or physically disabled. The aim of Occupational Therapy is to help people carry out their normal home and work activities and help them develop skills to live independent and useful lives.

This glossary was developed by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinicians from Mental Health ACT for *The Coloured Kit*, a support kit for young people of parents of with a mental illness/dual diagnosis and their families, developed by the Youth Coalition of the ACT and the Children of Parents with a Mental Illness Project. The kit is available from [www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net).

## Services

### Bungee

Provides short-term (6 – 8 weeks) intervention for young people who either live, work or study in North Canberra, while promoting good resilience and well being.

<b>Phone</b>	(02) 6264 0242
<b>Mailing Address</b>	PO Box 679, Belconnen ACT 2616
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:bcs@bcsact.com.au">bcs@bcsact.com.au</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bcsact.com.au">www.bcsact.com.au</a>
<b>Location</b>	Cnr Swanson Crt, Belconnen
<b>Parent Organisation</b>	Belconnen Community Service Inc.

#### Who Can Access:

<i>Gender</i>	Females and males
<i>Age</i>	5 – 18
<i>Young people under the influence</i>	Case by case
<i>Income required</i>	No
<i>Disability access</i>	Yes
<i>Young people with dual diagnosis</i>	Yes
<i>Children of clients</i>	No

**How to Access** By phone, email and drop-in, 9am – 5pm, Monday - Friday. No referral necessary. Assessment required.

**Programs** Focuses on encouraging people to look after and improve their mental health by being physically active and/or connected to the creative arts. Provides information, advocacy and referrals. Work is done in schools on the north side. Groups are available and may include anger management and self esteem. Various activities are provided including drama, Art and Craft and sport and recreational activities

**Other** There may be a waiting period of up to six weeks. Individual assessment is required for one on one resilience building sessions and referral.

**Families** Works with families and support people.

### headspace ACT

Early intervention mental health service for young people (12 -25) to assist with mental health, vocational and substance use issues.

<b>Phone</b>	Ph (02) 6201 5343
<b>Fax</b>	F(02) 6201 5666
<b>Mailing Address</b>	Building 12, Level B, Room 40 University of Canberra ACT 2601
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:headspaceACT@canberra.edu.au">headspaceACT@canberra.edu.au</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au/ACT">www.headspace.org.au/ACT</a>

<b>Location</b>	Building 12, Level B, Room 40 University of Canberra Bruce
<b>Parent Organisation</b>	headspace (national)

**Who Can Access:**

<i>Gender</i>	Females and males
<i>Age</i>	12 - 25
<i>Young people under the influence</i>	Yes
<i>Income required</i>	No
<i>Disability access</i>	Yes
<i>Young people with comorbidity</i>	Yes
<i>Children of clients</i>	No

**How to Access** By phone, email and drop-in Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Check the website for opening hours. Young people can self refer and/or agencies can refer.

**Programs** Provides information, case management, counselling, referrals and outreach.

**Other Families** Some fees may apply.  
Can liaise with families at the request of the young person.

## Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT)

Mental illness education.

<b>Phone</b>	(02) 6257 1195
<b>Mailing Address</b>	PO Box 4074, Ainslie ACT 2602
<b>Email</b>	mieact@mieact.org.au
<b>Website</b>	www.mieact.org.au
<b>Location</b>	Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra City
<b>Parent Organisation</b>	Mental Illness Education Australia

**Who Can Access:**

<i>Gender</i>	Females and males
<i>Age</i>	Any age (targeted at high-school and college aged young people)
<i>Income required</i>	No
<i>Disability access</i>	Yes

**How to Access** By phone and email, 9am – 4pm, Monday - Friday.  
No referral necessary.

**Programs** Run by volunteer presenters in high schools and other organisations throughout the ACT, with the aim of reducing stigma and improving mental health education.

**Other Families** Does not provide personal support.  
Does not work with families.

## STEPS

A residential youth mental health program for young people aged between 14 -18 with a moderate-severe mental health condition.

