

2021-22 Federal Budget

Inclusions for Children (0-12 years) and families

The foundations for lifelong mental health and wellbeing are built during childhood. Children with good mental health and wellbeing are more likely to reach their full potential, have fulfilling relationships, and be able to adapt to and cope with adverse circumstances. The initiatives supported within the 2021-22 Budget will help to bring service options specifically for children and their families into community settings. By establishing a network of hubs, a new approach is being taken to bring into effect a more coordinated approach that is provided by multidisciplinary teams – across general practitioners, mental health professionals and allied health services. This will help improve service navigation, coordination of care, and quality of care.

We encourage you to read the full mental health and suicide prevention budget available on our website to appreciate the following information in context.

Key Budget initiatives for children (0-12 years) and families:

\$100.9 million towards supporting Australian children aged 0-12 years by increasing access to multidisciplinary mental health and wellbeing care for them and their families, strengthening support for parents and improving early intervention. This includes:

- \$54.2 million towards working with states and territories to create a network of up to 15 new Head to Health Kids mental health and wellbeing centres for children aged 0-12 years. These centres will provide multidisciplinary support for infants, children and their parents, and improve early intervention outcomes for children's mental health.
- \$42.3 million to enable access to parent education and support programs to build parenting strategies, and teach parents and carers how to identify and respond to problem behaviours.
- \$0.5 million to develop national guidelines to support states and territories to include social and emotional wellbeing indicators in early childhood health checks, so any emotional difficulties can be identified early and in a nationally consistent way.

Mental health challenges often begin during childhood.¹ An estimated 50% of adult mental illness begins before 14 years of age and poor mental health during childhood can lead to long term struggles.²



Some of key 2021-22 Budget initiatives for everyone:

\$117.2 million to establish a comprehensive evidence base to support real time monitoring and data collection for Australia's mental health and suicide prevention systems. This includes: enhancing national data systems and filling information gaps, monitoring population risk of suicide and self-harm, funding to enhance forecasting of population mental health need, and to develop a nationally agreed framework for mental health regional planning, developing a national evaluation strategy and evaluation fund, funding for a longitudinal child mental health and wellbeing study, and measuring, for the first time, the prevalence of mental health in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

\$58.8 million for growing and upskilling the mental health workforce, critical measures include:

- \$0.3 million to identify opportunities to boost the skills of those who work with children and families,
- \$11 million to boost the psychiatrist workforce by increasing the number of training places available, including in regional and remote areas,
- \$27.8 million to increase the number of nurses, psychologists and allied health practitioners working in mental health settings through 280 scholarships and 350 clinical placements,
- \$3.1 million to sponsor up to 390 peer workers to undertake vocational training,
- \$1 million to reduce the stigma associated with mental health among health practitioners, and promote mental health as a preferred career option,
- \$8.3 million to support greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the mental health workforce through additional mental health-specific scholarships and provide training to support healthcare workers to deliver culturally safe care,
- \$2.4 million to continue mental health training for practitioners working in aged care and support professional collaboration through the Mental Health Professionals' Network

National FREE 24/7 Crisis Services

[Lifeline](#) | 13 11 14

[Suicide Call Back Service](#) | 1300 659 467

[Kids Helpline](#) | 1800 55 1800

[Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service](#) | 1800 512 348

[Beyond Blue](#) | 1300 22 4636

<https://headtohealth.gov.au/>

¹ Kessler RC, Chiu WT, Demler O, Walters EE. Prevalence, severity, and comorbidity of 12-month DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*. 2005;62(6):617-27.

² Costello EJ, Maughan B. Annual research review: optimal outcomes of child and adolescent mental illness. *J Child Psychol Psychiatry*. 2015;56(3):324-41.



Australian Government

National Mental Health Commission