

#GettingThroughThisTogether



Australian Government
National Mental Health Commission

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing during COVID-19

A special thank you to the organisations and representatives involved in the development of the practical tips and supporting assets including:

BeyondBlue | Lifeline | Reachout | headspace | RUOK? | Orygen | Black Dog Institute | SANE Australia | 1800RESPECT | Butterfly Foundation | Financial Counselling Australia | Mental Health Australia | Alcohol and Drug Foundation | Suicide Prevention Australia | Kids Helpine | Parentline QLD & NT | Women's Safety and Wellbeing | Office for Women | OurWatch | Department of Social Services | Everymind | Domestic Violence NSW | OpenSupport | Muslim Women Australia | Mind Australia

About #GettingThroughThisTogether

We have been affected by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in different ways and to varying degrees, with some jurisdictions now experiencing increased restrictions.

When we know how difficult something is, it is usually harder the second time

The longevity of COVID-19 and the fatigue that many are experiencing, and the impact of uncertainty on our mental health and wellbeing is a reality for all Australians – and our mental health is just as important as our physical health. That is why we have launched **#GettingThroughThisTogether** to acknowledge the stressors and difficulties of COVID-19 and provide simple and practical tips to support Australians' mental wellbeing.

We will all need a little extra support during this time, so let's be kind, stay connected, check in with each other, and seek professional support when we need it.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Continue a national conversation online to support the mental health and wellbeing of Australians during this time.
- Provide new and revised TIPS based on research that responds to the ongoing mental health and wellbeing impacts of the pandemic, while acknowledging the difficulties specific groups have been experiencing.
- To remind Australians we got through this once and we will get through this again
- To provide helpful information to Australians on how they can be supported and what steps they can take to look after themselves or seek professional help

Key Messages

Below are some key messages to support online engagement:

- As a nation, as a community and as individuals we are facing an extraordinary time. Many of us are feeling unsettled and uncertain as restrictions have either returned or may be on the horizon.
- It is critical that as a community, we understand the need to take care of, and give equal priority to, our mental health and wellbeing, while also responding to the medical and health requirements for COVID-19.
- With uncertainty, fatigue and frustration setting in for many, it is not only OK to seek support, but essential. It's also important to remember that things will not be like this forever.
- While we are keeping physically distant, it is more important than ever that we remain socially and emotionally connected.
- Mental health organisations, experts and leaders have come together to launch #GettingThroughThisTogether – a national conversation that everyone can join in on, sharing practical tips online to support the mental health and wellbeing of Australians.
- We need to make a conscious effort each day now and looking ahead, to stay connected to each other – this is the foundation of supporting our wellbeing and to supporting our mental health.
- Specific groups who we understand may be particularly challenged by the current circumstances, and we need to make a concerted effort to connect with in our communities:
 - Women and children who are living in unsafe homes
 - People who are really struggling with financial stress and distress due to reduced incomes, unemployment, or lockdown impacts on their businesses
 - Young people, especially those in key years of their study (included year 12 exams and university)
 - Children who may have had disruptions to the environments in which they grow and develop (schooling, childcare, stress in the home)
 - Women that shouldered considerable household burden during the first lockdown and are facing it once again. They are more likely to withdraw from work, or be part-time workers and have multiple stress points
 - People who are already living by themselves or already vulnerable– the dislocation from their community and support services will be extremely challenging

Communication Pack

You have been provided with a [Communication Pack](#) that includes the below digital assets to help spread the word online. The assets will also be made available on our [website](#) for those who cannot access the Dropbox Link.

Videos - *All videos are also available on our [YouTube Channel](#) if you would like to share this way*

- The community launch message
- Introductory message – Christine Morgan, CEO of the NMHC
- Individual tips (15x 30sec videos)

Social Media Assets

- Social media tiles for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram – one for each tip (x 10)
- Infographic with all tips

Guidelines

- Communication Guidelines for COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Messaging

The translated tips will be made available on the Dropbox Link and on our website on 16 August

Get involved

We want to reach as many Australians as we can, and we need your help!


