

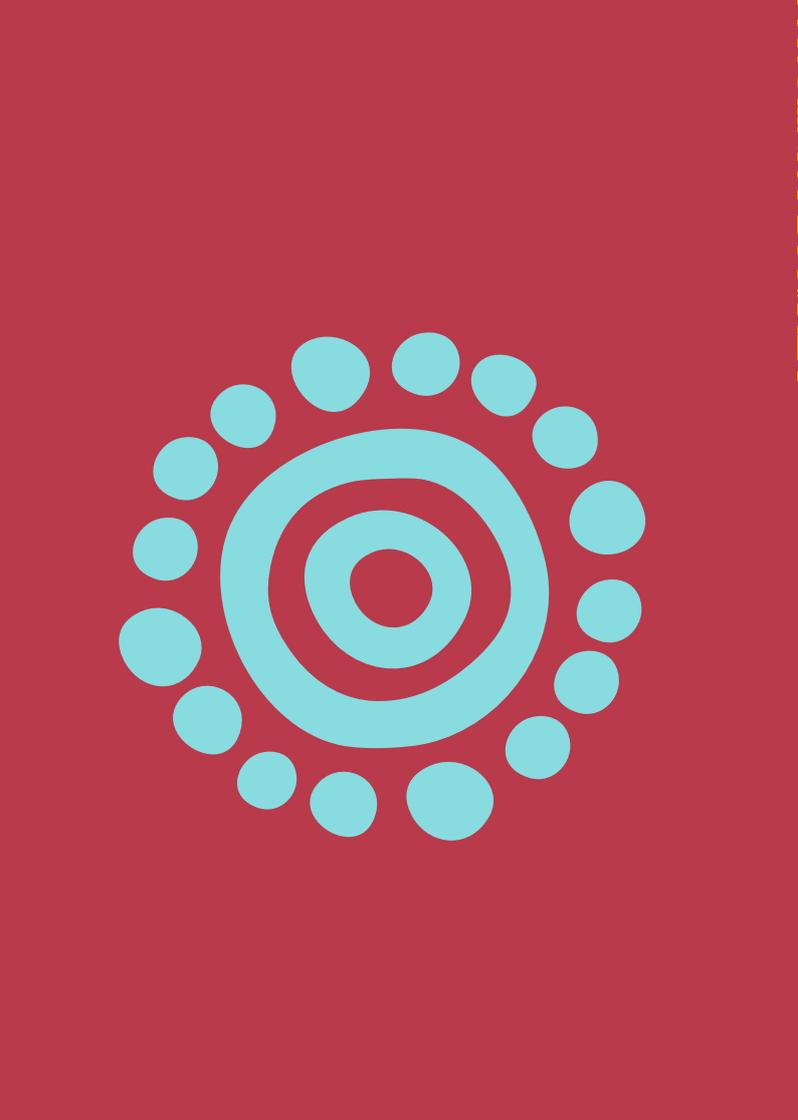
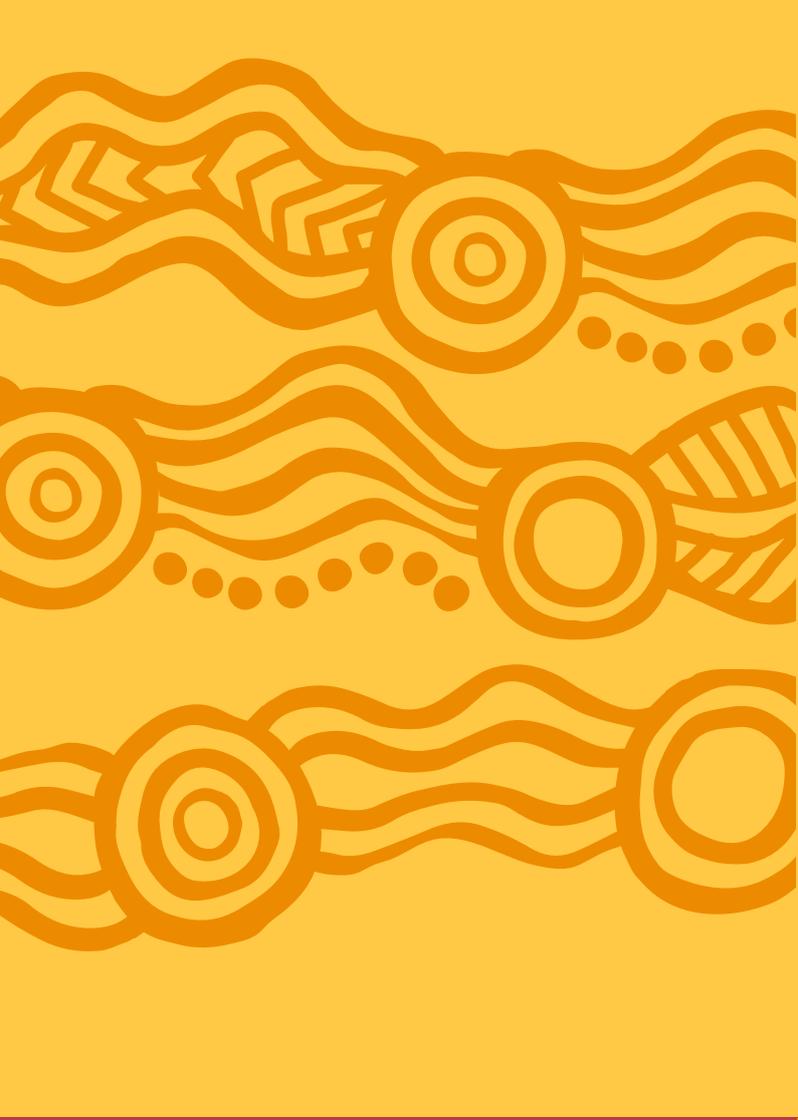
# helping young people get through challenging times

headspace year in review  
2020-2021

# acknowledgement of Country

headspace would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.

The mind body spirit culture country artwork was created by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist Riki Salam of We Are 27 Creative after consultation with key members of the headspace network and cultural advisors.



# welcome to the 2020–2021 year in review

4

a message from the CEO

16

participation at headspace national

28

headspace vocational programs

8

a message from the board chair



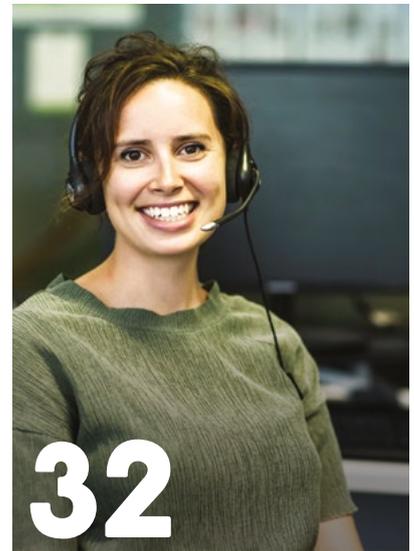
20 family and friends inclusive practice at headspace

30

headspace schools

12

2020-21 in numbers



32 headspace early psychosis program



14 about headspace

22

headspace centre network

24

headspace online services

34

cultural practice at headspace



38

headspace moments

40

strategy, impact and policy

44

headspace policy advocacy

45

investing in headspace

46

international collaboration

47

clinical practice



48

headspace brand, campaigns and engagement

52

headspace partners

54

fundraising events



56

fundraising

# a message from the CEO



**Jason Trethowan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
headspace

**It was a year like no other. But despite the challenges presented by 2020-21, headspace supported more than 100,000 young people to manage their mental health and live happy, healthy lives.**

That means we've now supported more than 700,000 young people in the 15 years since our establishment.

Thank you to everyone who has played a part in providing this critical care.

Never has headspace been more important than it is today.

## Living in a pandemic

headspace services were more in demand this year than ever before, as COVID-19 and lockdowns continued impacting the way young people work, study and socialise. We know from headspace research the pandemic has impacted young people's confidence to achieve their future goals. Further, we saw demand for eheadspace, our national online and phone service, spike in Victoria and New South Wales when those states moved to periods of extended lockdown. The relaxing of restrictions also led to more young people than before seeking face-to-face support at our centres and satellites, with the needs of those young people becoming increasingly complex.

The ongoing role for headspace is clear: to increase the size and capacity of our workforce to respond to the increase in demand and complexity of needs brought about in-part by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a challenge I am confident we will rise to meet.



**My passion lies in helping support young people one-on-one, building that relationship and helping them find and discover their strengths and passions in life.**

– headspace National staff member

**It is okay to seek support when things get overwhelming.**

– female, 24



## Key achievements

In June, we released the headspace Strategy 2021-24, an ambitious plan to ensure all young people are supported to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities. We want to be a service that provides to young people the right support, when and how it suits them. The Strategy also acknowledges our responsibility to collaborate with other voices of authority in the sector to shape the mental health system of tomorrow.

This year saw the second iteration of the headspace Model Integrity Framework (hMIF) take effect. Developed with input from key stakeholders – including headspace service managers and the headspace Youth National Reference Group (hY NRG) – hMIF gives centres confidence about how they can operate in accordance with the headspace model and continue meeting our assessment quality improvement processes.

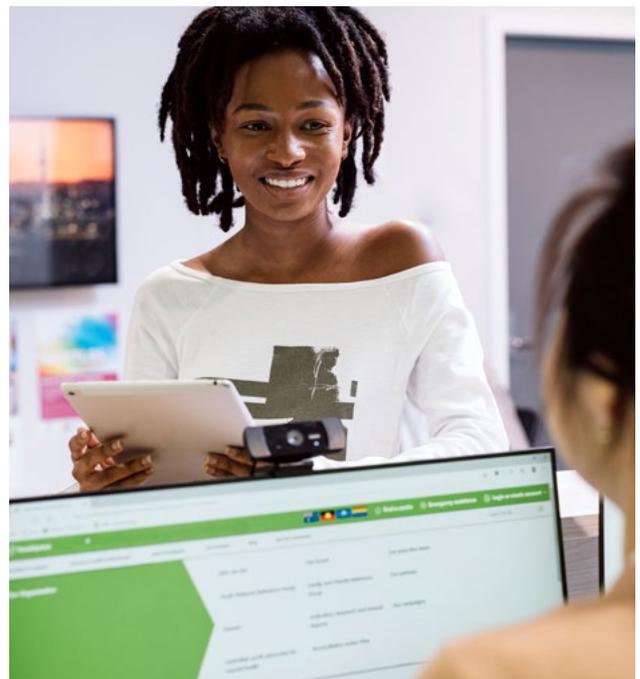
## Federal Budget

We were delighted to receive a funding commitment of \$278.6 million from the Federal Government in the May Budget, which will enhance and expand the headspace network in the years to come.

Part of that funding will establish the headspace National Early Career Graduate Program. This new workforce initiative will place and train early career psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists in headspace centres. The program will also support our centres to welcome Masters and Doctoral students from those disciplines. Not only will graduates benefit from working alongside our experienced staff, but they will also provide increased access to support for young people.

