

*Eltham Electorate Youth Council*

# YOUTH MENTAL WELLBEING GUIDE

*A resource tailored to support young people  
in our community.*

*This booklet has been written and designed by the  
Eltham Electorate Youth Council.*



**Vicki Ward MP**  
STATE LABOR MEMBER FOR **ELTHAM**

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*Hello reader!*

*I'm Jerry Healthy Brain, your trusty companion on this adventure called life.*

*Together, we will embark on a journey to maintain a sharp and healthy mind.*

*Whenever you find yourself in a slump, just think of me and remember: your mind is a garden, cultivate positivity, and let the flowers of joy bloom.*

*Please note, this booklet provides general mental health advice sourced from Victorian Government websites, including Better Health Vic, Vic Health, Beyond Blue, Lifeline, and Relationships Victoria. If you are struggling, please seek professional help.*

*Let's dive into the world self-care tips and tricks!*

# Welcome Message from Vicki Ward MP

*State Member for Eltham*

*Minister for Prevention of Family Violence*

*Minister for Employment*



Young people bring strength, energy, and optimism to our communities and it is crucial that we prioritise their mental health and wellbeing. It is essential that we support young individuals to gain knowledge and experience, empowering their freedom of choice about their own paths; in education, work, leisure, or advocacy.

So we have created this Youth Mental Wellbeing Guide, a project driven by the incredible efforts of the Eltham Electorate Youth Council. Their dedication and passion for creating a resource that will support their peers in navigating the complexities of mental health is truly remarkable. This booklet is a testament to many months of research, collaboration, and commitment to shaping a future where mental health is a priority for all.

I want to congratulate my Youth Council for their outstanding work. Their contributions will undoubtedly make a difference in the lives of many young people, providing them with the tools and support they need to thrive now, and in the future.

# What is Mental Health?

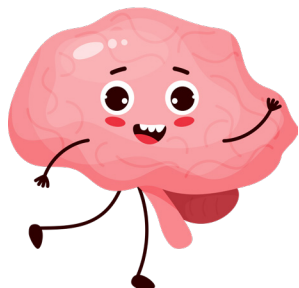
*Mental Health is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to manage the stresses of life, realise their abilities, and contribute to their community. If you have good mental health, you're likely to feel confident, hopeful and satisfied with life.*

**Here are some things that promote positive mental health:**

- Regular exercise
- A good sleep routine
- Avoiding unnecessary conflicts
- Relaxation and meditation techniques
- Positive relationships
- A nutritious and well balanced diet

**Improving mental wellbeing is similar to managing stress. Here are some things you can do when you feel overwhelmed:**

- Set short-term achievable goals
- Manage problems sooner rather than allowing them to build up
- Set boundaries around technology and social media use
- Speak regularly about how you are feeling to someone you trust like a therapist, counsellor, or psychologist



## MY REMINDERS WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH

- Use art, music or journaling to express myself
- Spend time in nature/ outdoors
- Write down my triggers/ what I find difficult
- Practice being kind to myself
- Limit screen time

# Sleep

*Sleep is essential for good mental health. Among other benefits, it can help with your mood, your memory and your ability to manage stress. Equally, poor sleep can have a negative impact.*

**Here are some tips for a good nights sleep:**

- Morning sunlight to set your body clock
- Limit naps
- Reduce stimulants like coffee or energy drinks before bed
- Make time to wind down
- Be consistent with your bed time
- Set a digital curfew

**Additionally, breathing exercises have been shown to have significant positive effects on mental health and wellbeing.**

**To try them out, scan the QR code below:**



# Exercise

*Exercise can boost your mood, concentration and alertness.*

**Here are some tips to get you started:**

- Choose an activity that you like, or have enjoyed in the past.
- Start small - build up your activity gradually
- Vary your activities so you don't get bored
- Write your exercise plan on your calendar, so it's a part of your schedule
- Exercise outdoors or with friends

## Workout Routine

### *Warm up*

- Arm circle (30 seconds forward, 30 seconds backward)
- Leg swing (10 reps each side)
- Quad stretch (15 seconds each side)

### *Circuit*

***Perform each exercise for 2 minutes with 1 minute of rest between each set, do it 3 times through***

- Jump squats - perform a squat and then spring upwards into a jump
- Bicycle crunches - lie on your back, bring your opposite elbow to your opposite knee in a bicycle motion
- High Knees - running in place while bringing your knees up towards your chest
- Tricep Dips - sitting on the ground, reach your hands behind you, bend your elbows and press up

### *Cooldown*

- Seated forward bend (10 reps)
- Knee to chest (10 reps each side)
- Shoulder stretch (15 second hold)

# YOUTH WORKOUT GUIDE

Having a workout log helps keep you accountable and on track to achieve your fitness goals. Here you can log the amount of reps you achieve over 2 minutes in a 3 week period to track your improvement.

## WEEK 1

Set a timer for 2 minutes with 1 minute of rest between each set and do the exercises 3 times.