#GettingThroughThisTogether is a collective message to support the mental health and wellbeing of Australians during a very challenging time. We would appreciate your support in any of the following ways:

- Letting your stakeholders know about #GettingThroughThisTogether
- Sharing or re-tweeting the Commission's posts on Twitter and Facebook
- Sharing our key messages on your social media channels (suggestions below) using the hashtag #GettingThisTogether and the social media tiles provided in the provided communication pack .zip file.
- Using #GettingThroughThisTogether in your online engagement and tagging the organisations mentioned above in your posts.

Suggested Social Media Posts

Below is suggested copy for social media posts. Please note as there are a large amount of resources and tips, we have provided some example posts and additional copy for the tips for when you are posting these – you can tweak for your audience. We encourage you to tag us on Facebook (@NMHCAustralia) and Twitter (@NMHC) in your posts, as well as the organisations listed above.

Facebook

- [Launch] Today the National Mental Health Commission 
Mental health organisations, experts and leaders have come together to launch #InThisTogether – a national conversation that everyone can join in on, sharing practical tips online to support the mental health and wellbeing of Australians
- [General tips one]

Twitter

- [Launch]
- [General tips one]

Tip Posts - Below is some supportive copy for each tip, which you can use to develop social media posts

TIP	Descriptive copy
<p>TIP 1 THERE IS NO PLACE FOR DOMESTIC OR FAMILY VIOLENCE- HELP IS HERE</p>	<p>Many of us are navigating new challenges – mentally, emotionally, and financially. Some people have experienced violence or abuse in their relationships for the first time during the pandemic; others are experiencing an increase in the intensity of existing controlling, abusive and/or violent behaviour in their relationships. But even in tough times, there is no excuse for abuse or violence. If you are self-isolating or currently required to stay at home, but are experiencing abuse or violence, you have options. For free, confidential advice or support at any time, call 1800RESPECT to talk to a counsellor about the options available to keep yourself safe. If you are in immediate danger, call 000 to seek police assistance. Violence and abuse can happen in any kind of relationship. It is never OK.</p>
<p>TIP 2 CARING FOR YOURSELF HELPS YOU CARE FOR OTHERS</p>	<p>We've all heard the in-flight announcement 'Apply your own oxygen mask first' and for parents and carers this applies during COVID. If you're a parent or carer you need to remember to look after your own wellbeing first. That includes sleeping and eat well, finding time to do something you enjoy, or connecting with friends and family. You may not have time to do all (or some) of these things but remember you're doing the best you can.</p>
<p>TIP 3 FINANCIAL STRESS IS REAL STRESS – SEEK FREE SUPPORT TODAY</p>	<p>Many of us are feeling worried about finances at the moment. It's understandable and perfectly normal to feel that way. For those of us feeling overwhelmed by our financial situation or recently out of a job, there is free support available. A financial counsellor can help and offer you free, independent, and confidential advice. There are lots of organisations that offer free financial counselling to help you deal with financial stress and hardship. Financial counsellors can assist you by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doing a full assessment of your financial situation • help you manage your debt • provide advice on how to negotiate with your creditors, government agencies and utilities • provide advice on your options and rights • referring you to other services when needed, such as emergency relief, legal and health services <p>If you are feeling worried and overwhelmed call the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service 1800 512 248 or if you want to speak with a financial counsellor call the National Debt Helpline on 1800 007 007 who can offer advice over the phone or put you in touch with another free counselling service if you issue is complex.</p>
<p>TIP 4 IT'S BETTER NOT TO BOTTLE UP YOUR FEELINGS Take steps to change your drinking habits</p>	<p>Since the start of the pandemic, some of us are drinking more alcohol or a bit more often than before. Stress, spare time, being out of work or feeling isolated can trigger more drinking. However, in the long-term alcohol only makes things worse. Instead of reaching out for a drink, try moderating consumption and reaching out to a friend or free support line or chat to talk about how you're feeling. If you are concerned about your drinking or a loved one, contact the confidential DrugInfo line for information and advice: 1300 85 85 84</p>

