



Supporting your young person over the holidays

Information for parents and carers

Holidays can take students away from friends and their usual school supports.

Changes to routine can cause some young people to feel stressed, isolated and alone.

Being a supportive parent is especially important when it comes to a time of change in a young person's routine or life structure.

There are signs that may suggest things are not quite right with your young person and that you might need to talk to someone about what's going on. These include:

- Not enjoying or not wanting to be involved in things they would normally enjoy.
- Unusual sleeping or eating habits.
- Being easily irritable or angry with friends or family for no reason.
- Being involved in risky behaviour they would normally avoid.
- Feeling tense, restless, stressed or worried.
- Crying for no apparent reason, feeling sad or down for long periods of time.
- Having lots of negative thoughts.



headspace Wollongong will be closed from 12pm on Thursday 24 December and will reopen on Monday 4 January.

Turn over for some tips for getting through the holidays.



Tips to help you support your young person:

1. Recognise their distress or concerning behaviour
2. Ask them about it
3. Acknowledge their feelings
4. Get appropriate support
5. Check in a short time afterwards



It's helpful to ensure that your young person stays involved and remains active during the holidays. You can help by:

Maintaining a regular routine (getting up in the morning, eating three meals a day, etc)

Encouraging them to keep in contact with friends.

Involving them in decisions and give them responsibility at home (such as deciding what to eat for dinner and helping prepare it)

Encouraging them to get involved in activities or projects, and participating with them when you can.

Support Services

If you believe that a young person is at risk of harm, you should seek professional support from your GP, mental health service or emergency department, and keep the young person safe until help arrives.

KIDS HELP LINE: Free, confidential phone counselling (ages 5-25), open 24/7: **1800 55 1800**

LIFELINE: Free and confidential phone counselling (all ages), open 24/7: **13 11 14**

MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE: Information and referral to local services: **1800 011 511**

EHEADSPACE: Free online and telephone counselling (ages 12-25) from 9am-1am, 7 days a week: **eheadspace.org.au** or **1800 650 890**

YOUR DOCTOR (GP): Many doctors and medical centres are open over the holidays.

REACHOUT: For information about wellbeing: **reachout.com.au**

PARENTLINE: Free, confidential phone counselling, support and guidance for parents and carers of children. 8am-10pm, 7 days a week: **1300 30 1300**