# \$278.6m

**commitment in 2021 Federal Budget to expand and enhance the headspace centre network over next four years.**





**It takes a village to power headspace. Every day is a team effort, and our successes are sweeter because of that collaboration.**

We are also entering our third year of rolling out the Federal Government's seven-year Demand Management and Enhancement Program. Wait times remain a challenge across the network, which is why headspace National is committed to exploring new, evidence-based ways of working. Our approach to managing demand is informed by feedback from our centres, and by sophisticated data collection about the needs of young people presenting to headspace.

It was pleasing to see the Federal and State Governments in COVID-19 affected states and territories acknowledge the pressures on our centres and online services this year, with several targeted funding commitments announced in response to lockdowns.

### **headspace supporting communities across Australia**

Another 20 headspace sites were established in 2020-21, bringing our total number of centres, satellites and outreach services to 135. A further 12 locations are slated for opening before the end of the 2021 calendar year. I'm grateful a temporary reprieve from travel restrictions made it possible for me to attend the official launch of both headspace Marion in SA and headspace Batemans Bay in NSW. Meeting with young people at these events is always an energising experience because it reminds me of the profound impact our services have on their wellbeing, and the tremendous resilience of young people. Nowhere was this more notable than at Batemans Bay, a community recovering from the devastating Black Summer bushfires in 2019-20. headspace does not take lightly its role to help young people in fire-affected parts of Australia to rebuild their lives and prepare for future seasons.

Establishing a new headspace centre requires the collaboration of several different organisations, not least of which are the Primary Health Networks (PHNs) that commission our sites and the lead agencies who run them. We owe those organisations our thanks for bringing headspace services to their communities. We must also express our sincerest gratitude to headspace staff around Australia, who handled the challenges of the past year with their characteristic grace and determination. I was impressed at the agility with which lockdown-affected sites were able to quickly move their in-person services online or over the phone. Their efforts meant young people did not miss out on support.

### **Government Reform Progress**

Throughout the year headspace made representations about the work of our network to the Productivity Commission review of the mental health system, and to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. A highlight for me was the organised and thorough approach young people took in advocating for headspace. Thank you to Board Youth Advisors Amelia Walters and Jarrad Hickmott for leading the way, and to our incredible Board Chair, Lisa Paul AO PSM, whose extensive experience as a Secretary in the Commonwealth Government provided great insight into how institutions like the Productivity Commission operate. My thanks also to everyone in the headspace network who contributed submissions to the Commissioners and who represented headspace during the process.

### **Building mental health literacy and reducing stigma in the community**

In recognition of the mental health impacts of COVID-19, the focus for headspace Day in 2020 was on taking small steps every day to manage mental health in tough times. The day was celebrated with a mix of in-person and online events emphasising our seven tips for a healthy headspace. Its success was testament to the creativity of our staff, young people and their communities.

### **Participation at our core**

The participation of young people is a key driver of the headspace model and ensures our work is responsive to their needs and preferences. In 2021, we bade farewell to our outgoing hY NRG cohort, whose insights have shaped the way headspace has worked over the past two years. headspace is indebted to them for their service. The outgoing team have passed their batons to another group of 21 young people from around Australia who are already putting into practice their broad range of collective knowledge about headspace, mental health and advocacy.

headspace understands that young people do not manage mental health in isolation. With that in mind, we continue working with an outstanding Family and Friends Reference Group, all of whom are passionate about making our mental health services family-inclusive. The group has grown in size with the addition of some valued new members and we look forward to their important feedback over the next year.

## Thank you

Partnerships are an essential part of headspace. I want to thank all our partners that help us to increase mental health literacy, encourage help-seeking and reduce the stigma around mental health. This was the final year of headspace's partnership with Kmart, and we want to thank them for their significant contribution to the mental health of young Australians.

I count myself lucky to work with a wonderful Board of Directors, and an Executive team of enviable talents, who steer our organisation and its workforce with confidence and wisdom. Thank you to Board Chair Lisa Paul, whose term will conclude in November. You and the entire headspace Board are unwavering in your commitment to our organisation. Your contributions to the wellbeing of young Australians are powerful and long-lasting.

It takes a village to power headspace. Behind the scenes there is a vast and tightly knit network of government support, PHNs, lead agencies, consortia, schools, partners, young people and – of course! – the headspace Board and headspace National team. Every day is a team effort, and our successes are sweeter because of that collaboration. To my executive team, thank you. The quality of output and commitment to youth mental health is inspiring. I know many of our colleagues have been challenged in 2021 by the environment in which we are operating, however, I'm constantly impressed with the passion and professionalism on display at headspace. Thank you all for your work – you are making a difference to the lives of so many young Australians.

**Jason Trethowan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
headspace



# a message from the board chair



**Lisa Paul AO PSM**  
Board Chair, headspace

The headspace Board is proud to have overseen another year of exciting growth for the organisation. During 2020-21, we not only expanded the reach of our network, but we added to the suite of support services that headspace provides. Continued demand for our services is testament to the fact young people trust and value headspace as a source of support in tough times.

This is an outstanding achievement given the challenges faced in 2020-21 by the mental health sector and the wider Australian community. COVID-19 has made the work of headspace both more important and more complex – and our organisation has met that challenge admirably, in no small part due to the outstanding work of headspace staff, volunteers and the leadership team.

## Continued government support

In the May Budget headspace received a commitment of \$278.6 million in Federal Government funding to open 10 new sites, upgrade several satellites to full centres, and, with State and Territory government support, expand headspace centres' workforces.

We were delighted to welcome both the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg to our centres after the announcement, so they could see first-hand the ways their commitment benefits the young people who come to headspace.



**Life throws us challenges but none are too big that we can't embrace who we are and leap over hurdles.**

– Australian Youth Advocate for Mental Health

**It's really important for families and young people to remember they are not alone.**

– headspace Centre Manager



We are also grateful for the Federal Government's commitment to headspace's Individual Placement and Support program, which will be offered at another 25 centres. That means more young people getting access to employment or education opportunities.

We also appreciate the support we received this year from State Governments. In June, The Hon Bronnie Taylor, NSW Minister for Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women announced \$1.2 million for headspace to run information sessions for parents and carers and to set up 12 Community Wellbeing Collaboratives in communities at high risk of suicide. The work we do in these communities connects vulnerable people to services and supports communities.

### **Mental health reform in Australia**

November 2020 saw the release of the Productivity Commission's Final Report into Mental Health, which included several recommendations for the support of young people. Importantly, the report acknowledged the need for a person-centric mental health system that focussed on early intervention and prevention, and that support for families and young children will play an important role in improving mental health of young people. We look forward to continuing our work with Government on responses to the proposed reforms.

### **Campaigning with the sector**

headspace prides itself on having close working relationships with the broader mental health sector and that work continued in 2020-21. We were glad to stand alongside other mental health organisations for a National Mental Health Commission's campaign which aimed to assist Australians experiencing mental ill-health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Australian Youth Advocates for Mental Health also delivered their pioneering awareness campaign, Visible. Artists and young people collaborated on expressions that made visible the often unseen experience of living with mental ill-health. The campaign was supported by our friends Batyr, Beyond Blue, Black Dog Institute, Butterfly Foundation, Consumers Health Forum of Australia, Mind, Orygen, ReachOut and SANE Australia.



**Continued demand for our services is testament to the fact young people trust and value headspace as a source of support in tough times.**

### Participation at Board level

A significant milestone will be reached in November when we farewell Jarrad Hickmott and Amelia Walters, two single-term Board Youth Advisors appointed for their youth perspective and their experience with headspace. Youth participation is at the heart of the headspace model and it was imperative that the voices of young people feature at the Board level as well. Amelia and Jarrad have inextricably shaped our decision-making during their tenure and we cannot thank them enough for their contribution.

### The Push-Up Challenge

We are grateful to every company, community and individual who supports headspace to achieve its goal of empowering young people to manage their mental health. The Push-Up Challenge was a stellar example in 2021 of the support that exists for headspace in the community. We thank the Push-Up Challenge for again welcoming us as a beneficiary partner. Thanks also to the thousands of Australians who chose to support headspace: their fundraising efforts will make it possible for our services to reach more young people.

### Thank you for your support

I want to acknowledge Board members: Professor Patrick McGorry AO, Ms Anne Murphy Cruise, Dr Annette Curruthers AM, Ms Katina Law, Dr John Harvey, Ms Robbie Sefton and Jarrad Hickmott and Amelia Walters. Your experience and your passion have made serving as Chair a pleasure.

Thank you to CEO Jason Trethowan whose visionary leadership has ensured headspace continues to expand its reach and its services and make a positive difference to the lives of young people. Thank you also to headspace Executive team and to the entire staff of headspace National, who work tirelessly year-round to safeguard the health and wellbeing of young people. I am constantly buoyed by your hard work, creativity and commitment.

I want to express my thanks to the Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, and to the Hon David Coleman MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and their Offices for their dedication to the health and wellbeing of young Australians during this challenging time. headspace values your ongoing support.

My tenure as Board Chair will conclude in 2021. I want to thank the headspace community for giving me the opportunity to serve in such a rewarding role. While I'm sad to say goodbye, I am incredibly proud of what our organisation has achieved. I know headspace will continue to be a pillar of hope for the hundreds of thousands of young Australians we support. Never has it been so important for young people to know we have their backs.

**Lisa Paul AO PSM**  
Board Chair, headspace



# headspace in the community

## In FY 2020-2021 headspace centres provided

**441,914**

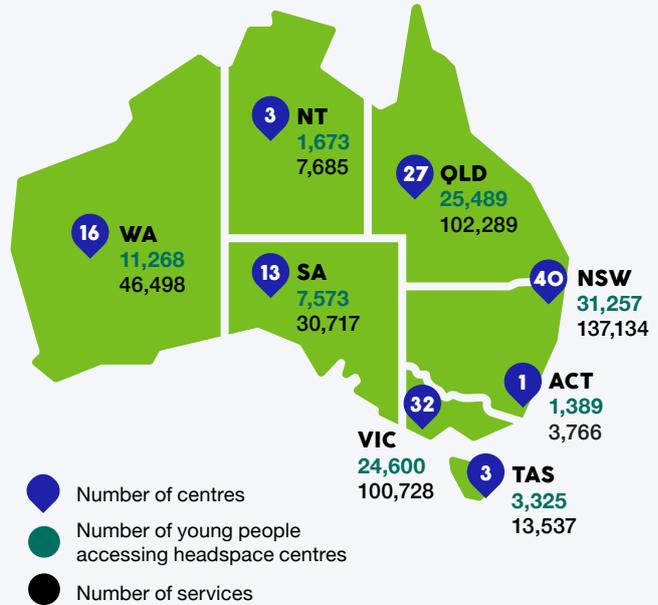
occasions of service

**135**

sites operating across Australia

**88%**

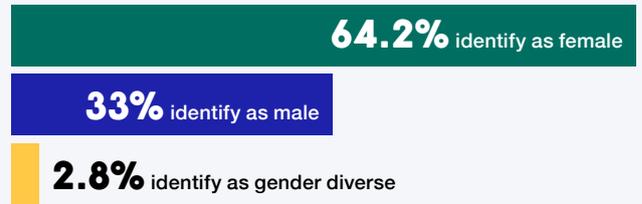
of young people report being satisfied with headspace