<p>TIP 5 MAKE A ROUTINE THAT WORKS FOR YOU</p>	<p>There is just so much uncertainty at the moment whether that's work, studies or life in general. However, there are things you can do to take back some control. 1. Connect with friends and family 2. Disconnect from the news and too much information 3. Plan a routine and find time to unwind 3. Everyone is saying it but it's important, exercise and sleep well 4. Be compassionate and remember we're all going to get through this together.</p>
<p>TIP 6 YOUR SUPPORT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE – CONNECT WITH PEOPLE EACH DAY Reach in before someone needs to reach out</p>	<p>Dealing with COVID-19 is challenging for all of us – especially as physical distancing measures limit the contact we have with family, friends, and colleagues. Lots of people don't reach out for help because they don't want to feel like they are burdening someone, or they feel like other people have it worse. This is not easy for <i>anyone</i>. It's important to check in on others, even if you think they are OK. Some people who live alone may not have close friends or family nearby. Ask if they're OK and let them know you're there to help.</p>
<p>TIP 7 CHOOSE ME TIME OVER SCREEN TIME Trade/swap the scrolling in</p>	<p>While it's important to stay informed, it's also important to take a break from the news cycle and social media, and not get stuck mindlessly scrolling. Try to limit or schedule your news and social media intake to a couple of times a day, as it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the volume of news confronting us. When looking for a news update, make sure it's coming from a reputable source.</p>
<p>TIP 8 PLAY YOUR PART Feel good by doing good</p>	<p>We can all make a difference to our own lives and those of others. We can encourage people to play their part and build on their skills and confidence to navigate the conversation if someone says they're not OK. We're getting through this together. Our daily decisions protect our family, friends, and community. We can help our healthcare and essential workers by following the most up to date health advice and supporting each other in these unusual times.</p>
<p>TIP 9 HELP IS AVAILABLE – REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT TODAY It's not only OK to ask for help, but essential Help is there for you/everyone (CALD)</p>	<p>Uncertainty due to COVID is a challenge for all of us. We're all trying to build new skills to be resilient in ways we haven't had to before, and it's OK to ask for support. Our mental health is just as important as our physical health and there are a range of services available that cater to our different needs, whether that's a helpline, webchat, peer support forum, community health centre or seeing your GP. For those of us already living with mental ill-health, it's important to keep getting help, treatment and care may change over time so use the phone and internet to stay connected to support.</p>
<p>TIP 10 MAKE A BREAK A REGULAR THING Keep working it Take regular breaks – keep moving (CALD)</p>	<p>This is a challenging time, and sometimes it might feel like our minds are moving very fast. Our minds need rest and time to reboot to reduce anxiety and stress. Taking time each day to do something that allows your mind to relax is good for your mental health. We know the burst of fitness motivation that might have happened in March may have faded, but don't underestimate the power of a little activity to get a spring in your step, and some clarity for your mind. Even exercising just, a little can make a huge difference to your mental health and wellbeing, where switching your body on can help your mind switch off.</p>

Use of support lines for GettingThroughThisTogether

There are a number of important support lines we would encourage use of for every social media post, and some specific national support lines that we would like you to include when talking about specific issues. Please use the below as the guide.

Beyond Blue Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service – 1800 512 348

Lifeline 13 11 44

headspace 1800 650 590

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

Free Financial counselling, Monday - Friday

- National Debt Helpline, 09:30am -4:30pm 1800 007 007
- Small Business Help, 09:00am – 5:00pm 1800 413 828

National Alcohol and Other Drugs hotline – 1800 250 015

1800RESPECT - 1800 737 732