THE LITTLE BLUE BOOK.

The straight-up guide to mental wellbeing. Growing up. Becoming more independent.

> Finding your place in the world.

Some days, life is great. Other days, things can feel confusing, lonely, frustrating or sad.

All these feelings are normal. Everyone has ups and downs. Bad days usually pass.

But sometimes, you might need extra help to feel better again. That's where this guide comes in.

It's a straight-talking, tell-it-how-it-is, starter guide to mental wellbeing. What it is, how you can take care of it and how to find help.

Toss it in your bag or pocket, and grab it when you feel lost or alone. Scribble your own notes or pass it on to a friend.



TODAY, I FEEL ...

IF YOU'RE FEELING DOWN OR OVERWHELMED ... REMEMBER, THESE DAYS AND THESE FEELINGS ***WILL*** PASS. ON YOUR OWN, OR WITH A LITTLE HELP, YOU'LL BEGIN TO FEEL BETTER.



Your feelings can change. And so can your mental health.

We all have mental health, just like we have physical health. It's part of who we are.

And it affects our feelings, thoughts and actions.

Our mental health also impacts how we make decisions, handle stress and cope with challenges.

ALL KINDS OF THINGS CAN AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ...

- Problems with friends or family
- Problems with money
- Problems at school or work
- Not getting enough sleep
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Losing someone you love

Life isn't perfect for anyone.

Everyone faces difficult and stressful situations that can leave us feeling down.

But most of the time, these feelings are temporary.

If these feelings last longer and start to affect your daily life, it could be time to check in with someone.

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You might also think about hurting yourself or have thoughts about suicide.

This is a serious sign that things are not ok.

IT'S TIME TO GET HELP. TELL SOMEONE.

Speak to your family, teacher or doctor.

These people can also help:

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 E Headspace headspace.org.au/eheadspace Lifeline 13 11 44 Your Local Mental Health Team 1300 64 22 55

> SEEKING SUPPORT HELPS. THINGS **CAN** CHANGE.

SOME OF THE THINGS YOU MIGHT FEEL:

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worryied a lot
tired or like it's hard to fall asleep
restless and on edge
no interest in things you used to enjoy
like you don't want to hang out with your friends
like being left alone
not hungry or eating a lot more
spaced out and forgetful
sad and crying all the time
worthless and without confidence
like life is meaningless
no feelings at all



Even if you're not sure what to say, it's important to say something.

It can be scary to share what you're thinking.

Remember, many people struggle with their feelings. You're not the only one.

But you can feel better. The first step is to ask for help.

Find somebody you trust. They don't need to solve anything. They just need to be a good listener.

Starting a conversation might feel awkward or uncomfortable. But talking openly can be a huge relief.

"I need your help. I think I might be …"

"I want to share something but it's hard to find the words. Will you listen and not judge?"

"I know you've been busy lately but can we spend some time alone to talk about something?"

IF STARTING A CONVERSATION SEEMS TOO HARD, IT MIGHT BE EASIER TO SEND A TEXT OR MESSAGE.

PEOPLE I CAN TALK TO:

SOME WORDS TO START A CONVERSATION:

"I haven't been feeling myself lately. Can I talk to you about it?"

"I don't know how to talk to you about this. Can you just listen?"

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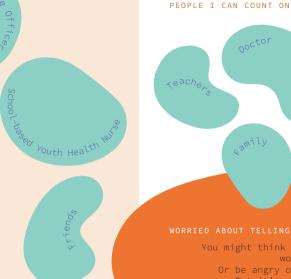
Build your team.

There are people who are ready to support you. It's ok to ask for help. And accept it.

You might already know some of your support team. Friends. Family. A teacher, guidance counsellor or youth worker.

They can listen and help you work out what to do next.

You might also need mental health experts on your support team. Together, they'll provide the right advice, strategies and treatment.



You might think your mum or dad won't understand. Or be angry or disappointed. But it's ok to be honest.







1.

