

Building Healthy Environments - Men's Mental Health

This November, it's International Men's Day and Movember. Both occasions represent an important opportunity to promote and support the health and wellbeing of men and boys in our communities. Keep reading to learn how you can better support the men in your life.

WHY ARE EVENTS LIKE THIS IMPORTANT?

Ultimately, men are far less likely than women to seek help if they're feeling down. There are a variety of reasons for this, including:

1. Men aren't encouraged to tune into their sensitive side.
2. Men tend to brush off their problems.
3. Men face more obstacles that prevent them from opening up, like social stigmas.



As a result, suicide in males is incredibly high. According to the Australia Bureau of Statistics:

- The suicide rate for males increased between 2011 and 2020 from 16.2 to 18.6 deaths per 100,000, making it the leading cause of death for 15-44-year-olds.
- This statistic is worse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males, with suicide now the second leading cause of death overall. This compares to 10th for females.

HAVE YOU NOTICED SOMETHING DIFFERENT WITH SOMEONE YOU KNOW RECENTLY?

Rome wasn't built in a day, and, like the great Italian city, it's going to take time for the social stigma surrounding men's mental health to improve. Until then, it's important we look out for signs in our friends, family or co-workers that suggest they might be feeling low. If someone you know hasn't seemed themselves lately, ask yourself:

- Does he seem a bit more on edge than usual?
- Has he become quieter in a social situation or even in a group chat?
- Has he stopped wanting to come to social events altogether?
- Has he stopped turning up to sporting events or training?

If you feel like your male friend, family member or co-worker is showing any of these signs, then use **the ALEC model** to navigate a conversation with him:

ASK →

Start by mentioning the thing you've noticed that has caused concern e.g. "I've noticed you haven't been responding to my texts as you normally do. Are you okay?" Trust your instinct. Remember that "I'm fine" is a common response to this sort of question, so don't be afraid to ask twice or however long it takes to ensure support is received.

LISTEN →

Give your full attention to their answer. Don't feel under pressure to know how to help them immediately, just let them know that you're all ears. Follow up with more questioning, like: "That can't be easy. How long have you felt that way?"

ENCOURAGE ACTION →

Suggest some simple action that might improve the person's wellbeing. Is he getting enough sleep, exercising enough, or eating properly? Perhaps there could be someone else he could talk to? Whether that be another friend, family member or professional support, another confidant may be able to help. If you think the feelings are particularly dark, then recommend he contact a doctor or a mental health professional.



convergeinternational.com.au



1300 687 327

Converge
Care Anytime Anywhere

CHECK IN →

Ensure you catch up with him soon, in person if you can. If you can't meet face-to-face, then drop him a message to show that you care. You'll also then get an indication if he's feeling better and if he requires further support.

NEED SUPPORT?

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36

Open Arms - Veterans & Family Counselling:
1800 18 7263

Sane Australia: 1800 18 7263

Your Company's **EAP Provider Converge's** number is:
1300 687 327 or visit convergeinternational.com.au to
book an appointment with a mental health professional.



convergeinternational.com.au



1300 687 327

Converge
Care Anytime Anywhere