World Mental Health Day 10/10

We are aware of the impact of the Covid pandemic on both our physical, social

and financial positions – however we are also discovering significant impacts on

our mental wellbeing. October is designated Mental Health Month and the 10th of October is World Mental Health Day. This is a wonderful invitation to stop and reflect on our own personal mental wellbeing, the wellbeing of our family members and friends, and our community at large.

Many people are struggling to see the light at the end of the lockdown: we remember particularly the people of NZ, NSW and Victoria who have been impacted by the Delta variant most recently. Children miss their friends, struggle to be educated on a screen multiple hours per day, parents juggle work and home educating, people living alone face loneliness and isolation. Our lives have most definitely been disrupted and there is not a lot of promise about the way forward.

Caring compassionately for each other through this time is essential. If you are worried about someone, reach out and ask if they are ok. Listen compassionately to what they share. Ask how you can help. Offer to accompany them to see a professional support, like a doctor. Know that if they are having trouble with their mental health, they can’t just “snap out of it”. Be encouraging, accept them as they are and keep talking to them.

Mental Health Month is also a good time to think through how our church communities can support and care for people who are struggling with mental health concerns. A free resource pack has been released by the ***Mental Health and Pastoral Care Institute in Australia*** with a number of helpful tools including church announcements, Psalms of lament and comfort to read during services, prayers and videos. There is also a list of 10 TIPS for supporting someone with mental health challenges. These could be printed out and distributed at church or somewhere accessible. You can access these resources at <http://www.mentalhealthinstitute.org.au/resources/1010-videos>.

When we speak freely and graciously about the struggles of mental illness, and the ways we can support positive mental wellbeing, we reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and demonstrate to people in our community that we are a safe place to come as you are, and be supported through hard times. People experiencing mental illness need compassionate welcome, companionship for the journey, access to treatment, therapy and support. The church can be an active part of accompanying people in hard times, advocating for treatment services and praying for healing and restoration for sufferers.

If you would like assistance to plan a World Mental Health Day celebration in your church community, please contact Anna Kroehn, the Project Officer for Christian Care Sunday, [anna.kroehn@lca.org.au](mailto:anna.kroehn@lca.org.au).

More mental health resources for churches:

A UK resource designed to help the church support those with mental health issues: <http://www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/>

World Mental Health Day Australian Government Campaign <https://lookafteryourmentalhealthaustralia.org.au/>

Look After Your Mental Health Australia YouTube video for Oct 10 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtSRplQfmjo&t=54s>

NZ resources for Mental Health Awareness Week 27 Sept- 3 Oct <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/our-campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/mental-health-awareness-week-resources>

Social Message on Mental Illness from the ELCA: <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Mental-Illness>

Logo

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceMessages of Hope, by Lutheran Media:

Resources on wellbeing: <https://www.messagesofhope.org.au/well-being/>

Resources on stress: <http://www.messagesofhope.org.au/stress/>

A 10 minute program on Surviving School at Home: <https://www.messagesofhope.org.au/surviving-school-at-home/>

An 11 minute program on Surviving Lockdown: <https://www.messagesofhope.org.au/surviving-lockdown/>

Australian Support Services worth promoting:

If you or someone you care for is in need of immediate support you can contact the below National Crisis Counselling Services.

* Lifeline 13 11 14 - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
* Lifeline Text 0477 13 11 14 – 6pm to midnight (AEDT), 7 nights a week
* Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636 - www.beyondblue.org.au (link is external)
* Butterfly Foundation National Helpline 1800 334 673
* Carer Support 1800 242 636 or 1300 554 660
* SANE Australia Helpline 1800 187 263
* Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467
* Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 [www.kidshelpline.com.au(link is external)](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/)
* MensLine Australia 1300 789 978
* QLife 1800 184 527
* Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling 1800 011 046

### For more information in Australia:

* Head to Health [www.headtohealth.gov.au](http://www.headtohealth.gov.au  )
* Black Dog [www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au  )
* Headspace [www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au    )
* R U OK?  www.ruok.org.au
* ReachOut www.au.reachout.com
* Embrace Multicultural Mental Health [www.embracementalhealth.org.au](http://www.embracementalhealth.org.au/)

Support Services in New Zealand: from <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/>

### National helplines

Need to talk? Free call or text [**1737**](https://1737.org.nz/) any time for support from a trained counsellor.  
  
[**Lifeline**](https://www.lifeline.org.nz/) – 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE) or free text 4357 (HELP).  
  
[**Suicide Crisis Helpline**](https://www.lifeline.org.nz/services/suicide-crisis-helpline) – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO).  
  
[**Healthline**](https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/services-and-support/health-care-services/healthline) – 0800 611 116  
  
[**Samaritans**](http://samaritans.org.nz/) – 0800 726 666

### Depression-specific helplines

[**Depression Helpline**](https://depression.org.nz/) – 0800 111 757 or free text 4202 (to talk to a trained counsellor about how you are feeling or to ask any questions).  
  
[**www.depression.org.nz**](https://depression.org.nz/)– includes The Journal online help service.  
  
[**SPARX.org.nz**](https://www.sparx.org.nz/) –  online e-therapy tool provided by the University of Auckland that helps young people learn skills to deal with feeling down, depressed or stressed.

### Sexuality or gender identity helpline

[**OUTLine NZ**](http://www.outline.org.nz/) – 0800 688 5463 (OUTLINE) provides confidential telephone support.

### Helplines for children and young people

[**Youthline**](https://www.youthline.co.nz/) – 0800 376 633, free text 234 or email [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz) or online chat.  
  
[**thelowdown.co.nz**](https://thelowdown.co.nz/) – or email [team@thelowdown.co.nz](mailto:team@thelowdown.co.nz) or free text 5626.  
  
[**What's Up**](https://www.whatsup.co.nz/) – 0800 942 8787 (for 5–18 year olds). Phone counselling is available Monday to Friday, 12noon–11pm and weekends, 3pm–11pm. Online chat is available from 3pm–10pm 7 days a week, including all public holidays.

### Help for parents, family and friends

[**EDANZ**](https://www.ed.org.nz/) – improving outcomes for people with eating disorders and their families. Freephone 0800 2 EDANZ or 0800 233 269, or in Auckland 09 522 2679. Or email [info@ed.org.nz](mailto:info@ed.org.nz).  
  
[**Parent Help**](https://www.parenthelp.org.nz/) – 0800 568 856 for parents/whānau seeking support, advice and practical strategies on all parenting concerns. Anonymous, non-judgemental and confidential.  
  
[**Family Services 211 Helpline**](https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory/) – 0800 211 211 for help finding (and direct transfer to) community based health and social support services in your area.  
  
[**Skylight**](https://www.skylight.org.nz/)– 0800 299 100 for support through trauma, loss and grief; 9am–5pm weekdays.  
  
[**Yellow Brick Road**](https://yellowbrickroad.org.nz/%E2%80%93) – Supporting families towards mental wellbeing.