

Family & Friends

Welcome Guide

2021 / Version 2



headspace Mildura would like to acknowledge all the Traditional Owners throughout the Murray- Mallee region as the First Peoples of this Nation on whose land we work and live. We also pay respect to all their Elders past and present and honour their culture.



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What is headspace?

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. We deliver services and support to young people aged 12–25 and their family and friends in four key areas:



Mental Health



Physical Health



Substance Use



Work & Study

We keep young people at the heart of our services

Mental health difficulties and young people

Mental health difficulties are the most common health challenges for young people. Between 20–25 per cent of Australian adolescents will experience a mental health or substance-abuse difficulty in any given year. Many will experience more than one problem at the same time. Anxiety, depression and substance abuse are the leading mental health concerns for young people.

Getting help early for a mental health difficulty takes a lot of courage, but it makes a big difference to how quickly a young person gets back on track with their life.

headspace is a good place to seek help if a young person:

- needs help with any type of health issue
- is having difficulty with something in their life
- feels sad, anxious, worried or worthless
- is concerned about their use of alcohol and/or drugs
- is worried about a friend or family member
- needs advice about work or study
- needs to discuss relationships, sexuality or their sexual health.



Get in to
Life

Welcome to headspace Mildura (hM)

headspace Mildura is an inclusive service and believes that family and friends play an important role in a young person's journey to better their wellbeing.

We understand that there are many different forms of family and friends that are important in a young person's life. These include:

All types of families:
nuclear, extended, blended, single-parent, heterosexual, same-sex couples

Non-parental caregivers: partners, foster parents, grandparents, godparents, adoptive parents, other family members

Significant others: friends, teachers, mentors, kinship relations, spiritual care leaders, coaches

headspace Mildura,
2/125 Pine Avenue,
Mildura, Victoria 3500
Phone (03) 5021 2400
Fax (03) 5023 6760
my.headspace@headspacemildura.com.au

We know from research that involving family and friends in a young person's care can lead to better health outcomes for young people*. Wherever possible, we advocate for and provide meaningful opportunities for family and friends to directly participate in our services.

How you can be involved in supporting your young person will depend on many things – including their age, life experience and their feelings about family involvement.

While we encourage and support family and friends participation, involvement is respectful of the privacy and confidentiality of young people

This guide will introduce you to our service and will detail further information and support for you and your young person.



Common myths and facts about mental health difficulties

MYTH

There is no hope for people with a mental illness

FACT

There are many supports, treatments and community services available. People with a mental illness can lead active, productive and healthy lives.



MYTH

Mental health difficulties are caused by genetics.

FACT

Mental health difficulties occur due to a complex combination of factors. These factors can be biological (due to a family history of mental health difficulties), psychological (e.g., trauma, loss, neglect) and/or environmental (e.g., stress, money problems, social pressure).

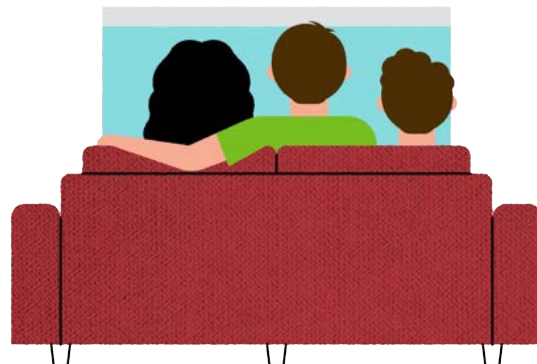


MYTH

Non-qualified people cannot help people with a mental health difficulty.

FACT

Friends and family can offer important help and support. When family and friends speak and act positively towards a young person with a mental health difficulty, they create an environment that builds on a young person's strengths and promotes understanding and respect.



How headspace Mildura can help

INFORMATION AND SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, THEIR FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS CAN BE ACCESSED THROUGH :



1 The headspace website

Our website includes information about mental and physical health, work and study, drugs and alcohol, how to get help, and how family and friends can support a young person going through a tough time.

To access the headspace website visit: [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au).



2 eheadspace

eheadspace is our national online and telephone support service. It is staffed by experienced youth and mental health professionals.

Young people in contact with eheadspace can access a range of information and support as well as a short-term treatment, where appropriate.

To access eheadspace visit [eheadspace.org.au](https://www.eheadspace.org.au) or phone 1800 650 890. Webchat, telephone and email support are available to young people, as well as their families and friends, from 9 am to 1am AEST, 365 days of the year. Email access to eheadspace is available 24 hours a day.