## Priority groups



## Gender

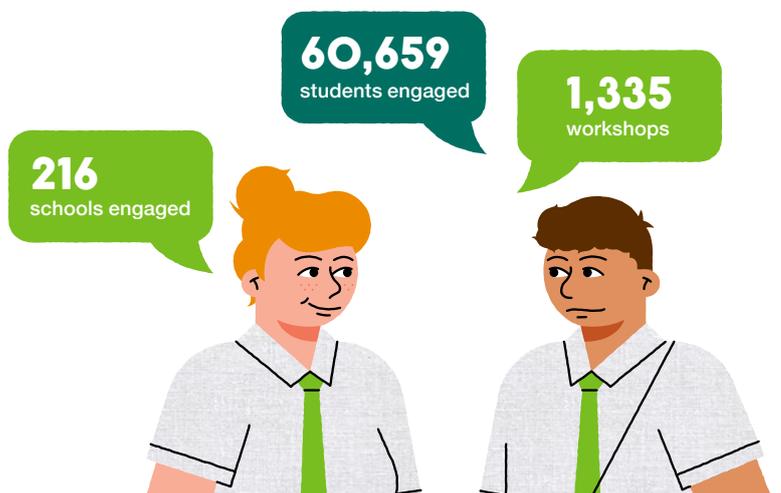


## Be You

**5,350**

educators supported by headspace as delivery partners for the Be You initiative during FY 2020-2021

## headspace schools



# headspace digital services

## website

**3.9 million**

visits to the headspace website

**82%** of young people were satisfied with the service

## eheadspace

In FY 2020-2021, eheadspace, our online and phone counselling service provided 62,698, services to

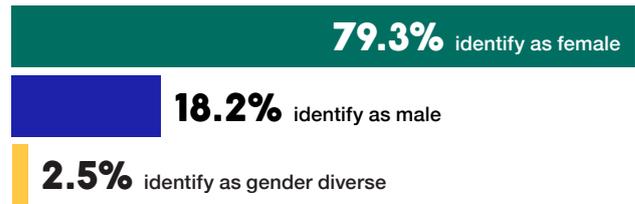
**25,302**

young people

## Priority groups



## Gender



## headspace work and study

**1,425**  
young people

**95.4%** of young people who used the service report being satisfied

## headspace career mentoring

**126**  
young people worked with a career mentor

**653**  
career mentoring sessions



## online community events

**42**

online community events were led by mental health professionals

**175**

chat sessions were led by peer moderators

**7,843**

unique logins to eheadspace

**29,759**

guest log ins to Online Community Chats (not unique)

# our vision is that all young Australians are supported to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities



Each year, headspace provides early intervention mental health services to young people aged 12-25, their families and their friends. Since establishment in 2006, headspace has supported more than 700,000 young Australians, providing 4.4 million services to strengthen their wellbeing, manage mental health, get through challenging times and get back on track.

In 2020-21 alone, headspace centres supported young people on 441,914 occasions.

The headspace model understands that adolescence and early adulthood are critical times in a young person's life, with research highlighting that more than 75% of mental health disorders begin before the age of 25.

We provide a holistic approach to supporting young people early in life through four core areas: mental health, physical and sexual health, work and study support, and alcohol and other drugs.



# 441,914

headspace provided 441,914 occasions of service via our headspace centres

## headspace centre network

As at 30 June 2021, a national network of 135 headspace sites now operates across metropolitan, regional and rural areas of Australia. This includes a range of satellites and outreach services, tailored to the needs of the local community in which they operate.

## headspace online services

ehespace is our national online and phone counselling service available for young people seven days a week, every day of the year. ehespace supports young people who might not be able to access a headspace centre or prefer to get help online. Providing a secure and anonymous place to talk to a professional or peer means many young people who wouldn't ordinarily seek help in person are getting support and access to tools to manage their mental health when they need it.

## headspace Telepsychiatry

headspace Telepsychiatry provides young people aged 12 – 25, in eligible regional and rural areas, access to highly skilled psychiatrists via video consultations. These psychiatrists are experts in youth mental health and have experience working with young people from various backgrounds.

## headspace Work and Study

headspace Work and Study offers support to young people aged between 15 and 25 to plan a career, find employment or work towards further education. This is done in a highly accessible, confidential and youth-friendly environment. headspace Work and Study includes one-on-one support with a careers specialist. Programs on offer include Career Mentoring, Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and Digital Work and Study.

## headspace Schools

headspace Schools supports, engages and partners with education and health sectors across Australia, to build the mental health literacy and capacity of workforces, children, young people, their families and wider school communities. Their programs and initiatives include their role as the service delivery partner for Be You for all primary and secondary schools nationally, the delivery of Mental Health Education Programs, which support school staff and principals in mental health and wellbeing, and various other programs supporting training and professional development for those working in schools.

## headspace Early Psychosis

The headspace Early Psychosis program supports young people experiencing, or at risk of developing, psychosis. Based on evidence developed by Orygen, the program is delivered at 14 headspace centres and focuses on early intervention and providing young people and their families with timely access to specialist support.



## andy's story

The headspace Career Mentoring service connects young people with an industry professional to help the young people find, maintain and enjoy employment in their preferred area of work.

Aspiring psychologist and recent university graduate Andy was about to start looking for his first full-time professional role.

But first he wanted to know more about what it takes to start a new career.

“A lot of my life was dedicated to working hard so that I could one day land a job – but I never really stopped to reflect on what having a job would be like,” Andy said.

He registered for the headspace Career Mentoring program and was paired with Pim, an experienced mental health professional.

Together they explored what life was like as a psychologist, the different pathways someone can take to psychology practice and the many sectors in which psychologists could work.

“I really appreciated these in-depth clarifications about the field of psychology,” Andy said, crediting the mentoring program with helping him fill gaps in his knowledge after university.

“I have a huge amount of respect for my mentor and she is definitely someone that I would love to emulate one day.”



## harry's story

Harry is a member of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) at headspace Elsternwick.

He connected with headspace during Victoria's second period of COVID-related lockdown in 2020.

Lockdown had a profound impact on Harry's mental health. The normally outgoing young man who was used to spending lots of time with friends and family found the sudden isolation difficult to manage. The final-year psychology student even lost motivation to complete his university degree.

Harry says headspace was a vital support for him at this challenging time.

"headspace provided a team that I could talk to and process the experience with. They were genuine people that considerably helped me and gave me a strong connection to the organisation," he said.

Harry says being a part of his local YAC has been a welcome distraction from lockdowns in 2021. He credits the YAC experience with giving him the skills to reach out to friends who are also having a tough time.

Harry's experience also prompted him to create a men's mental health podcast called Ungroomed, which he says has been an important way to help destigmatise mental health amongst his peers.

# participation is central to everything we do at headspace

Young people, their family and their friends are engaged at all levels here at headspace to help us make sure we provide quality services to young people. Through participation, we recognise that young people, their family and friends are the experts about their own lives and have the right to be actively engaged in the issues that affect them.

Engagement starts at the headspace centre, with local reference groups advising services and supporting community engagement. At headspace National, we facilitate several avenues for participation in different areas of our work.

We have also kicked off our Alumni network, which connects people who have previously been involved in headspace National participation programs over the past 15 years.



**We recognise that young people, their family and friends are the experts about their own lives and have the right to be actively engaged in the issues that affect them.**



### headspace Youth National Reference Group (hY NRG)

In 2020-21, we farewelled our departing hY NRG cohort, who provided a massive contribution to our organisation over a two-year period. The pandemic made engagement challenging, and we are so grateful to this amazing group of young people for their commitment to improving mental health outcomes for young people in Australia, despite the unusual circumstances we were operating in.

We also extend a huge welcome to the new hY NRG cohort. We look forward to working with them over the next 18 months and look forward to the expertise and insight they'll bring to all our work.

### Family & Friends Reference Group

headspace highly values the lived experiences of family and friends supporting young people with mental health challenges. Our Family and Friends National Reference Group expanded in July this year as we welcomed four new members with diverse experiences. Reference group members contribute their perspectives to the development of resources and policy, and in advocating for the wellbeing of young people. The reference group meets monthly and is rapidly growing its profile and influence at headspace National.

### headspace Interns

This year, as many organisations suspended work experience programs, it was more important than ever for headspace to provide young people with opportunities to develop their skills and gain practical experience. We supported four young people to undertake project-based internships remotely across a number of teams, an initiative that will assist them in their future careers as youth mental health professionals.



# 15 years

Our Alumni network connects people who have previously been involved in headspace National participation programs over the past 15 years.

**AYAMH & Visible**

Australian Youth Advocates for Mental Health (AYAMH) is another headspace youth participation program. The group of 12 advocates were tasked with the responsibility of developing a public-facing initiative to improve mental health outcomes for young Australians. In November 2020, the group launched Visible. The campaign aims to change the way we view mental health by making unseen experiences of mental health visible through creative expressions of work, developed between young advocates and artists. The Visible exhibition is live at [visible.org.au](http://visible.org.au).

A new AYAMH team were recruited in early 2021 to co-design Phase Two of Visible, which will see the initiative activated in local communities.



Step one, by Zoe Bastin and Mel Keller-Tuberg



Portrait of Emmanuel Asanate by Anton Pulvirenti



Walk with me, by Vivi Feng and Emily Unity



## Jordan's story

Jordan was excited to lend her lived experience of mental health to the role of Australian Youth Advocate for Mental Health, saying she wanted to shine a light on an issue that too often goes unseen.

“Because I know how alienating and alone it can feel to have mental ill-health, I want to help break down stigma and advocate for young people to get the help and support they need,” she said.

For her Visible expression, Jordan chose to spotlight lesser-known experiences of mental ill-health, including body-focused repetitive behaviour like skin-picking.

She was paired with artist Isobel Knowles to collaborate on a series of animations that depict Jordan's daily experiences of anxiety and the healthy coping mechanisms she's learned to deploy in response.

Jordan said working on the initiative helped her realise just how resilient she's become. She's full of praise for the work of headspace too.

“I love the people and the culture of headspace. I never feel judged, I feel safe. I see amazing youth with such incredible stories, and a hunger to change the world. It fills me with such happiness, and I feel proud to be a part of it.”

## Board Youth Advisors

Amelia Walters and Jarrad Hickmott have served the past three years as our inaugural Board Youth Advisors. Amelia and Jarrad – both hY NRG alumni – complete their terms in November 2021. We cannot begin to thank them enough for their enormous contribution to headspace.

We are excited to welcome Niharika Hiremath and Naraja Clay as our new Board Youth Advisors, formally commencing their roles in November 2021. Between them, they bring expertise across a number of headspace programs, as well as experience with both National and State Mental Health Commissions.