Exercises	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Jump Squats			
Bicycle Crunches			
High Knees			
Tricep Dips			
Total			

## WEEK 2

Exercises	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Jump Squats			
Bicycle Crunches			
High Knees			
Tricep Dips			
Total			

## WEEK 3

Exercises	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Jump Squats			
Bicycle Crunches			
High Knees			
Tricep Dips			
Total			

# Nutrition

*What you eat not only effects your physical health, but has a major impact on your mental wellbeing. Having a varied healthy diet improves your health and can boost your mood.*

**Here are some tips for a healthy diet:**

**Have plenty of:**

- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Legumes (such as lentils, peas, chickpeas, tofu and beans)
- Wholegrain foods (such as breads, brown rice, quinoa, and couscous)

**Include:**

- Lean meats (such as beef, lamb and pork)
- Fish
- Poultry
- Eggs
- Low or reduced-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese

**Vegetarian and Vegan diets:**

- Consume a wide variety of plant foods so that your energy needs are met
- Be aware of which vitamins and nutrients come from animal sources and seek to get those nutrients through the alternatives you choose.

**Limit:**

- Foods high in saturated fat (such as biscuits, cakes, fried foods, potato chips and other savoury snacks)
- Goods and drinks containing added sugars (such as soft drinks, cordials and energy drinks)

*For more information on nutrition, scan here*





# Greek Salad

Ready in: 20 minutes | Serves: 6

## Ingredients

- 6 ripe tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cucumbers, chopped
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 1 red capsicum, chopped
- 200g Greek olives
- 220g feta, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 125ml (1/2 cup) olive oil
- 60ml (1/4 cup) white vinegar



I like to think I'm quite the cook, so here's a quick and easy lunch recipe courtesy of Banyule Youth!

## Instructions

- Gather all your ingredients and chop up
- Combine tomato, cucumber, onion, olives and feta in a salad bowl
- Sprinkle with oregano and salt
- Whisk together oil and vinegar - this is your dressing
- Drizzle the salad with the dressing and toss together with the oil to combine and serve

## Optional

- Add chicken for extra protein
- Remove feta and add tofu to make it vegan



Scan here for more recipes



# Getting a Mental Health Plan

*Under Medicare, you can receive 10 free individual counselling/ psychology sessions per calendar year and 10 free group therapy sessions in a calendar year together with your GP.*

**Here is how you can access the sessions:**

- Schedule an extended/double appointment with your GP
- Explain what you're experiencing to your GP
- Create a mental health treatment plan
- Your GP will refer you to a mental health professional
- Schedule your appointment with the mental health practitioner

*Your mental health treatment plan will have goals agreed to by you and your doctor.*

**It will also have:**

- Treatment options
- Support services available

*Scan the QR code for more on  
Mental Health Treatment Plans*



# Anxiety

*Anxiety is more than just feeling stressed or worried. Stress and anxious feelings are a common response when we feel under pressure. Anxiety is a serious condition that makes it hard for a person to function with daily life.*

**Here are some anxiety management strategies from Lifeline:**

- Slow breathing
- Stay in the present moment
- Challenge yourself to talk
- Be kind to yourself
- Plan worry time – set aside 10 minutes each day to think about your anxieties and write them down in a constructive way

*A healthy lifestyle can help reduce anxiety and improve your overall wellbeing.*

**Healthy habits include:**

- Keeping active
- Eating well
- Spending time outdoors in nature
- Spending time with family and friends
- Activities you enjoy



Sometimes when I'm anxious a quick walk or any form of exercise can release endorphins, which help improve my mood and reduce anxiety

# Healthy Relationships

*Everyone deserves to be safe, equal and respected. Family violence and violence against women continues to exist across Victoria. This violence is driven by culture that allows it to happen. We all have a role to play in ending gender based violence.*

**Here are some actions you can take to stop violence and encourage healthy behaviour:**

- Not laughing at sexist jokes
- Supporting and believing victims when they speak up
- Men and women sharing independence and decision making
- Workplace policies that encourage women from all backgrounds into leadership
- Men and women sharing decisions about household finances
- Challenging outdated and harmful gender stereotypes and roles
- Support men and boys to develop healthy masculinities and positive, supportive relationships
- Teaching boys that it's ok to express their emotions safely, including sadness

*Source information from*



# Boundaries

*Setting boundaries is an important component to healthy, balanced relationships. It is also a crucial part of maintaining your identity, mental health, and physical wellbeing.*

## Healthy boundaries:

- Encourage autonomy and reduce co-dependent habits
- Set expectations when interacting with others
- Give you a sense of empowerment and self-respect
- Ensure your physical and emotional comfort
- Clarify individual responsibilities in a relationship
- Separate your wants, needs, thoughts, and feelings from those of others

## Helpful phrases for setting boundaries:

- 'No, thank you.'
- 'At the moment, I don't have capacity for that.'
- 'I won't be attending.'
- 'That's not going to work for me.'
- 'Could you explain what you mean by that?'
- 'I don't think it's helpful for us to talk about this right now.'
- 'Let's take a break and come back to this conversation in a few hours.'
- 'Please lower your voice.'
- 'Please let me finish what I'm saying.'
- 'I'm not comfortable discussing that.'
- 'I'm going to take a break and go out for half an hour because I have a boundary around name calling. We can talk about this more when I get back if you're open to that and you don't call me names.'