<b>Phone</b>	(02) 6262 3453
<b>Mailing Address</b>	PO Box 3167, Manuka ACT 2603
<b>Email</b>	STEPS@centacare-canberra.org
<b>Website</b>	www.centacare-canberra.org
<b>Location</b>	350 Antil Street, Watson ACT 2602
<b>Parent Organisation</b>	CatholicCare (Formerly Centacare Canberra)

### Who Can Access:

<i>Gender</i>	Females and males
<i>Age</i>	14 - 18
<i>Young people under the influence</i>	No
<i>Income required</i>	No
<i>Disability access</i>	Yes
<i>Young people with comorbidity</i>	Yes
<i>Children of clients</i>	No

<b>How to Access</b>	By phone. A referral is required from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service, a General Practitioner or private psychiatrist.
<b>Programs</b>	Provides clinical support, case management, recovery planning, referrals and advocacy. Limited outreach is available after the young person exits from the program. Some groups are also available.
<b>Other Families</b>	Waiting list may apply Can liaise with families

## Youth & Wellbeing

Provides outreach support for young people who suffer from mental health issues (including anxiety, depression, psychosis, challenging behaviours) and/or AOD related issues.

<b>Phone</b>	(02) 6163 7600
<b>Mailing Address</b>	PO Box 3167, Manuka ACT 2603
<b>Email</b>	ywb@centacare-canberra.org
<b>Website</b>	www.centacare-canberra.org
<b>Location</b>	127 Phillip Ave, Watson
<b>Parent Organisation</b>	Centacare Canberra

### Who Can Access:

<i>Gender</i>	Females and males
<i>Age</i>	12 – 25
<i>Young people under the influence</i>	Case by case basis
<i>Income required</i>	No
<i>Disability access</i>	Yes

<i>Young people with comorbidity</i>	Yes
<i>Children of clients</i>	No

<b>How to Access</b>	By phone and email, 9am – 5pm, Monday - Friday. A referral is necessary and young people can self refer and arrange an interview with a worker.
<b>Programs</b>	Provides information, advocacy, case management, transport, counselling and referrals. Outreach is provided through a case management model based on holistic approach.
<b>Other Families</b>	There may be a waiting list of up to 4 weeks. Family and support people can access other programs within Centacare.

**The following services also provide mental health programs:**

- AIDS Action Council ACT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and/or Questioning)
- Children and Young People Worker, Domestic Violence Crisis Service (Youth Support)
- Children and Young People's Workers, Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (Youth Support)
- CYCLOPS<sub>ACT</sub> (Young Carers)
- CYCLOPS<sub>ACT</sub> Litmus Program (Young Carers)
- DIRECTIONS ACT (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
- FACES (Family)
- Horizons, Marymead Child and Family Centre (Young Parents)
- Junction Youth Health Services (Health and Sexual Health)
- Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (Health and Sexual Health)
- St. Nicholas' Young Carers Program (Young Carers)
- Young Carers Program (Young Carers)
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Services (Health and Sexual Health)
- See also the Youth Centres section

## Resources

### More Services

#### **ACT Mental Health Consumer Network**

Consumers advise, inform and partner with organisations and Government to improve outcomes for people using mental health services.

**Phone:** (02) 6230 5796

**Email:** [actmhcnc@netspeed.com.au](mailto:actmhcnc@netspeed.com.au)

**Web:** [www.actmhcnc.org.au](http://www.actmhcnc.org.au)

**Location:** Griffin Centre, Genge St, Canberra City

#### **Canberra After Suicide Support Group**

Support group for parents, spouses, siblings, children, relatives, lovers, partners, companions and friends of those who have died by suicide.

**Phone:** (02) 6292 6847

**Email:** [ourcanberra\\_cass@yahoo.com.au](mailto:ourcanberra_cass@yahoo.com.au)

**Web:** [www.ourcanberra.com/Canberra\\_After\\_Suicide.html](http://www.ourcanberra.com/Canberra_After_Suicide.html)

### **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

#### *Mental Health ACT*

Provide a number of services including assessment and treatment for children and young people with moderate to severe mental health problems, groups, counselling, educational programs, health promotion and support networks.

