



**Bronnie Taylor**  
Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW SERVICES NOW OPEN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE**

Children and young people living in Western Sydney and the Mid-North Coast engaging in serious self-harming behaviour or having ongoing thoughts of suicide can now access practical, non-clinical support in their communities to help their recovery.

Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor said the newly opened Blacktown and Coffs Harbour-based services are part of an innovative trial of child and youth-specific Aftercare services by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

“Coming out of acute care can be really overwhelming, so it is critical to connect these vulnerable young people with the right support outside of the hospital setting so they can reconnect and reengage with their family, friends and community,” Mrs Taylor said.

“This bold and innovative approach is all about keeping more children and young people safe by providing practical, caring support to help them re-discover hope for their future.”

“We know that what works for adults doesn’t necessarily work for younger people, which is why this service has been co-designed by young people who’ve been in their shoes and understand how frightening life can be after a suicide attempt.”

Aftercare is a non-clinical service provided in the immediate months after someone has attempted suicide or engaged in serious self-harming practices. As a model of care, this type of support has been highly effective for adults.

The service focuses on providing psychosocial support that responds to individual needs. This includes one-on-one and group activities that will help a person thrive in their day-to-day life.

This could include developing coping skills, strengthening relationships with family and friends, identifying education or work opportunities, managing addiction, or finding secure housing.

The new youth-specific services, led by New Horizons, have been co-designed with young people with lived experience of suicide, subject matter experts, and a consortium of support agencies. Further trial sites will open in Tamworth and South West Sydney later this year.

New Horizons employs Children and Young People Champions – people with lived experience of suicide whose role is to create an empathetic and safe environment for anyone seeking support.

Blacktown Champion, Kalei, said any child, young person, parent or carer is welcome to get in touch if they think they could benefit from the service.

“Being a kid and going through this stuff alone is so difficult, especially when suicide isn't talked about,” Kalei said.

“At 12, I didn't know people could live through a suicide attempt and be happy. I aim to let young people know that it can get better.”

Coffs Harbour Champion Daisy said any child, young person, parent or carer is welcome to get in touch if they think they could benefit from the service.

“When a young person comes to us, I hope to give them the support I didn't have,” Daisy said. “I want to help them build the foundations of a healthy life.”

Youth Aftercare is being jointly funded by the NSW Government and through the Commonwealth Health Innovation Fund. It is in addition to the \$87 million investment by the NSW Government in new initiatives under the Towards Zero Suicides strategy; a Premier's Priority.

If you, or someone you know, is thinking about suicide or experiencing a personal crisis or distress, please seek help immediately by calling **000 (Triple Zero)** or one of these services: Lifeline **13 11 14** | Suicide Call Back Service **1300 659 467** | NSW Mental Health Line **1800 011 511**.

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