**Amelia Walters**  
Board Youth Advisor



**Jarrad Hickmott**  
Board Youth Advisor

# family and friends play a significant role in the lives of young people



**Research tells us that four in five young people are likely to seek support from their friends, partner or family member in relation to a personal or emotional problem. We know that strengthening the support network for young people results in better mental health outcomes.**

In the last year, the Family and Friends Inclusive Practice Team has developed a range of resources that encourage inclusive practice at headspace centres. The 'Engaging Family and Friends at Reception' video and a refreshed 'Welcome Pack for Family and Friends' convey the message that family and friends are welcome at headspace and play a vital role in a young person's recovery. New fact sheets have also been developed for family and friends accessing the headspace website to understand how they might best support young people.

headspace National supports local centres through consultations and provision of resources and training. The Family and Friends Inclusive Practice Team has led the rollout of Single Session Thinking and Single Session Family Consultation across the headspace centre network. These core clinical approaches enable clinicians to focus on the young person's priorities and work collaboratively with the young person and their family as a source of support. The rollout has included the provision of online training in Single Session Thinking and Single Session Family Consultation to 'centre champions' and support for 'champions' to train clinicians at their centres. The successful rollout has resulted in increased confidence and capacity of clinicians to implement these approaches in their centres. Feedback from clinicians, young people and their families and friends has been extremely positive.

### **Engaging culturally and linguistically diverse young people**

**Young people from Refugee and Migrant backgrounds experience a number of barriers to seeking and accessing mental health care.**

In 2020, headspace National undertook a comprehensive review of existing service guidelines for working with people from Refugee and Migrant backgrounds, and carried out consultation across the network, with the aim of developing a framework for headspace to better meet the needs of these young people and their communities and place headspace as a culturally safe and considered organisation.

Recommendations reached through this process will form the foundation of work to promote culturally safe and appropriate headspace services and workplaces, which will be consolidated and expanded in FY22.



## **kim's story**

Kim Edgar is a powerful advocate for mental health awareness and suicide prevention, not only on the Bellarine Peninsula where she lives but across the whole of Australia.

Kim's son, Daniel, died by suicide in 2018. Kim tells her story to help other parents learn the signs of mental ill-health and to promote ways that families can support their young person.

Kim uses her position on the headspace Family and Friends Reference Group to advocate for holistic and family-inclusive approaches to mental health. She says it's important for practitioners to acknowledge young people are part of a family unit that also requires knowledge and support to navigate the mental health system.

"Suicide prevention is everyone's business," Kim said.

Kim joined the reference group almost two years ago and reports that headspace is listening to and acting on the advice of members.

"I have really enjoyed the experience so far," she said. "The breadth of opportunities for family participation show that we're really valued – and that's amazing."

# headspace centres are the foundation of the broader headspace platform



## 5 new centres opened in:

- 📍 **Victoria:** Syndal
- 📍 **Queensland:** Roma and Strathpine
- 📍 **New South Wales:** Batemans Bay
- 📍 **South Australia:** Marion

## 7 new satellites now operate in:

### Victoria

- 📍 Wangaratta (a satellite to Albury-Wodonga)
- 📍 Lilydale (a satellite to Knox)

### Western Australia

- 📍 Busselton (a satellite to Bunbury)
- 📍 Esperance (a satellite to Kalgoorlie)

### Queensland

- 📍 Maryborough (a satellite to Hervey Bay)
- 📍 Beaudesert (a satellite to Meadowbrook)

### Tasmania

- 📍 Burnie (a satellite to Devonport)

## 1 satellite upgraded to centre in:

- 📍 **Tasmania:** Devonport

This year, we saw the establishment of five new headspace centres and seven new headspace satellites across Australia. headspace Devonport also upgraded from satellite to centre over the course of the past year.

These services are part of the 11th and 12th rounds of headspace services to open since headspace was established. Over the remainder of 2021 an additional 12 centres and seven satellites are due to open. This year's Federal Budget announcements also included funding of the following six headspace satellites to be upgraded to centres: Gympie (QLD), Armidale and Lake Haven (NSW), Port Lincoln and Mount Barker (SA) and Esperance (WA). Additionally, a new satellite will be established in Palmerston (NT) connected to headspace Darwin.

Over the remainder of 2021 an additional 12 centres and seven satellites are due to open.



## Wait Time Reduction

Throughout the year, the wait time reduction program continued to be rolled out in centres across the country with headspace services using the funds to relocate to better facilities and to update existing services through refurbishment and renovation. We have seen headspace Murray Bridge (SA) relocate to a new space and headspace Rockhampton (QLD) undertake major refurbishment to refresh their centre. A further three centres will relocate over the remainder of this year.

## Adapting and sustaining headspace services during the COVID-19 pandemic

As the global pandemic continues to impact the Australian community, the need for headspace services continues to grow. headspace National has worked with our partners in PHNs and State and Federal Governments to secure additional resources that respond to increasing demand, and to the need for headspace to adjust service offerings into community outreach and online environments. Our focus throughout the past year has continued to be about supporting the network through advocacy and the provision of resources to maintain business continuity and service delivery. Examples of this include the rollout of funding to Victorian headspace centres from both State and Federal governments to enable centres to recruit additional workforce and deliver services to young people when young people need them. The monthly online strategic webinars hosted by headspace CEO, Jason Trethowan, continue to be a key engagement point with the centre network.



## candice's story

University of Wollongong student Candice was applying for as many as 25 jobs a week before registering for the headspace Work and Study program. She reached out to headspace for support after a string of unsuccessful applications left her feeling dejected.

Over the course of several online consultations with her Work and Study specialist, Candice learned better resume and cover letter writing techniques. headspace also provided Candice feedback on job applications prior to submission, to give her the best possible chance of success.

“Job-hunting sometimes feels like a mystery that we’re just supposed to know from a young age how to solve. headspace helped demystify the process for me,” she said.

It wasn’t long before she saw the benefits, securing a part-time position at a local supermarket just a couple of months after her first headspace consultation.

“It didn’t real sink in until I got my first pay, and that’s when I felt this sudden sense of stability,” Candice said.

She now reports having the confidence to navigate the job market in the future.

# offering digital services that best support young people



# 25,000

**During 2020-21, eheadspace provided support to more than 25,000 young people, families and friends.**

## eheadspace

eheadspace provides confidential and free online and telephone support to young people experiencing mental health issues, as well as to their family and friends. Support is available between 9am and 1am AEST every day of the year via email, live webchat and a 1800 phone number. Young people can connect with a youth mental health professional when, where and how it suits them. Like all of headspace, eheadspace offers a stigma-free, 'no wrong door' youth-focused, family inclusive approach.

During 2020-21, eheadspace provided support to more than 25,000 young people, families and friends. The past year has certainly led to unprecedented challenges across Australia in relation to the impact of COVID-19 on our mental health and wellbeing. We observed a very close relationship between periods of heightened social restrictions and service demand, indicating that disconnection from school, friends and our regular routines is having a big impact on young people. It was fantastic to see that 82% expressed high satisfaction with our service.

## Online communities

The past year has seen continued growth across our online communities, which provide an important role within our stepped care model and can be especially useful for those who are socially or physically isolated. These offer a range of supports including the option for young people to join group chats led by professionals or peers. Throughout the year, we delivered more than 40 online tailored chat sessions led by mental health professionals, which have since been replayed and viewed thousands of times. The group chats offer a safe space for discussions on topics such as bushfires, coping with drought, managing relationships and navigating difficult times like COVID-19.



We also provided peer support group chats facilitated by a group of 25 Online Peer Support Moderators (20 young people, and five adults with experience supporting young people). Topics included LGBTIQ+ issues, a bespoke mental health support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people called Yarnspace, and sessions on navigating relationships. These peer chats provide a safe and supportive online environment for young people, families and friends to connect with people like them.

### Regional Phone Counselling Service (Vic)

The headspace Regional Telephone Counselling Service is designed for secondary students attending school in regional areas of Victoria, located more than 80 kilometres from a headspace centre. The service is funded by the Victorian Government and ensures students in regional Victoria have access to mental health support via a team of clinical workers at headspace. The service has continued to evolve over the past year and now supports 80 Victorian schools. Students utilising the service report high satisfaction.



80

schools in regional Victoria have access to headspace Regional Telephone Counselling Service



**headspace noted significant spikes in demand associated with periods of extended lockdown across Australia.**

### headspaceConnect

headspaceConnect is funded as a service of the headspace Demand Management Grant and works with six regional headspace centres. The program provides young people with a responsive and dedicated alternative to receiving care at a headspace centre. Service delivery is provided in the form of one-to-one counselling by our specialist clinicians via telephone or video link, with a strong focus on developing personalised care planning for every young person.

The program's results demonstrate that digital services can work very well with headspace centres to ensure young people are getting prompt and effective support. During the past year we've supported 196 young people.

### headspace website and headspace account

We've continued to extend the digital offerings available on our website and specifically through the headspace account. The recent extension to the headspace account has enabled young people with a relationship to a headspace centre to stay up-to-date via the website with news from that centre. Upon logging into their headspace account, young people are presented with a variety of personalised content, including: new posts on their chosen centre's webpage; centre contact details, and social media channels. This means centres can continue sharing opportunities with their young people between centre visits. It also ensures young people have access to headspace's suite of online mental health resources should they need more support. The feature is an important contribution towards integrating our different platforms and services into a single user-friendly experience.



## headspace Telepsychiatry

headspace Telepsychiatry provides young people aged 12 to 25 and who live in eligible regional and rural areas with access to highly skilled psychiatrists via video consultations.

The program also provides secondary consults to GPs and mental health professionals. The psychiatrists are experts in youth mental health and have experience working with young people from various backgrounds.

The service is experiencing a considerable growth in demand and during the past year provided support to 752 young people, as well as 121 secondary consult sessions to professionals across the network.

# 752

**headspace Telepsychiatry provided support to 752 young people aged 12 to 25**



## emily's story

Emily describes mental health advocacy as her greatest passion and so was excited to work on the Visible campaign with its goal of increasing community awareness about the mental health experiences of young people.

An Australian Youth Advocate for Mental Health (AYAMH), Emily worked with artist Vivi to produce a 24-frame animation featuring her favourite video game characters.

“Video games were one of the only places where I didn’t have to worry about discrimination or prejudice. When you meet me in a video game, I can just be present, unfiltered, and unapologetically myself,” Emily says.

Being a part of the AYAMH initiative has connected Emily with other young people who “see the world in a different way”.

“This team is incredibly diverse in identities, lived experience and areas of passion. We’ve had such a broad range of ideas and it’s been amazing to spend meaningful time understanding each idea and each other,” she says.

AYAMH is the latest in a long line of headspace initiatives to which Emily has contributed. She’s been a member of her local Youth Advisory Committee, a peer support moderator for eheadspace and a Recovery Educator for the headspace Discovery College.

She credits the youth-friendly and approachable environment at headspace with helping her manage her mental health.

# supporting young people with their employment, study and mental health

**The past year saw unprecedented challenges to young people's engagement in work and study, with 77% of young people reporting the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted on their work, study or financial situation. Half of young people headspace surveyed reported COVID-19 impacted their confidence to achieve future goals.**

Despite these challenges, headspace Vocational Programs continued to provide clinically integrated, voluntary and strengths-based approaches to support young people to engage in employment and education.