**Phone:** Southside: (02) 6205 1469

Northside: (02) 6205 1050

### **Kids Helpline**

A free and confidential 24 hour telephone counselling service for 5 – 25 year olds in Australia.

**Phone:** 1800 551 800

### **Lifeline**

A free and confidential 24 hour telephone counselling service.

**Phone:** 13 11 14

### **Mental Health ACT**

Delivers a range of flexible and accessible mental health services, and provides specialist treatment and rehabilitation services for people suffering from moderate to severe mental health issues. 24 hour free crisis service.

**Phone:** 1800 629 354 or 6205 1065 (Access to Triage Unit and Crisis Assessment Treatment Team)

### **Mental Health First Aid for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities in Gungahlin**

A 12 hour interactive program for people from all cultural backgrounds who may be carers, friends or support workers supporting someone with mental health issues.

**Phone:** (02) 6123 4402

**Email:** familysupport@gungahlin.org

**Location:** Gungahlin Community Resource Centre, 47 Ernest Cavanagh St, Gungahlin

### **Mental Health Foundation ACT**

Provides information, referral, outreach, drop in, library, support, groups and mental health promotion.

**Phone:** (02) 6282 6658

**Email:** info@mhf.org.au

**Web:** www.mhf.org.au

**Location:** Suite 6, 42 Townshend St, Phillip

### **SANE Australia**

A national charity working for a better life for people affected by mental illness, through campaigning, education and research. Has a Helpline to provide information and advice about mental illness (it is not a counselling service).

**Helpline:** 1800 18 7263

**Web:** www.sane.org

### **VYNE @ Ozhelp**

Provides mental health training including SafeTALK and ASIST (both suicide intervention training courses) several times throughout the year.

**Phone:** (02) 6251 4166

**Email:** vyne@ozhelp.org.au

## More Information

### **Auseinet**

National network for promotion, prevention and early intervention for mental health.

**Web:** [www.auseinet.com](http://www.auseinet.com)

### **Headroom**

*Government of South Australia*

Information for young people, their caregivers and service providers about positive mental health.

**Web:** [www.headroom.net.au](http://www.headroom.net.au)

### **Just ask**

*Lifeline*

Lifeline's rural (includes Canberra and surrounding region) mental health information service – it is not a counselling service. Open 9am - 5pm weekdays.

**Phone:** 1300 13 11 14

**Email:** [justask@lifeline.org.au](mailto:justask@lifeline.org.au)

**Web:** [www.justask.org.au](http://www.justask.org.au)

### **MoodGYM**

*Centre for Mental Health Research, Australian National University*

A free, interactive, Internet-based program for young people that uses cognitive behavioural training to prevent and decrease symptoms of depression.

**Web:** [www.moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au)

### **Reach Out!**

Provides support information and referrals in a format that appeals to young people. An Inspire Foundation initiative.

**Web:** [www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)

### **Translated Mental Health Factsheets**

*Multicultural Mental Health Australia*

Includes information on understanding mental illness.

**Phone:** (02) 8838 2117

**Email:** [rosanna.commisso@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rosanna.commisso@swahs.health.nsw.gov.au)

**Web:** [www.mmha.org.au/find/resources](http://www.mmha.org.au/find/resources)

### **Ybblue**

Youth initiative of Beyond Blue - encourages young people and their family and friends to get help when it's needed.

**Web:** [www.beyondblue.org.au/ybblue](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/ybblue)

## Some Dates for Your Diary

### **10 October 2009**

### **World Mental Health Day**

World Mental Health Day was observed for the first time on 10 October 1992. It was started as an annual activity of the World Federation for Mental Health by the then Deputy Secretary General Richard Hunter. The day is officially commemorated every year on October 10.

**Web:** [www.mhca.org.au](http://www.mhca.org.au)

**4 – 10 October 2009**

**Mental Health Week**

Aims to activate, educate and engage people around mental health and related issues through the organisation of a huge variety of events by individuals and organisations. The theme for 2009 is 'Be Active, Get Connected, Stay Involved'.

**Web:** [www.mentalhealthevents.com](http://www.mentalhealthevents.com)