DECIDE WHO TO TALK TO FIRST, THEN TELL THAT PERSON HOW YOU'RE FEELING.

2.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR DOCTOR. THEY CAN HELP YOU DECIDE WHETHER IT'S TIME TO TALK TO A MENTAL HEALTH EXPERT.

3.

IF YOU'RE REFERRED TO AN EXPERT, YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT IS A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER. IF YOU DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE TALKING TO THEM, JUST ASK TO BE REFERRED TO SOMEONE ELSE.

4.

KEEP ATTENDING APPOINTMENTS WITH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS. FOR AS LONG AS THEY RECOMMEND.

Good mental health can help you cope with tough times and the struggles of everyday life.

> And you can build it, one step at a time.

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Healthy habits for good mental health.

Even when life feels out of control, there are things you can do to take care of your mental health.

Everyone is different. Finding your own coping strategies will help you handle tough times in the future.

You can look after yourself with:

Sleep routines Stress management Movement and exercise Nutrition Mindfulness

Read on to find out how



Get moving

Yes, exercise keeps you fit and healthy.

But you know it also boosts your energy and releases endorphins. This helps you feel better. You could be surprised by how much.

When you're feeling low, it's hard to be motivated. And exercise might not seem like a priority.

If you're time-poor or finding it hard to get started, try giving yourself a small goal. Even a five-minute walk in the fresh air can lift your mood.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Set a goal that's easily achieved. You'll feel more confident.

Over time, you can aim for more.

THINK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN GET ACTI MOST DAYS.

THINK ABOUT HOW AND AIM TO MOVE YOU CAN GET ACTIVE FOR AT LEAST 30 MOST DAYS. MINUTES.

WHAT GETS ME MOVING? WHAT DO I ENJOY?

Wal	king
	ing
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	teboarding
ВМХ	
Dan	cing
	k climbing
	mming
	fing
Foo	ty ty
Soc	cer and a second s
Ten	nis
Bas	ketball
Wei	ghts
Pil	ates
Yog	a
Boo	tcamp
Box	ing

Think about whether you like exercising alone or with friends. This will help you stick with it.

Fuel your body right

Maybe you grab the easiest thing to eat? Or forget to eat at all?

A healthy diet can help you feel more energetic and clear-headed.

And we all know how important it is to drink water. When you get dehydrated, you can feel tired and get headaches.



THINK TWICE ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

They might seem like the answer, but could actually make you feel worse. Alcohol and many other drugs are depressants. They might provide an escape for a few hours, but later, you can feel even lower than before.

With enough sleep, it's easier to face the day.

If you're not getting enough sleep, you'll probably feel irritable and low in energy. It can be hard to concentrate and you're likely to forget things. When you sleep well, big problems can become easier to manage. It's easier to find the solution to a problem.

IF YOU'RE FINDING IT HARD TO FALL ASLEEP, OR STAY ASLEEP, YOU CAN:

Create a routine.

Set your alarm to wake up at the same time every morning. And go to bed at the same time every night.

Switch off the screens.

Avoid your phone, laptop or TV for at least 30 minutes before bedtime. The light can make your brain think it's daytime still.

Say no to naps.

Daytime napping can make it harder to fall asleep at night.

Relax your mind.

Soft music, deep breathing and meditation can help calm the mind.

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Set your imagination to work.

Imagine making something, or going somewhere, to distract yourself from worries.

Track your thoughts

Many people experience patterns in how they feel. Particular situations trigger similar thoughts or feelings.

You can identify these thoughts and patterns, which will help you learn to manage them.

TRY WRITING THEM DOWN

When you see your thoughts in writing, it's easier to examine them. And decide whether those thoughts are actually right or reasonable.

ASK YOURSELF:

Is that actually true? Is there any other way to look at this? Is there anything good about the situation? How could I solve the problem or make it better?

You could also write down what makes you happy or things you enjoy doing. If you're feeling down, reading your list might help you feel better.