## Individual Placement and Support

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) integrates in-person vocational and clinical resources in headspace centres. Recognising the program's impact, the Department of Social Services has invested a further \$45.7 million. This will provide a three-year extension for the 24 headspace centres currently delivering the program, and expansion to an additional 26 headspace centres. headspace National has also been funded to provide the program management for the trial and to support all headspace IPS centre programs.

# 77%

**of young people reported the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted on their work, study, or financial situation**

## headspace Work and Study

headspace Work and Study, a unique model of clinically integrated online employment and study support for young people aged 15-25, has experienced large service growth over the past year. In recognising the changing needs of young people whose work and study situations were impacted by COVID-19, the Department of Health announced a two-year \$6.75 million boost to the program in early 2020. This funding has seen service capacity double over the past year, meaning more young people than ever are receiving clinically integrated vocational support through the online headspace platform.

The service has also been recognised as the online companion to IPS, with \$4.1 million in ongoing service funding from the Department of Social Services.

## headspace Career Mentoring

The past year has again highlighted the role strong connections and networks play in supporting young people to kick start their careers.

headspace Career Mentoring, which matches young people aged 18 to 25 with an industry mentor, saw more than 600 individual mentoring sessions delivered, the highest number in the program's history. In a year like no other, mentoring relationships provided young people with confidence and motivation.



## maddison's story

Darwin resident Maddison, 20, was matched with a headspace vocational specialist to help her find new work after being made redundant from another role.

"I was very anxious, because I wasn't confident about getting a job. I'd already been looking for so long, that I was starting to give up," she said.

headspace's Individual Placement and Support program helped Maddison identify the skills she needed to impress potential employers: how to develop a resume, what to include in a cover letter and what to expect in a job interview.

Soon Maddison began securing interviews and quickly won a role with an international hospitality franchise.

She remembered feeling "very, very happy" when she got the good news.

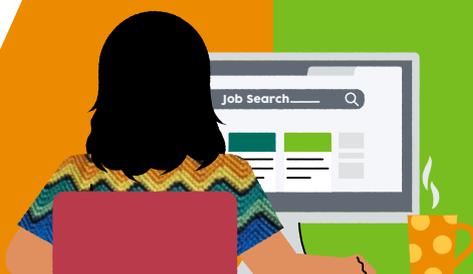
"It has given me a routine, which is something I need to keep my head clear. It's made me feel like I have a purpose," Maddison said.

# \$6.75 m

**Federal Government  
boost to headspace  
Work and Study**

# 126

**young people worked  
with a headspace  
career mentor**



# supporting mental health literacy in school communities and beyond

**The scale and impact of headspace Schools programs continued to grow in 2020-21, servicing more than \$22 million Commonwealth and state government contracts.**

Several newer programs have commenced and been delivered throughout the year, including:

- Work with Australian Universities in suicide postvention, based on the model that headspace Schools implements in school communities across Australia
- A partnership with Lifeline to support communities in NSW experiencing suicide clusters, funded by the NSW Government
- Parent and carer information sessions, delivered in response to an increase in need due to COVID-19
- School leader and Principal wellbeing supports
- School allied health support services
- Co-designed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-focused wellbeing packages
- Policy development for education departments.

headspace Schools responded promptly and effectively to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and 2019-2020 bushfire season. headspace Schools was agile and responsive to thousands of service delivery requests. Our relationships with both education and health departments across the country have grown significantly during the past year. We have also enhanced our partnerships with PHNs and other mental health partners, including the eSafety Commissioner, Mindframe, Thirilli, Standby, Lifeline and Beyond Blue.

## Be You

headspace is a proud service delivery partner for Be You – a national program to support children's and young people's mental health in early learning services and schools. As part of our role, we were tasked with recruitment, implementation, engagement and retention of schools and school communities from primary and secondary sector and have continued this work right across the year, despite challenges related to COVID-19 and various lockdowns across the country. In addition, the team have continued to service the critical national postvention support to schools experiencing suicide and suicide risk.

A major milestone for headspace Schools this year was exceeding our Be You contract milestone of 6,500 participating schools. We finished the year with 6,748 participating schools which is a huge outcome for Be You's goal to ensure every child, young person, educator and family can achieve their best possible mental health. Over the past 18 months, headspace engaged with 8,691 schools (participating and non-participating), provided immediate suicide postvention support to 616 schools and supported a further 1,019 schools with intensive support across Australia.

During 2020-21, headspace facilitated 695 episodes of professional learning online and on-site, attracting an audience of 8,409 principals, educators, wellbeing coordinators, and support staff.

# 6,748

**participating schools in the national Be You program**

### Mental Health Education Program

Schools play an important role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people and their families. Our mental health education workshops are designed for secondary students and their parents and carers to build mental health awareness, knowledge and skills. Workshops are interactive, strength-based, evidence-informed and timed to fit a standard school lesson. Workshops are facilitated onsite at schools or online as a webinar. Despite the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, the Mental Health Education Program team was able to deliver more than 500 sessions, reaching more than 26,000 secondary school students across Australia.

### NSW community collaboratives and parent/carer information sessions

In the past year, we welcomed funding from the NSW Government for headspace and Lifeline to establish 12 Community Wellbeing Collaboratives in communities at high risk of suicide.

When a region is identified as high risk or is emerging as high risk, headspace works with Lifeline Australia and national agencies to implement a collective impact collaboration model based on headspace’s own blueprint model in how to best activate services to provide support to a community. This support is being provided for up to 12 regions in NSW. These collaborations aim to build protective factors, coping, wellbeing and resilience within the local community.

headspace also received funding from the NSW Government to rollout parent and carer information sessions across the state. Over a four-month period, 70 sessions were delivered to more than 1,500 parents and carers.

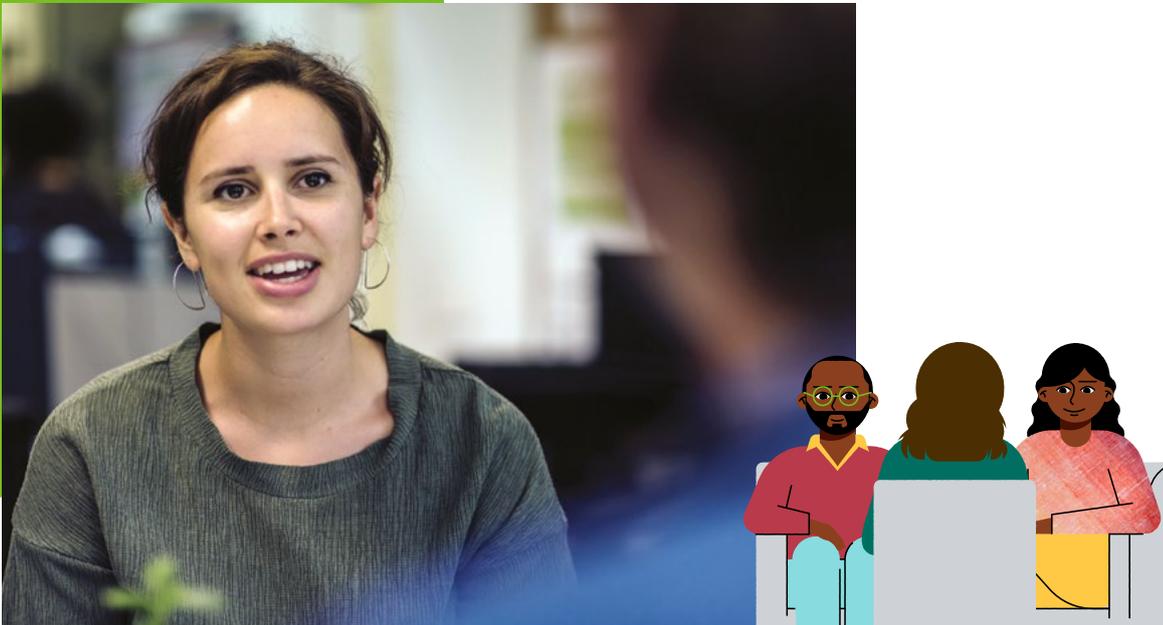


1,500

parents and carers attended 70 information sessions within a four-month period



# supporting young people experiencing psychosis across Australia



## Review of Early Psychosis program data

**The headspace Early Psychosis Program has collected data via the current Minimum Data Set (MDS) since June 2017 using the headspace Application Platform Interface (hAPI), and over the last three years, headspace National has captured comprehensive longitudinal data about young people who have accessed the program.**

The purpose of the review of the Early Psychosis MDS and hAPI functionality was to improve data capture for the Program by revising data items and refining the processes of collecting these data. The Early Psychosis Program has evolved in the past few years and it was necessary to ensure the data collected was relevant, and that hAPI functionality aligned as closely as possible with the service practice and pathways. The review also provided an opportunity for the data items to align with the Commonwealth Department of Health's Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).

Between April and November 2020, the Early Psychosis project team undertook extensive consultation with the six Early Psychosis clusters (14 centres), Orygen and internally at headspace National as part of the MDS revision.

As a result of this large-scale review and consultative work, a new MDS (Version 3.0) was produced and went 'live' on 1 April 2021.

**Young people and their families can access the Early Psychosis program at 14 headspace centres.**





# our commitment to cultural practice

## Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people

'Take a Step', a campaign run by headspace to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to recognise the signs that something's not right – and provide small, practical steps towards feeling better, continued production and rollout throughout the year. In May 2021, the production commenced filming in Alice Springs and Brisbane following many months of development by the Wominjeka Youth Reference Group, Elders, the headspace centre network and headspace National staff.

The initiative will launch early 2021-22 with a suite of assets available on the headspace website and a paid media campaign.

## Cultural review of the model

headspace is dedicated to serving the social and emotional wellbeing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and their friends. A cultural review of the headspace model is currently underway to identify how the organisation's practices can be made safer and more inclusive to the needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. The past year saw the headspace Cultural Practice team work closely with Aboriginal consultancy agency Cox Inall Ridgeway to review the available evidence-based practices for the mental health care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and abroad. We also undertook a survey of the centre network, our young people, health agencies, PHNs and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to understand what changes they would like to see headspace adopt to better serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the community. Some face-to-face consultation was also able to occur, despite the disruption posed by COVID-19 lockdowns. The Cultural Practice team at headspace National anticipates reporting on the key findings and recommendations of this work during the forthcoming financial year.



Behind the scenes: filming for the 'Take a Step' campaign in Brisbane



## nikia's story

Since seeking support from headspace as a teenager, Nikia has gone on to get involved with the organisation in several ways at local, state and national levels.

Nikia is a valued member of the Youth Reference Group at headspace Edinburgh North in South Australia.

She's also a headspace youth ambassador for her state, and supports young people in her work as an eheadspace moderator.

Most recently, Nikia has played an important role in the development of social and emotional wellbeing resources as part of headspace's Wominjeka youth reference group.

The proud Ngarrindjeri woman hopes sharing her lived experience of mental ill-health helps to break down stigma in the wider community, especially among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"I know this will start some important conversations in my community and will hopefully encourage more young people like me to take the first steps towards better social and emotional wellbeing," Nikia said.



