PUSH FOR BETTER WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

The Push-Up Challenge is getting Australians active, raising awareness of mental health, fostering social connection and promoting health and wellbeing.

All workplaces can play a role in encouraging conversations about mental health and wellbeing. The following conversation starters will help managers, supervisors or health and wellbeing professionals initiate conversations about mental health during The Push-Up Challenge.

Note: discussion points can be covered all together as a 'one-off' or separated into multiple sessions (eg. weekly).

Get the conversation started. Ask colleagues:

What do you think when you hear the words "mental health"?

Notes for facilitator:
- Responses are often mental illness focused (eg. depression, anxiety).
- Some people may suggest words associated with strong mental health and wellbeing such as 'happy' or 'resilient'
- Encourage team to group responses into mental wellbeing and mental health challenges

Discussion Points

There is no wellbeing without mental wellbeing.
Mental wellbeing is much more than merely the absence of mental illness. Good mental health is a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community[1].

Unfortunately, not all of us enjoy good mental health all of the time.
One in five Australian adults experiences a mental disorder each year[2]. This equates to 4.3 million Australians living with a mental illness.

Mental illness does not discriminate.
It doesn't matter your gender, age, ethnicity or level of success – mental illness can affect anyone[3].

The sooner you seek help, the sooner you can recover.
Less than half (47.7%) of Australians with a mental illness saw a health professional for their mental health[4]. The good news is there are plenty of effective treatments for mental health conditions. GPs are often the best starting point for someone seeking professional help.

Notes for facilitator:
- If your workplace has an EAP provider, make contact details available.

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THE PUSH-UP CHALLENGE

We can all do things to boost our mental health.

Just like we try our best to look after our physical health, there are lots of things we can do to look after our mental health. Deliberately taking action to look after your mental health and wellbeing will help you cope better when stressful events happen, and you will enjoy a more meaningful and positive life.

Keep the conversation going and ask colleagues:

What do you do to look after your mental health? Or perhaps, what would you like to do more of?

Take time to look after your mental health every day:

- Connect with people
- Be active
- Eat well
- Spend time in nature
- Take up a hobby or a cause
- Get enough sleep
- Limit alcohol & other drugs
- Learn new coping skills

Other useful services:

- **Lifeline -** Provides 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services for all Australians. Offering connection, compassion and hope, their vision is for Australia to be free of suicide. **Call 13 11 14.**
- **headspace -** Provides early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds. **headspace.org.au**
- **RUOk? -** Provides tips on how to have meaningful conversations with friends, family and co-workers.
- **Mental Health First Aid Australia (MHFA) -** Teaches people the skills to help someone who they're concerned about.
- **Relationships Australia -** Provides relationship support services for individuals, families and communities, aiming to help people achieve more positive and respectful relationships. **Call 1300 364 277.**

References:

1. World Health Organisation (WHO) 2018, Mental Health, Strengthening our Response, Fact Sheet.
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2022 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing.
3. American Psychiatric Association (APA) 2018 What is Mental Fitness?
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2022 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing.

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