*Scan the QR code for more information*



# Communication

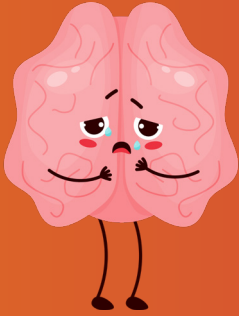
*Communication ensures you avoid misunderstandings that may cause hurt, anger, resentment or confusion.*

**When you're communicating, try to:**

- Set aside time to talk without interruption from other people or distractions
- Think about what you want to say
- Be clear about what you want to communicate
- Make your message clear
- Talk about what is happening and how it affects you
- Talk about what you want, need and feel - use 'I' statements such as 'I need', 'I want' and 'I feel'
- Accept responsibility for your own feelings
- Listen. Put aside your own thoughts for the time being and try to understand their intentions, feelings, needs and wants (this is called empathy)
- Share positive feelings, such as what you appreciate and admire about them, and how important they are to you
- Be aware of your tone of voice
- Remember you don't have to be right all the time
- Be willing to admit if you were wrong and apologise

*Learn more about communication*





Self-reflection has helped me to gain insight into my feelings. Here are some journalling prompts provided by Relationships Victoria.

Scan the QR Code for more prompts!



*Where am I happiest or most content?*

*What activities give me fulfilment?*

*How can I add more of these in my life?*

*Do I have any habits that I would like to let go of or change?*

*What could I do differently that would better serve me and those around me?*

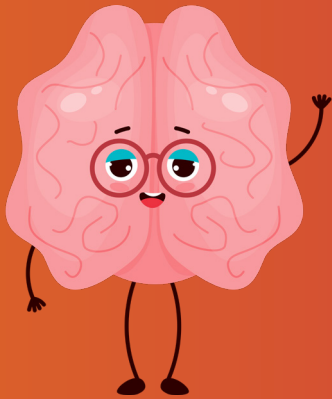
# Resource List

Organisation	Description	Phone
Beyond Blue	24/7 qualified support for you or someone else	1300 224 636
Lifeline	Free 24-hour telephone crisis support service	13 11 14
MindSpot	Free national online mental health clinic	1800 614 434
Head to Health	Digital mental health services, information, and support	1800 595 21
Kids Helpline	Free and confidential 24/7 online and phone counselling for young people	1800 551 800
Headspace	Early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds	1800 650 890
1800 Respect	Confidential support for people impacted by domestic, family or sexual violence	1800 737 732
Relationships Victoria	Family and relationship support for all members of the community	1300 364 277
PACFA	Find a therapist by proximity to you, languages spoken, or are an NDIS provider	9046 2270
Mensline Australia	Support for men with concerns about mental health, anger management, family violence and wellbeing.	1300 789 978
Family Relationship Advice	Help for families affected by relationship or separation issues	1800 050 321
The Orange Door	Support for family violence victims or people who need support with the care and wellbeing of children	1800 319 355
Safe Steps	Victoria's only 24/7 domestic and family violence crisis response centre	1800 015 188



Organisation	Description	Phone
SHARC	Provides family drug and gambling help	1300 660 068
Direct Line	Confidential counselling for all people affected by drug or alcohol	1800 888 236
13 Yarn	National crisis support line for mob who are having difficulty coping	13 92 76
Djirra	Support for Aboriginal people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence	1800 105 303
QLife	Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex communities	1800 184 527
Rainbow Door	Free helpline for LGBTIQ+	1800 729 367
Charlee	A suicide prevention hub made by LGBTIQ+ people who have thought about suicide	Online Resource





*Thanks for being with me on this journey of self help tips and tricks!*

*Although it's over, please don't forget all the lessons we have learnt together, and always remember that by facing our challenges, we grow stronger, wiser and more compassionate.*

# Youth Council Acknowledgment

As we reach the end of our journey in creating the Mental Health Resource Booklet, we would like to express our thanks to everyone who has contributed to this important project.

Working together as a Youth Council has been an incredibly rewarding experience. We have had the opportunity to learn about the various facets of youth mental health, from understanding the challenges faced by our peers to exploring effective strategies across advocacy, healthy relationships, sleep, nutrition and exercise. This project has not only deepened our knowledge, but highlighted the important role that young people play in shaping our future.

A special thank you goes out to Vicki Ward, whose unwavering dedication and passion for the Eltham Electorate has inspired us throughout this process. Your commitment to improving the lives of individuals in our community has been a guiding light for our council. We are grateful for your support and the incredible work you do.

Together, we hope this booklet will empower our peers and foster a culture of understanding and support around mental health.



## **CREATED ON WURRUNDJERI LAND**

We recognise the historic and cultural significance of Australia's Indigenous history and its role in Australia's identity.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land this book was created on, the Wurrundjeri people, and pay respect to Elders past and present.