**We're committed to reconciliation between Australia's First Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.**





### Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

headspace is committed to reconciliation between Australia's First Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. With this commitment, headspace aims to build a culturally safe organisation that actively welcomes, supports, listens to and respects our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, Elders, young people, families and communities.

Over 2020-21, we worked to progress reconciliation as we build and improve the cultural safety of our services and our workplaces. Our RAP Working Group has continued to support our efforts, which includes:

- Dedicated events to mark National Reconciliation Week, notably an internal online space for headspace staff to share their commitments to reconciliation with colleagues
- Resource development in preparation for the 2021-22 launch of social and emotional wellbeing campaign 'Take a Step'

- Consistent provision of content and news about our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities via headspace internal communications channels.

The RAP working group's leadership has been replicated in other parts of the organisation, with headspace' Digital Mental Health and Schools teams also developing their own RAP sub-working groups to fine tune the safety and sensitivity of their practices.

## Engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce

The headspace Cultural Practice team is proud to coordinate the headspace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff network. Work was done this year to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the headspace network were connected with the Cultural Practice team. In late 2020, we ran a virtual workshop for these staff to ensure opportunities were still available during the COVID-19 pandemic. Attendees reported this workshop was a valuable networking opportunity. They also heard from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people engaged with headspace services about their lived experience of social and emotional wellbeing. Key themes of discussion at the workshop were the importance of cultural supports for young people facing social and emotional wellbeing challenges.



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

The headspace National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group (Advisory Group) provides advice and recommendations to the executive team at headspace to enhance the cultural safety of the design and delivery of our services. The Advisory Group was in its second year of operation in 2020-21, the second half of the 10 members' term of service.

Over the past 12 months we farewelled two members and welcomed two new members to the group. The format of the meeting schedule has evolved from four meetings per calendar year to six, providing more opportunity for members to meet and advise on a regular basis. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has continued to significantly impact our face-to-face engagement, with meetings shifting into the online space where possible and appropriate.



Members of the Wominjeka Youth Reference Group have led development of the 'Take a Step' campaign.



**87%**  
of young people would recommend headspace to a young person who needed mental health support



**13**  
new headspace locations in communities across Australia



**33**  
headspace is the most recalled youth mental health organisation



# 707,425

young people have received services since inception

# 135

headspace sites operating across Australia



# 88%

of young people say headspace is a vital community service

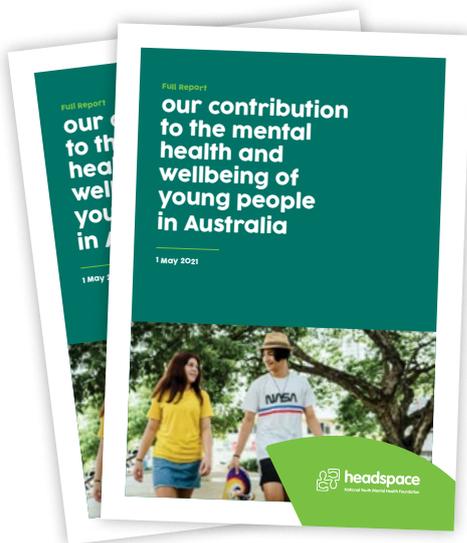
# working together to improve quality and guide our future



## 2021-24

The headspace Strategy 2021-24 is an ambitious plan to ensure all young people are supported to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.

The Strategy, Impact and Policy Division continued its work with colleagues across headspace to guide the organisation's strategic direction, inform the national policy reform agenda, engage Governments on headspace initiatives, and comprehensively monitor and evaluate headspace services to support continuous quality improvement, guide service innovation, and inform future directions in youth mental health.



### headspace Strategy

In June, the headspace Strategy 2021-24 was released. The Strategy is an ambitious plan to ensure all young people are supported to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.

It includes a suite of initiatives aiming to ensure young people can access:

- The right support (from the full suite of headspace support);
- When they need it (timely access); and
- How they want it (through the medium of their choice).

### headspace Impact Report

In May 2021 headspace completed its first Impact Report, with a summary version and a full report released. The reports tell the story of headspace today and documents our primary domains of activity, our signature initiatives, and the impact they have on young people, their family and their friends.

The full headspace Impact Report outlines the evidence-based design of each of our major initiatives, highlights how headspace is working to expand access to services for young people, and explores the outcomes and impact of our initiatives.



### Evaluations conducted throughout the year

Over the past 12 months we have continued to evaluate headspace programs and services to measure their activity and effectiveness and guide continuous quality improvement. Some of our key projects have included evaluating:

- the Wait Time Reduction Program
- Client complexity
- Service accessibility
- headspaceConnect
- Community Spaces
- AYAMH Project Visible
- GP Registrar project.

We are also supporting an Independent Evaluation of the National headspace Centre Program, through provision of extensive service data and facilitating access to centres and young people that use our services.

### Support for external evaluation enhancements to data collection (launch of new minimum data set for the EP program and the IPS)

We have continued to refine and improve the data we collect across headspace programs and have undertaken a major review of our Early Psychosis Program Minimum Data Set (MDS) and developed and implemented new MDS's for our headspaceConnect and IPS programs.

# we are thought leaders in youth mental health

## Research projects

We've engaged in many research projects, including:

- Progressing our second National Health and Medical Research Council partnership grant with Orygen, to examine outcomes for young people accessing support at headspace, particularly focusing on quality-of-life outcomes.
- Collaborating on UK Wellness Trust-Funded Australian Early Psychosis Collaborative Consortium to establish the world's first clinical registry for early psychosis, to determine integration with our MDS data.
- Partnering on Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) projects with a focus on appropriate models of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, including:
  - Ngalaiya Boorai Gabara Budbut – Supporting the heads and hearts of children: Responsive mental health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adolescents (South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute).
  - Bringing family, community, culture and country to the centre of health care: Culturally appropriate models for improving mental health and wellbeing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (University of Melbourne)
  - Our Journey, Our Story: Building bridges to improve Aboriginal youth mental health and wellbeing (Curtin University).
- Partnering on MRFF eating disorders project, InsideOut: A Centre for Health System Research and Translation in Eating Disorders: Detection and intervention system-focused knowledge to drive better outcomes in mainstream care for eating disorders (University of Sydney).
- Finalising research into implementation of the MyLifeTracker measure in clinical care.
- Completing the NHMRC-funded research project with Victoria University into physical activity for young people with depression, a cluster randomised controlled trial to test the effectiveness of incorporating a brief intervention into routine clinical care.



## Research publishing

Filia, K., Menssink, J., Gao, C., Rickwood, D., Hamilton, M., Hetrick, S.E., Parker, A.G., Herrman, H., Hickie, I., Sharmin, S., McGorry, P., Cotton, S. (2021). Social inclusion, intersectionality and profiles of young people seeking mental health support. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. [NHMRC grant 1076940]

Allott, K., Gao, C., Fisher, C., Hetrick, S., Filia, K., Menssink, J., Herrman, H., Rickwood, D., Parker, A., McGorry, P., Cotton, S. (2021). The Neuropsychological Symptoms Self-Report (NSSR): Psychometric properties in an adolescent and young adult mental health cohort. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12473>

Filia, K., Rickwood, D., Menssink, J., Gao, C., Hetrick, S., Parker, A., Hamilton, M., Hickie, I., Herrman, H., Telford, N., Sharmin, S., McGorry, P., Cotton, S. (2021). Clinical and functional characteristics of a subsample of young people presenting for primary mental healthcare at headspace services across Australia. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-020-02020-6> [NHMRC grant 1076940]

Rickwood, D., Kennedy, V., Miyazaki, K., Telford, N., Carbone, S., Hewitt, E., & Watts, C. (2021). An online platform to provide work and study support for young people with mental health challenges: Observational and survey study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. <https://doi.org/10.2196/21872>

Kwan, B., Rickwood, D., & Brown, T. (2020). Factors affecting the implementation of an outcome measurement feedback system in youth mental health settings. *Psychotherapy Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2020.1829738>

O'Dwyer, N., Rickwood, D., Watsford, C., & Buckmaster, D. (2020). Therapeutic interventions in Australian primary care, youth mental health settings for young people with Borderline Personality Disorder or borderline traits. *Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Dysregulation*, 7, e23. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40479-020-00138-2>

Allott, K., Gao, C., Cotton, S., Hetrick, S., Filia, K., Menssink, J., Fisher, C., Hickie, I., Herrman, H., Rickwood, D., Parker, A., & McGorry, P. (2020). Subjective cognitive functioning in relation to changes in levels of depression and anxiety in youth over three months of treatment. *British Journal of Psychology Open*, 6(5), e84. <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjo.2020.68>

Kwan, B., & Rickwood, D.J. (2020). A routine outcome measure for youth mental health: Clinically interpreting MyLifeTracker. *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/eip.13016>

McGorry, P., Rickwood, D., Radovini, A., Denborough, P., Adams, S., & Callaghan, A. (2020) Debate: Response to Looi et al - Tilting at windmills: A giant quest. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867420925153>

Seidler, Z.E., Rice, S.M., Dhillon, H.M., Cotton, S.M., Telford, N.R., McEachran, J., & Rickwood, D.J. (2020). Patterns of youth mental health service attendance and discontinuation: Population data from Australia's headspace model of care. *Psychiatric Services*. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201900491>

# advocating for mental health reform across Australia

**During the year, headspace advocated for national reforms to improve support for the mental health and wellbeing of young people across Australia in a range of forums, including:**

- A submission to the Federal Government, providing our response to the Final Report of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health;
- A submission to the House of Representatives Select Committee on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and an appearance before the Committee to further discuss our recommendations for reform;
- A Witness Statement by our CEO to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, following on from our submission;
- Advocacy to extend MBS support for telehealth, including provision of headspace reports:
  - headspace (June 2020), headspace staff experience of Telehealth during COVID-19, and
  - headspace (June 2020), Young people's experience of Telehealth during COVID-19
- Direct engagement with government officials, advisers and Ministers, and
- A submission to the National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Among the reforms recommended by headspace were:

- Ensuring the National Agreement between the Commonwealth and the States due in November 2021 provided for universal timely access to support for all young people, including young people with more severe and complex needs;
- Expanding telehealth and digital services;
- A strategy to secure the youth mental health workforce, including through stable and competitive remuneration and training cohorts of students and graduates from psychology, social work and occupational therapy in headspace centres;
- More robust measures to prevent suicide;
- Integrated mental health and alcohol and other drugs (and broader holistic) services for young people;
- Measures to ensure family inclusive practice;
- Supporting young people to participate in work and study, including through headspace Work and Study and expanding the Individual Placement and Support program across headspace centres;
- Supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and
- Drawing on the lived experience of young people in the design of all youth mental health strategies, policies and programs.

# funding to support the growth of headspace services

headspace worked closely with Australian governments to seek expanded support for the mental health and wellbeing of young people across the year, particularly as the global pandemic increased the need for support.