3 headspace Mildura centre

headspace Mildura provides young people with access to a range of health workers who have specific expertise in working with young people. They provide, mental health, physical health (including sexual health), AoD (Alcohol & other Drugs) and Vocational & Educational support.

Young people can make an appointment at a centre in person or by phone or email. Family or friends can also make an appointment on behalf of a young person if the young person consents to the appointment.



Please note

headspace Mildura provides time-limited services for mild to moderate difficulties. It is not an emergency service. If you or your young person need immediate support or medical assistance, please contact:

- *Mildura Base Public Hospital Mental Health Services (03) 5022 3500 or 1300 366 375 (24/7)*
- *Emergency Services 000 (24/7)*
- *Lifeline 13 11 14 (24/7)*
- *Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 (24/7)*

If your young person is experiencing more severe &/or complex difficulties, they may be eligible for specialist clinical mental health services through Mildura Base Public Hospital .

If you are unsure about the best service for your young person, we can assist you.



Our commitment to inclusive practice

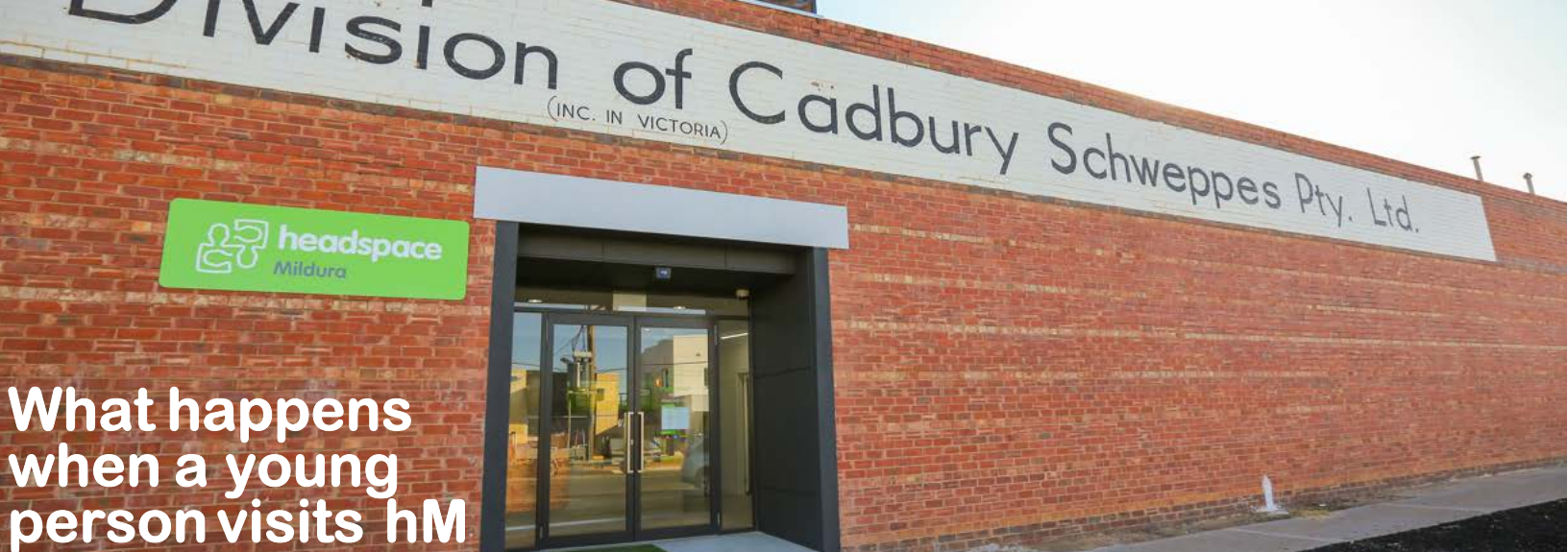
We understand that some young people may experience additional or greater barriers to accessing help for mental health difficulties. These people might be:

- young men
- sexuality and gender diverse young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples
- young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds
- young people who use alcohol and other drugs
- young people experiencing homelessness
- young people with disabilities
- young people in rural/remote communities.

