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National Youth Mental Health Foundation

# **Beyond Pathways: mental health informed support for young people entering work**

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# Acknowledgement of Country

headspace would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians.

We value their cultures, identities and continuing connection to country, waters, kin and community.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and are committed to making a positive contribution to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, by providing services that are welcoming, safe, culturally appropriate and inclusive.



# Today's session we will explore:

- How transition to work can affect mental health and wellbeing
- Strategies to prepare young people for this period of change
- Building confidence, self-advocacy and worker identity
- Where young people can access support before, during and after transition



# headspace National Youth Foundation



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# National youth mental health foundation



headspace provides information and services that support young Australians aged 12-25 as well as their family and friends to be mentally healthy and engaged in their communities.



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Centres**



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Online & Phone  
Support**



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Schools &  
Communities**

# career decision making

## Findings from a recent headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey:

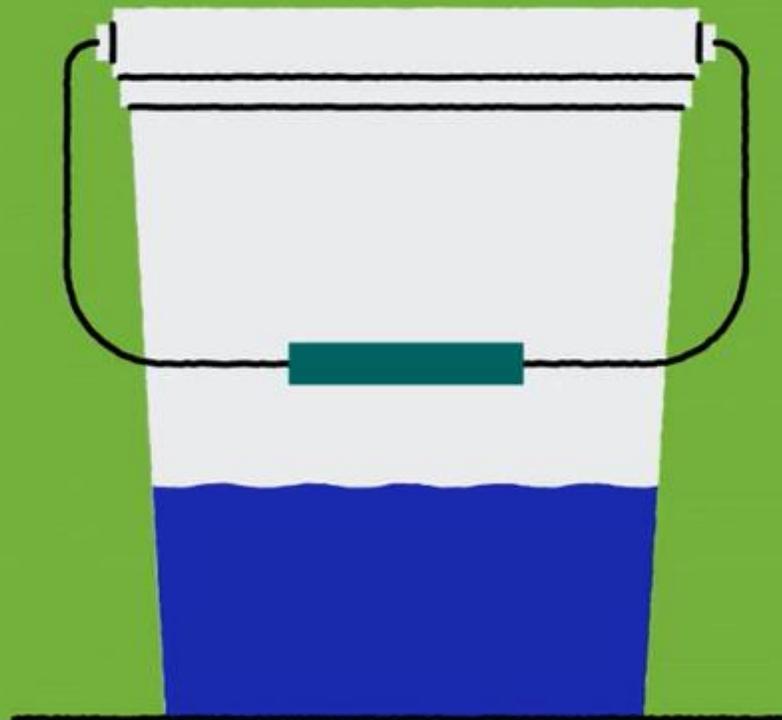
- More than 3000 young people surveyed
- 49% ranked cost of living in their top five concerns
- 42% said they felt hesitant to have children due to financial pressures
- Other major stressors:
  - Study stressors (38%)
  - Future job opportunities (34%)
  - Housing affordability (34%)



# looking for work can be tough



**stress**



# Mental health benefits of work and study for young people



# Strategies to prepare young people for this period of change

*Some ways you can support young people during change*

- ✓ Change is a normal part of a YP's life at school and home, and while it can affect learning, it does not have to.
- ✓ Encourage your YP to see change as an opportunity to grow, learn new skills, and step outside their comfort zone.
- ✓ Help them put things in perspective by reminding them of past challenges they have successfully managed.
- ✓ Reduce fear of the unknown by helping them gather information and prepare for what is ahead.
- ✓ Maintain consistent routines to provide stability and a sense of security during times of change.
- ✓ Encourage open conversations about their feelings and guide them toward trusted supports if they need extra help.
- ✓ Support them to take short mental or physical breaks to gain fresh perspective and recharge.
- ✓ Prioritise sleep, nutrition, and exercise to strengthen their ability to cope with change.



# Steps you can take

*Some ways you can support the work and study journeys of young people*

- ✓ Ask all young people about work and study
- ✓ Share the philosophy that working and studying is possible
- ✓ Share your stories of how work and study has been beneficial
- ✓ Embracing the 'having a go' attitude - acknowledging the hard work and rewards that follow.
- ✓ Promoting a culture of celebrating wins along the way - it's not all about getting to the end goal of employment.
- ✓ Explore headspace work and study services and resources on the headspace website.



# Work & Study action plan

## Work & Study action plan

Before completing this action plan, it could be helpful to spend some time reflecting on how you can use the things you are good at to work towards your work and study goals. It might also be helpful to have a chat about these things with someone you trust - this could be a friend, family member, vocational worker or mental health professional.