We were delighted to see the Federal Government commit \$278.6 million in the 2021-22 Budget to strengthen, enhance and expand the headspace network. Commitments included:

- Upgrades to five satellite services and establishment of ten new headspace centres, expanding the national network to 164 by 2024-25;
- Boosts to clinical capacity at existing headspace services;
- Culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, with \$14.3 million allocated for:
  - Culturally safe outreach services for small communities in Western NSW;
  - Establishing a service in Palmerston NT, provide outreach in Mutitjulu and Yulara and engage traditional healers in Alice Springs;
- Ongoing funding for headspace, with \$20.34 million allocated over four years, and
- Establishment of the headspace National Student and Graduate Placement Program to place and train two cohorts of psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists in headspace centres.

headspace was also pleased to see:

- \$5.24 million in support from the Victorian and Federal Governments – announced in June and July respectively – to boost support for young people in Victorian headspace centres through the placement of Child and Youth Mental Health Services clinicians in headspace centres;

## 278.6m

**to strengthen, enhance and expand the headspace network.**

- \$45.7 million over three years announced in October 2020 to extend the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program from 24 to 50 sites.

We also welcomed these additional supports for Victorian communities impacted by COVID-19:

- \$5 million in support from the Federal Government under the COVID-19 Emergency Mental Health Support Program – announced in August 2020 – to enhance the Victorian headspace centre network’s ability to respond to local demand and to increase outreach services to young people in the community. The funds are also for headspace National to provide student placements, parent and carer information sessions, additional headspace services, and Telepsychiatry secondary consultations.
- \$1 million in support from the Victorian Government – announced in October 2020 – to support Melbourne based headspace centres to provide assertive engagement, outreach and coordinated care for young people in the community who disengaged from headspace services as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions.

# supporting the mental health of young people globally

While the ongoing global pandemic meant less international visitors to our shores, it didn't stop our ability to further strengthen our international connections.

## Foundry (Canada), headspace (Australia) and Jigsaw (Ireland) Collaboration

In the collaborative's second year, the three youth mental health organisations further strengthened our connection and delivered on our shared goal of creating a space to share knowledge, experience and peer support across a number of common themes. The introduction of working groups on topics ranging from family and friends to youth participation, supporting school educators and addressing complex mental health issues in young people brought opportunity for our teams to share and learn from each other. Our respective COVID-19 responses and the impact of the pandemic on young people in the three countries was a consistent backdrop to our discussions. In the coming year, the collaboration will expand to provide opportunities for our centre networks, young people and family and friends reference groups to meet and share experiences.

## Advocacy for Youth Mental Health services

From the United Kingdom to Serbia, a number of countries sought headspace advice and advocacy in their efforts to bring similar service models to their countries. While many of these initiatives are in their infancy, headspace National has welcomed the opportunity to provide briefings and direct advocacy to foreign Governments.

## allcove (USA)

To round out the year, allcove officially opened their first two centres in San Jose and Palo Alto in California. Stanford University's centre for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing created the two centres in collaboration with young people, partners and supporters, including headspace National and Foundry and Frayme in Canada. We are delighted for our friends at allcove and Stanford, and for the essential services these centres will provide to young people, their family and friends in California's San Francisco Bay area.



**headspace National has welcomed the opportunity to provide briefings and direct advocacy to foreign Governments.**

# building a platform that evolves with changing needs

**The Clinical Practice team supports headspace centres to deliver youth-friendly, effective and efficient services to young people and their families. Pressing challenges experienced in 2019-20 such as bushfires, workforce needs, COVID-19 and the digital transformation of services have informed some of the key activities throughout 2020-21.**

The 2019-20 bushfire season was without precedent in terms of its impact on young people and the headspace network. headspace National rapidly activated a large-scale response to support impacted communities. This involved the development of tools, training and support for headspace staff, to enable them to continue supporting young people, services and communities impacted by the bushfires. headspace National also led the establishment and interim operation of headspace Batemans Bay at the request of the local community, and developed mental health literacy resources for distribution via the headspace website and digital marketing channels to support positive approaches to responding to the impact of natural disasters.



This year has demonstrated how important technology can be in supporting service delivery. Take the enhanced rollout of the electronic headspace holistic assessment tool (ehHAT), for example. ehHAT is an online survey sent to young people before their first headspace visit. It's a holistic and brief screening tool designed to reduce barriers to care and make the entry into service more youth friendly. It offers young people choice and flexibility in how they might choose to share information, as well as allowing young people more control in guiding the focus of their first session. Evaluation of the tool has identified that young people are more likely to disclose risk factors, helping to inform more appropriate care offerings. The tool has been widely accepted by clinicians and young people, and in the last year the Clinical Practice team delivered two national training and implementation assistance offerings to the centre network to encourage broader uptake across the network.

In recognition of the important role peer workers play in the service system, headspace has developed peer support guidelines for headspace services. The guidelines were co-designed with existing peer workers, and include a literature review summarising the evidence base, plus a comprehensive step by step guide for headspace services to support them to establish a valued peer workforce. Next year, work will focus on the development of a training package to enable peer workers to adopt practical, safe and sustainable approaches in their roles. It will include essentials, growth and mastery courses and aims to support every headspace service to include peer support as a service option.

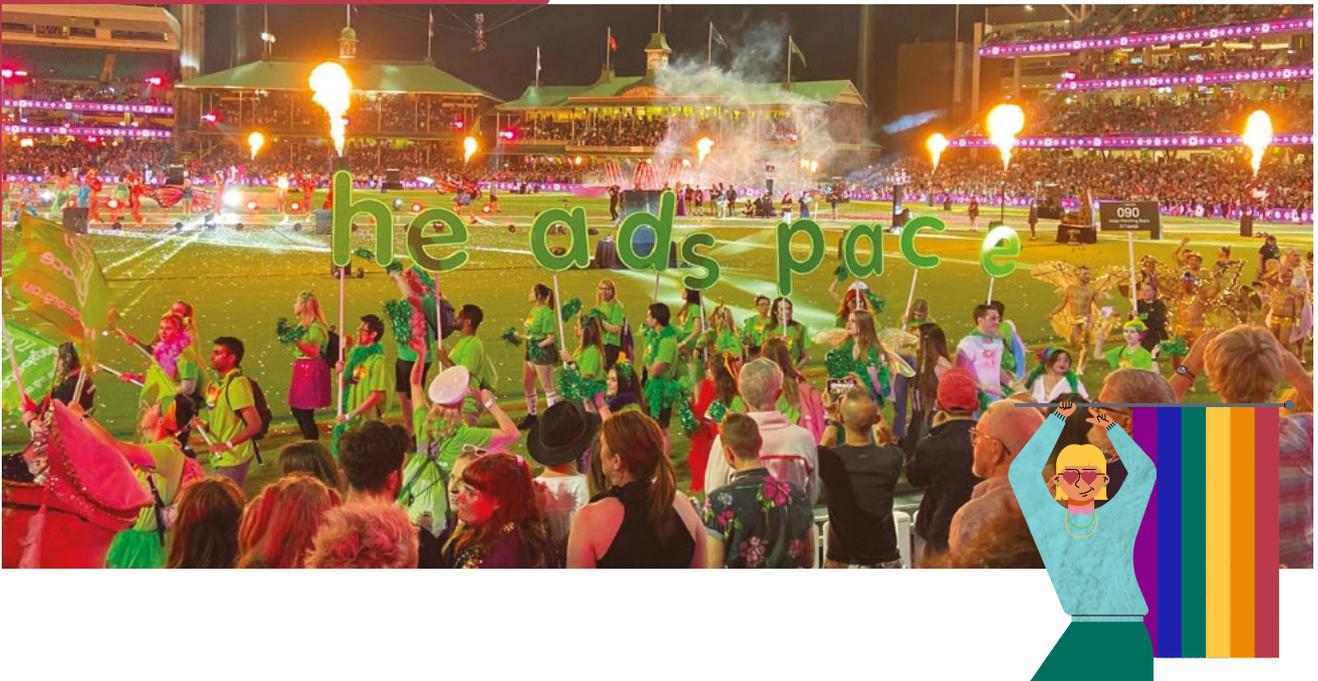
# increasing mental health literacy and ensuring young people are aware of our brand and services

## headspace day

With the impacts of the COVID-19 resulting in one in two young Australians struggling to carry out everyday activities, the theme for headspace day focussed on taking small steps every day to help manage mental health and wellbeing during tough times.

We celebrated headspace day with a mix of online and in-person events. From Zoom yoga sessions and self-care packages, to physically-distanced dance classes and open days, there was no limit to the creativity on display.





### Supporting the LGBTIQ+ community

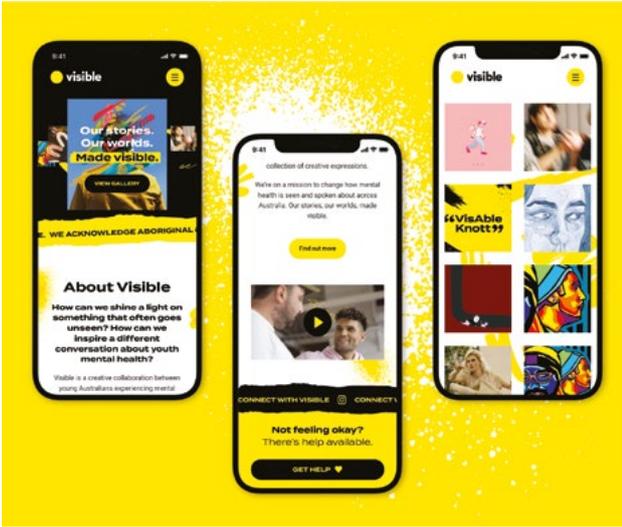
A video content series was developed and featured members of the hY NRG sharing their stories and advice for other young people who identify as LGBTIQ+. Other content included videos for family and friends of young people and resources on our website. The series aimed to help other young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ recognise that they are not alone and that help is available. To run alongside the video content series, we also launched a statistic from our headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey that found more than half (61%) of LGBTIQ+ young people have high or very high levels of psychological distress, compared to 28% of heterosexual and cisgender young people.

**headspace has continued to show support for the LGBTIQ+ community, proudly marching in the Melbourne Midsumma Festival and the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras COVIDSafe parades.**



### Bullying isn't Banter

To align with the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, headspace launched a digital content series to support young people to understand bullying and respectful behaviour online. A series of animations and website resources were created, covering topics such as understanding bullying, trolling and cyberbullying. Content was also developed to help family and friends support young people experiencing bullying. An online group chat for young people, led by eheadspace mental health clinicians and hY NRG members, supported the digital content series. We also launched a chapter from the headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey revealing experiences of cyberbullying over time, including research that revealed one in two Australian young people have experienced some form of cyberbullying in their lifetime (51%).



**Visible**

Following the completion of a 12-month co-design process, the Australian Youth Advocates for Mental Health (AYAMH) delivered their campaign, Visible, in November 2020. Visible was a creative, youth-led advocacy campaign that connected artists to young people with lived experience of mental health. Together they developed creative interpretations that challenged the way mental ill-health was perceived by young people and their communities.