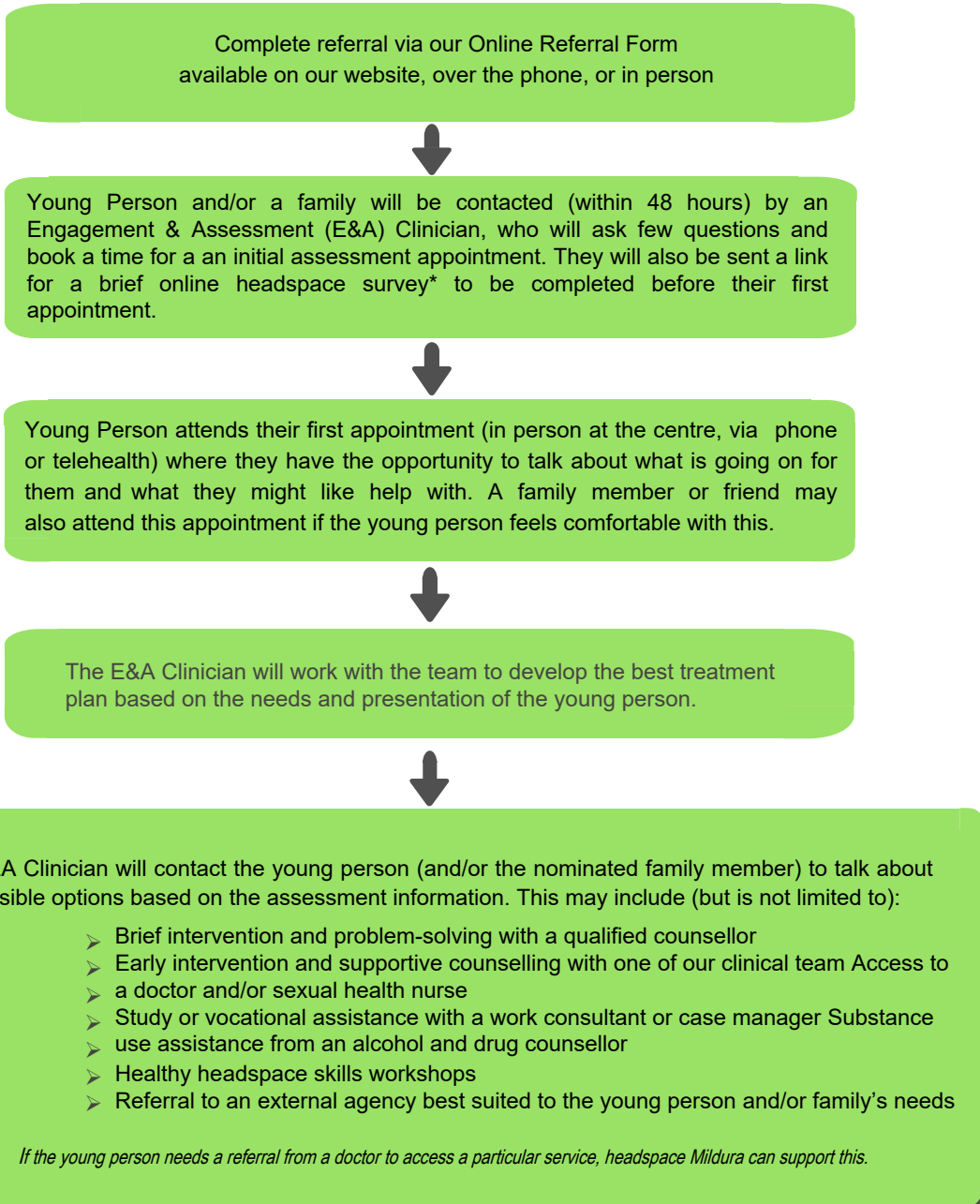
We are committed to inclusive practice. Inclusive practise involves being responsive to the needs of, and actively welcoming and accepting all young people, irrespective of their culture, language, gender, sexuality, lifestyle, values and beliefs, abilities, appearance or socioeconomic differences.

As an inclusive service, we:

- acknowledge and respect all young people
- treat all young people fairly
- do not discriminate against or judge young people
- challenge negative stereotypes
- help young people to attend to their immediate basic needs before engaging them in treatment (like food, housing, safety, employment and daily living skills)
- offer flexible, tailored and culturally safe approaches to treatment.



What happens when a young person visits hM



* headspace Application Platform Interface (hAPI) is a headspace National Initiative which collects data from the young people who access our services, and service providers. All clients will be registered into hAPI prior to the appointment to generate their appropriate survey.



How long will an appointment take?