Calm y<mark>our mind</mark>

You can train your brain to be more mindful. This means focusing on the present moment, which helps you relax and concentrate.

FOCUS ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR BODY RIGHT NOW.

What can you hear, feel or smell?	
Are you hot or cold?	
Think about your breathing.	
Just observe it all and let it be.	

Practice being mindful every day, even if it's just for a few minutes. When you're feeling down, stressed or overwhelmed, you'll find it easier to use mindfulness to feel calmer.



REACH OUT. THERE IS HELP. AND YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

Stay connected

Catching up with friends and family might feel too hard. But it's important to try and stay in touch.

Keep it low-key if you like. Get a burger, see a movie, go shopping or take a drive.

Talk about what's on your mind or just hang out. Either way, you're probably going to feel better later.

APPS

Check-in - Beyond Blue

Worried about a friend? This app makes it easy to know exactly what to say.

Smiling mind

Meditation for young people. Use mindfulness to help your thoughts become more clear and calm.

Calm Harm

This app is designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm.

Clear Fear

This app helps young people manage their anxiety.

PEOPLE TO TALK TO

Kids Helpline

1800 55 1800

Suicide Call Back Service

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

1300 659 467

Your Local Mental Health Team

(24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

1300 642 255

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ONLINE INFO

Lifeline www.lifeline.org.au

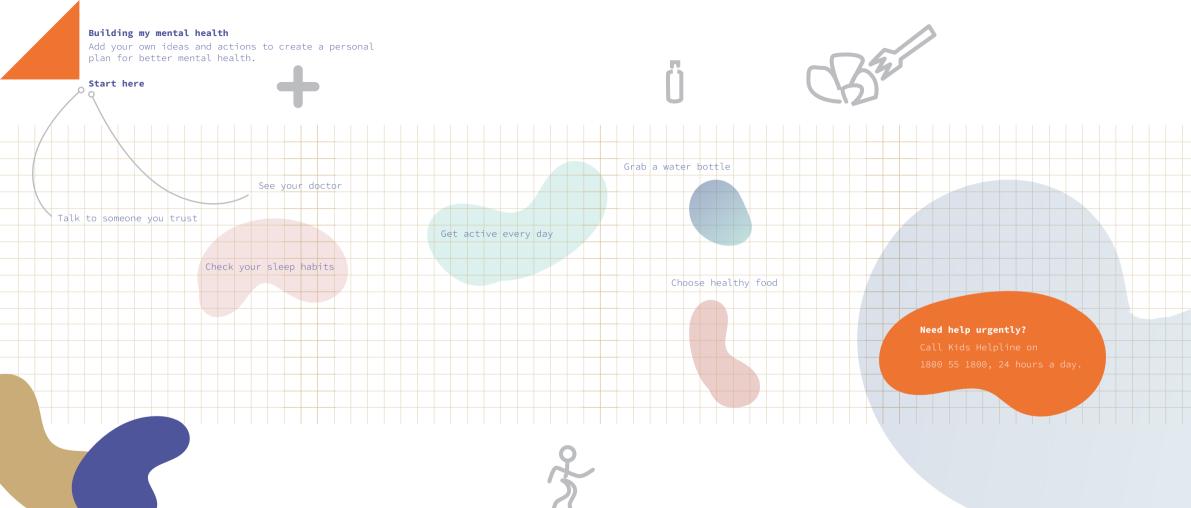
Beyond Blue
www.beyondblue.org.au

Youth Beyond Blue
www.youthbeyondblue.com

Headspace www.headspace.org.au

ReachOut
www.au.reachout.com

Brave www.brave-online.com



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A community resource provided by Federal Member for Wide Bay Llew O'Brien 319 Kent Street Maryborough 4650

IMES IT CAN BE HARD TO FIND ISE OF HOPE.

If you're struggling to cope or thinking about suicide, support is available.

You don't need to face your troubles alone.

Call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800, 24 hours a day.