Visible launched as a digital exhibition, accessible online via the Visible website, Instagram and other digital channels. The initiative was funded by the Federal Government and supported by a cross-sector collaboration of Batyr, Beyond Blue, Black Dog Institute, Butterfly Foundation, Consumers Health Forum of Australia, Mind, Orygen, ReachOut and SANE Australia.

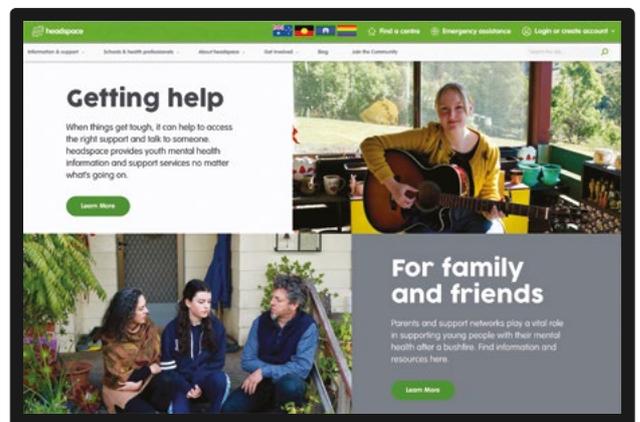
**Bushfires**

Supporting young people in bushfire-affected parts of Australia was a priority for headspace during 2020-21. Not only was it necessary to support the mental health of communities impacted by the Black Summer bushfires of 2019-20, but it was also important headspace help them prepare for future bushfire seasons.

headspace responded to this need by developing a campaign that sought to:

- Be the champion of young people in natural disaster affected areas
- Provide lived experience role models of recovery and hope for young people and parents
- Prepare and support our Community Awareness network – mentally and physically

A series of five videos created in collaboration with headspace Bega profiled young people, families and a local headspace centre affected by bushfires. Their inspiring stories provided viewers in affected areas with messages of hope and strength. New landing pages were also developed for the headspace website, one for young people and the other for their families and friends. These materials were delivered to communities in need via targeted social media posting.



headspace bushfire website – coping with the stress of busfires with stories and videos of role models of bushfire-affected communities



# 35%

**Research found one in three young people have experienced someone posting mean or hurtful comments (35%) about them online**

## headspace in the news

Using findings from the 2020 headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey, headspace was able to drive the news agenda around critical time periods for the community to address issues, and provide helpful information to support people.

## Supporting young people and families through transition periods

In January 2021, we released research that found young people in critical age groups (12 to 14 and 18 to 21) were reporting significant increases in feelings of isolation<sup>1</sup>. The findings – revealing a substantial uplift since the data was last recorded in 2018 – came as young people in these age groups entered into major transition periods in their lives with return to school, study and work.

We used this opportunity to provide tips and advice to parents of young people in this age group, delivered through online and print mainstream news outlets.

## Addressing the issue of cyberbullying among young people

On National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence in March 2021, we released research that found one in three young people have experienced someone spreading a rumour (33%) or posting mean or hurtful comments (35%) about them online. As a result of these findings, delivered through news media, we launched a new “bullying isn’t banter” campaign aimed at creating safer online experiences for all young people. We directed both young people and their families and friends to online resources about how they can get informed or access support.



<sup>1</sup> headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey 2020

# we are extremely proud to work with so many great organisations



This year, headspace announced an exciting new partnership with AFL as their Youth Mental Health partner. The partnership was developed to ensure young footballers learn the skills they need to build mental fitness and manage their own wellbeing. The partnership will provide young people in the Talent Pathway program, professional clubs and community football clubs with tools to help protect their wellbeing as they aspire to play football at an elite or amateur level.



Australia's most popular bubble tea retailer Chatime continued to support headspace throughout the year by sharing mental health and wellbeing content to their highly engaged social media audience, in-store fundraising and creating mental health literacy content in collaboration with Student Edge and headspace. Thank you to Chatime for their ongoing support through a difficult year.



## FUNLAB

Our partnership with Funlab has continued to make a huge impact on the mental health of young people this year, and we would like to acknowledge their ongoing support during an extremely challenging year for their organisation. In 2020, Funlab held their fourth annual Day of Fun in support of headspace. Nine Funlab staff have also continued to mentor 21 young people through our Career Mentor program.



Kmart has again supported headspace this year through their self-service point-of-sale donations in Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Contributions totalled an incredible \$96,000 this year. This was the final year of our partnership with Kmart and we thank them for their ongoing support and the significant contribution they have made to the mental health of young Australians.



headspace continues to support NRL's State of Mind programs and initiatives. This year, NRL rolled out their State of Mind program for young people, Get in the GAME. headspace assisted NRL to develop the content for this program, which aims to strengthen the mental health and wellbeing of young rugby league players at grassroots football clubs across Australia. The program is delivered by current and former NRL players and supported by local headspace centres.

headspace was also fortunate to have State of Mind ambassador Clinton Toopi run a fitness session for staff during our Week of Wellbeing. NRL staff also took part in The Push-Up Challenge in support of headspace.



AFL club The GIANTS supported The Push-Up Challenge with player ambassadors from the women's team encouraging people to get involved, helping us increase participation and encourage more GIANTS fans to support headspace. We were also thrilled to have three player ambassadors from the men's and women's teams involved in headspace day 2020 video content.



headspace's Chief Executive Officer Jason Trethowan, AFL's Head of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Dr Kate Hall and AFL's General Manager of Football Operations, Steve Hocking (left to right)

**Program Partner:**



This year we welcomed Mirvac as a program partner for the headspace Career Mentor Program. Twenty Mirvac staff are now trained mentors, mentoring 22 young people across 32 sessions. One of the young people who has worked with a mentor from Mirvac said the experience was “nothing less than amazing”. “We focused on improving my interviewing skills with the end goal of getting a new marketing job,” the young person said. “My mentor assisted me through the job application process and within one month of job seeking, I received two job offers. My mentor guided me through the decision-making process of selecting the best job offer from these options.”

We are thrilled to have Mirvac staff as mentors and are grateful for the breadth of knowledge and enthusiasm they bring to the program.



**2020**

**This year we welcomed AFL as an official partner.**

# we recognise, acknowledge and thank all of our supporters

## Push-Up Challenge

headspace was grateful to again be a beneficiary of The Push-Up Challenge. The challenge of 3,318 push ups over 25 days in June placed a spotlight on the number of people who tragically died by suicide in 2019. This year more than 170,000 Australians took part, pushing up for better mental health and to support headspace, Lifeline and The Push for Better Foundation.

This was the biggest Push-Up Challenge to date with almost \$9 million raised and 240 million push-ups completed. headspace is incredibly grateful for the \$3.7 million donated to our foundation, which will help our centres fund special projects in their communities and support headspace national to implement priority projects that grow our reach and impact.



## Day of Fun 2020

During Day of Fun, all proceeds from games across Funlab's 39 venues (including Strike Bowling, Holey Moley and Skyzone, among others) were donated to headspace. Whilst the day looked a little different than it has in previous years due to COVID-19, many headspace centres across the country worked with their local Funlab venue on Day of Fun as well as other community projects throughout the year. Funlab staff ran "Night of Fun", a virtual trivia event for Funlab staff and their family and friends. A staff member from a Funlab venue even shaved her head at the event in support of headspace.

Despite a challenging year for Funlab, their fourth annual Day of Fun was a huge success, raising \$100,000 for headspace. We would like to acknowledge the incredible commitment and contribution Funlab staff have made to headspace and the work it took to make Day of Fun happen in 2020. We are so proud to work with Funlab and so grateful for their support.

## Our community supporters:



### Jock Landale #GivingRise

Australian basketballer Jock Landale has had an incredibly successful year. Not only did he win the NBL championship with Melbourne United where he was crowned Finals MVP, he recently signed a two-year contract with the San Antonio Spurs in the NBA. Jock also made an inspiring choice to donate \$200 to headspace for every slam dunk he made in a game (and he made a lot of them!).

“I’ve dealt with my own mental health challenges; I know how tough it can be for young people to deal with their own issues, which is why I’m proud to get behind headspace and in particular their efforts in rural and regional Australia,” Jock said. Jock’s fundraising initiative, Giving Rise, kicked off in May with an initial pledge of \$6,400 to cover his 32 dunks in the season to date, and has since raised \$12,840 for headspace. What an incredible effort!

**We are thankful to have Jock’s support this year and want to thank him for his commitment to headspace and the mental health of all young Australians.**

### Sarah Ryan shaves her head to support headspace

In May 2021, Sarah Ryan bravely shaved her head in support of headspace, raising an incredible \$7,000. Sarah chose to fundraise for headspace as she believes early intervention is the key to long-term mental health and wellbeing. She also believes supporting young people’s mental health during the pandemic is especially important.

Sarah is an avid rugby player and thanks her rugby community and headspace for helping her through some difficult times she has faced. “Positive mental health has not only helped me through tough times mentally, but has drastically improved my physical health as well,” Sarah said.

**We are so grateful for the phenomenal support Sarah and her community have given headspace. Thank you, Sarah!**



# supporting more young people and their family and friends

**This year, our community have continued to play an important role in supporting improved mental health outcomes for young people. Funds donated to headspace have supported priority projects that play a critical role in growing our reach and impact. These include helping headspace pilot and scale programs, increase service delivery, provide enhanced support for family and friends and ensure that young people can access the right support, when they need it and how they want it. Programs delivered this year through fundraising include:**

## Family & Friends Participation

Family support is pivotal to the health and wellbeing of young people, and their participation can be key in reducing the severity of mental health challenges and facilitating recovery in their young people. This year, funds raised for headspace have allowed us to review and expand our Family and Friends National Reference Group and scale Family Inclusive Practice across the headspace network.

## Online Communities

Funds raised for headspace have also enabled headspace Peer Chats: online, group, text-based chats occurring in real time on bespoke chat technology, developed by headspace, with inbuilt safety mechanisms. These chats provide opportunities for service users to connect with “people like me” to provide and receive peer support from their community. These ‘chats’ are unique in Australia, with no other mental health service offering these online, real time, group based, peer support activities.

## Youth Peer Work

Thanks to funds raised, headspace launched our national peer support guidelines, and is now developing a peer support training program to equip peer workers and peer work supervisors with the skills they need to do their role safely and effectively.

## Alice Springs Cultural Consultant

In collaboration with the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation (the Lead Agency for headspace Alice Springs), funding has been used for the position of Cultural Consultant at the centre. This position has responsibility for cultural direction at headspace Alice Springs and service provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who attend the centre.

## Parent & Carer – COVID Support

Fundraising enabled us to develop and implement community education sessions to build the capacity of parents and carers to notice, inquire and provide assistance for their young people to seek support as communities faced the ongoing stress of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic downturn.





headspace centres and services operate across Australia, in metro, regional and rural areas, supporting young Australians and their families to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.



headspace would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. We value their cultures, identities, and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and emerging and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.



headspace is committed to embracing diversity and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the provision of health services. headspace welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation and gender identity.

headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health