First appointments can last up to 90 minutes, while ongoing counselling appointments usually last 50 minutes to an hour. Sessions with a GP are generally 15 to 30 minutes.



How much will an appointment cost?

Services at a headspace Mildura is free. We also try to ensure we refer you to someone who is either free or low cost. Some external private practitioners might charge a gap fee (with a MHTP), but we can talk you through this if this is the case and provide some options. (See page 9 to understand more about what a Mental Health Treatment Plan is and why this is relevant).



Can I access headspace Mildura on behalf of my young person?

Whether your young person is ready to access our services or not, we encourage you to make contact with us and discuss ways we might engage your young person or how you can be supported to care for them. If you would like to talk to a headspace clinician, please call us. You may be booked for an appointment or offered support over the phone. If your young person is engaged or is willing to engage with headspace, ask us about the support and involvement we offer to family and friends.



hM also offers **Tuning in to Teens** (TinT), an emotion-focused Parenting Program; parents or carers are able to participate in TinT irrespective of whether their young person is engaged in hM. Please contact us if would like further information or to register your attendance.

Before contacting us, it is a good idea to talk with your young person about it first.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY YOUNG PERSON WHILE THEY ARE WAITING FOR AN APPOINTMENT?

We understand that wait times for appointments may vary. While your young person is waiting for an appointment, here are some ways you can support them:

- Keep communication open, show empathy and don't rush into judgments.
- Be available without being intrusive or 'pushy'.
- Spend time with them.
- Take an interest in their activities, and encourage them to talk about what's happening in their life.
- Take their feelings seriously.
- Encourage and support friendships.
- Encourage activities that promote mental health, such as exercise, good eating, regular sleep and doing things they enjoy.
- Give positive feedback.
- Let them know that you love them. They may not always admit it but this is likely to be very important to them.
- Encourage the use of online supports available.

CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Consent

headspace is a voluntary service. Health workers can only provide treatment to young people who give consent. This is something we will ask a young person when they attend. Young people can consent to treatment without parental permission provided they understand the consequences of engaging with the service. Nonetheless, support and involvement from others is always encouraged and we will work with the young person to involve their family and friends in ways that they are comfortable with, and that are likely to be beneficial to the young person's wellbeing. If you would like a copy of our Consent Policy, please speak to a headspace clinician.

Confidentiality

When a young person speaks with a headspace clinician, nothing they say can be passed on to anyone else without their permission unless the young person:

- is at risk of harming themselves or someone else
- is at risk of being harmed by others
- has committed a serious crime.

In these cases, we will provide only necessary information to appropriate services or support people. If you have any questions about confidentiality, please speak to a headspace clinician.



For further information, visit:

headspace.org.au/friends-and-family/life-issues



Self-Care

At headspace Mildura, we encourage self-care. Worrying about someone you care about is tough, so it is important to remember to be kind to yourself. Maintaining your own health and wellbeing enables you to best take care of the person you are supporting.

Here are few ideas for you :

- Eat well and drink plenty of water.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Unplug your phone, television or computer.
- Get active
- Engage in a hobby.
- Spend time with friends.
- Practice gratitude – notice those things in life you are grateful for.
- Check-in with your emotions in a space where you feel comfortable.



Interpreter Services

headspace Mildura services are provided in English. However, we are happy to arrange an interpreter to support the young person or their family and friends to communicate with a headspace clinician during a session. It helps if we know this need in advance.



We find that most people prefer a telephone interpreter service but we may be able to arrange a local interpreter for some languages.

For more information on mental health in a language other than English, please speak to a headspace clinician or visit Mental Health in Multicultural Australia at mhima.org.au.

Please check out this video on Mental health information for Family and Friends of young people :



How can family and friends contribute to headspace Mildura?

Family and friends' involvement in the delivery of our services is important to us. We have a feedback/suggestion box in the foyer and would appreciate any ideas of perspectives you have. If you would like to provide further input into how we engage with family and friends as a service, please speak to us.

Family & Friends Reference Group

The Family and Friends Reference Group (F&FRG) is a diverse group of volunteers that provide consultation and guidance to headspace Mildura staff on the engagement of, and provision of support to, family and friends of young people engaged with the service.

The aim of the F&FRG is to be an advocate for those that support and care for young people in the community and give them the opportunity to provide feedback and input into the strategic direction of headspace Mildura. The F&FRG may be involved in the development of projects in the local community and within headspace to make our services more family-friendly.

For more information contact:

sandy.guthrie@headspacemildura.com.au

What is a Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP)?

- Mental Health Treatment Plans are completed by a GP and allow a young person (or their Family and Friends) to access counselling support from a Private Practitioner (outside headspace Mildura).
- A MHTP will usually provide 6-10 sessions (based on the program of the Private Practitioner) in one calendar year; but to start with, you will be referred for up to 6 sessions. Practitioners can set their own fees and you may be required to pay a small gap fee.
- The young person can obtain a MHTP through their family GP or make an appointment with the headspace Mildura GP.
- Private practitioners cannot start their sessions with the young person until they receive a copy of this from the GP.
- A young person may also need a MHTP to receive support from certain staff at hM. We will advise you and your young person in this case and will facilitate this.

Understanding Change

We all at times say we are going to change something or improve something (i.e., start a new exercise regime) and then life gets in the way and we don't do as we had originally hoped. However, it can be hard to watch your young person participate in harmful behaviours and know how to support them to change. There are several psychological models of change and we describe one below that may be helpful to family and friends.

The Five Stages of Change

Stage 1: Pre-contemplation

This is the stage where the young person resists any idea about change and sees no need for change despite the concerns expressed by family and friends. Young people's apparent motivation can be influenced by a range of factors associated with developmental stage and level of vulnerability. Young people may:

- Not care about the consequences of their situation or behaviour
- Intentionally give the impression that they don't care about the consequences to project an image that they are in control even when they clearly are not
- Have limited experience and are only beginning to develop their capacity for to understand the link between their actions and consequences.

The primary areas to focus on at this stage are:

- Engagement
- Seek to understand the reasons behind the problematic situation/behaviour
- Support activities that compete with problematic situation/behaviour

Stage 2: Contemplation

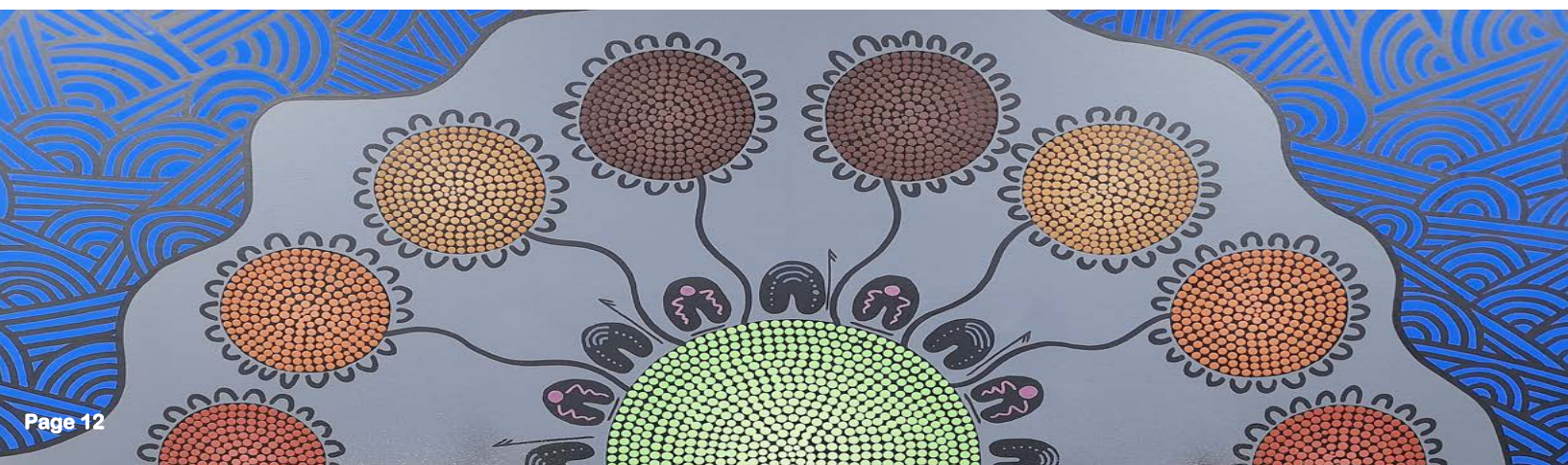
The person is in 'Two Minds' about the need to change: juggling thoughts about the pros and cons of change and whether they have the confidence to do it. This balance between consideration of the costs and benefits of changing can produce confusion and distress.


As with those young people who are not interested in change, contemplators might also mask their true state of mind. Again, there is potentially a developmental component stemming from young people's:

- Need for privacy and reluctance to share personal details about themselves until trust has been built with one another
- Sensitivity regarding the image they project, young people often feel it important to hide their vulnerability
- Inexperience and/or believing myths regarding help-seeking or maintaining behaviour.

The primary areas to focus on at this stage are:

- Build upon a relationship
- Provide space for the young person to discuss their situation/behaviour change in the context of what is important to them
- Build motivation for investment in self-care and a healthy lifestyle
- Address causes of problematic situation/behaviour





Understanding Change continued...

Stage 3: Preparation

This is when the young person has made a commitment to change their behaviour. They may research further treatment options/strategies and consider the lifestyle changes that will have to be made.

The primary areas to focus on at this stage are:

- Set realistic goals for change
- Support self-efficacy
- Ensure the young person has an adequate level of stability
- Increase opportunities for supportive relationships
- Help the young person plan to deal with unhelpful relationships
- Encourage the young person to participate in a rewarding activity
- Support the young person's ability to cope effectively with underlying issues.

Stage 4: Action

This is when the young person has confidence in their ability to change and is taking active steps. For example, the young person may begin practising alternative coping mechanisms, like journaling, rather than engaging in the concerning behaviour. Unfortunately, this is also the stage where the young person is most vulnerable to a relapse because learning new techniques for managing your emotions is a gradual learning process. **Support is vital at this stage—this is where the surrounding support system can be the most valuable!**

The primary areas to focus on at this stage are:

- Continue goal setting and review
- Provide opportunities for developing new life skills
- Build and reinforce helpful beliefs and values
- Support helpful relationships and reinforce positive participation
- Recognise and celebrate achievement, but offer the option of discussing the downside of change
- Relapse prevention.

Stage 5: Maintenance

This is when the young person is working to maintain the changes they have made. They are aware of triggers and how these may affect their goals. For example, if the young person is aware that a stressful event is approaching, this may increase their self-care strategies to reduce the likelihood of engaging in unhelpful behaviours.

The primary areas to focus on at this stage are:

- Reinforce helpful beliefs and values- reasons to be hopeful
- Consolidate new knowledge and skills
- Strengthen connections with helpful relationships and constructive activity
- Help the young person set and pursue long term life goals
- Relapse prevention

Further information & support

Local agencies

- **Centacare**
136 Lime Ave
Mildura VIC 3500
03 5051 0000
- **Mallee Family Care**
malleefamilycare.com.au
122 Ninth Street
Mildura VIC 3500
03 50235 966
- **Mallee District Aboriginal Services**
mdas.org.au
120 Madden Ave
Mildura VIC 3500
03 5018 4100
- **Sunraysia Community Health Services**
www.schs.com.au
137 Thirteenth St,
Mildura VIC 3500
03 5022 5444

State agencies

- **Australian Community Support Organisation(ACSO)**
asco.org.au
1300 022 760
Alcohol & drug support service
- **Eating Disorders Victoria**
eatingdisorders.org.au
1300 550 236 or (03) 9417 6598
Free, confidential helpline
- **Rainbow Door**
www.rainbowdoor.org.au
1800 729 367
Free specialist helpline providing information, support, and referral to all LGBTIQ+ Victorians, their friends and families.
- **Mental Health Legal Centre**
mhlc.org.au
03 9629 4422 or 1800 555 887
Free legal service for anyone who has experienced mental illness in Victoria (where their legal problem relates to their mental illness)

National agencies

- **youthbeyondblue**
youthbeyondblue.org.au
1300 224 636 (24/7)
Information about supporting someone with depression or anxiety Online chat & 24/7 phone support
- **Black Dog Institute**
blackdoginstitute.org.au
Information about supporting someone with depression or bipolar disorder.
- **Carers Australia**
carersaustralia.com.au
Carer counselling, advice, advocacy, education and training
- **QLife**
qlife.org.au
1800 184 527
Information about supporting people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, inter sex, queer or questioning (LGBTQIA+)
Online chat & phone support
- **Reachout**
au.reachout.com
Information about supporting young people with mental health difficulties
- **Suicide Call Back Service**
suicidecallbackservice.org.au
1300 659 467 (24/7)
Free 24/7 phone & online counselling.
- **Gambling Help Online**
gamblinghelponline.org.au
1800 858 858 (24/7)
Online chat & phone support.
- **Family Drug Support Australia**
fds.org.au
1300 368 186 (24/7)
phone counselling & support