Begin by asking yourself or talk through the following questions with someone:

- What do I want out of a job or career?
- What are my values? What is important to me?
- What do I like to do?
- What are my strengths?

### 1 What is your work and/or study goal or, what would you like to achieve?

Think about where you want to be and the steps you'll need to take to get there. e.g. I want to learn how to write a resume, find an organisation and contact them for work experience opportunities, identify course options, create a study schedule etc.

### 2 What's working well now that can support you in achieving your goal?

Think about what you're already doing, the skills you could use and your interests. Perhaps you've already made steps towards your goal, e.g. contacted a business, did some work experience, or already have access to useful resources.

✓ Tick all suggestions that apply or add your own:

- |                                                                            |                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Time management and/or organisation                  | <input type="radio"/> Engaged with a Mentor for specific industry insights |
| <input type="radio"/> Communication/teamwork/collaboration                 | <input type="radio"/> Completed a short course to increase skills          |
| <input type="radio"/> Problem solving/attention to detail                  | <input type="radio"/> Something else                                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Volunteered to develop industry knowledge and skills |                                                                            |

### 3 What things could get in the way of achieving your goal and what are some potential solutions?

e.g. I need to be able to ask a lot of questions or get clear instructions, how can I express this to my future employer? Transport has been a barrier in the past - what transport options are available to me?

### 4 What are your go-to ways to maintain a healthy headspace while working towards your goal?

What has helped you manage or reduce stress in the past and what could you do now and in the future, once you have achieved your goal?

✓ Tick all that apply or add your own:

- |                                                                                   |                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Physical activity such as going to the gym, yoga, sport etc | <input type="radio"/> Spend time in nature                             |
| <input type="radio"/> Be creative through art, music or journaling                | <input type="radio"/> Connect with someone you love spending time with |
| <input type="radio"/> Something else                                              | <input type="radio"/> Read a book or do something quiet and relaxing   |

### 5 What are your next steps and who can support you with these?

What are some things (or even one thing) you can do to move towards your goal? e.g. I need to print out resumes, find a study schedule template, talk to my support person about this action plan, find a career mentor specific to my area of interest, talk to a headspace Work & Study Specialist etc.



**Ditch impossible expectations and keep working on you**

Get the tools you need to support your work and study goals.

 **headspace**  
work & study

# practical tips for young people: routine and goals



- **establish a balanced routine:** take one small job-hunting action each day, set aside time to get outside, engage in hobbies and ensure you're getting good rest.
- **set small goals:** while your overall aim may be to secure a job, breaking it down into smaller steps or setting SMART goals can make it easier and boost your mental health along the way. Teaching young people to take personal responsibility for the effort they put into and in doing their best.
- **keep track of your applications:** try using an excel sheet or a note taking application like notion to keep track of your applications

# 7 healthy tips

1. Get into life



2. Learn new skills for tough times



4. Get enough sleep



5. Stay active



3. Create connections



6. Eat well



7. Cut back on alcohol and other drugs



# Hear from the young people and vocational specialist on the benefits



# Integrated and collaborative

22-year-old trans man referred by a mental health clinician for employment support; had not completed Year 12.

Experienced stigma and discrimination in public and workplace settings, increasing anxiety and exacerbating Tourette's symptoms.

Support focused on job search skills, confidence building, skill development, and career goal setting, alongside collaborative care with clinician.

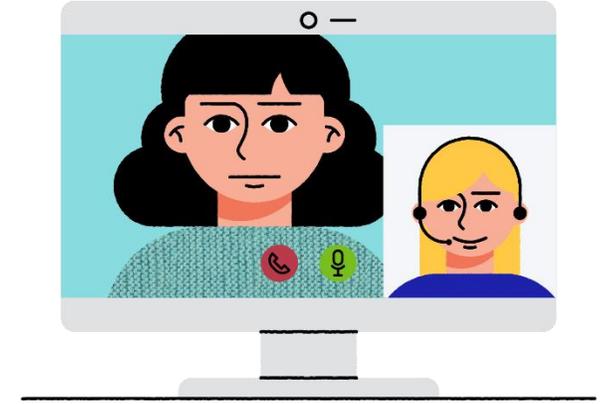
Secured casual cleaning employment offering flexibility for ongoing medical appointments.

As confidence increased, explored tertiary pathways, registered for the STAT test, and received an offer for a double degree.

# headspace Work & Study

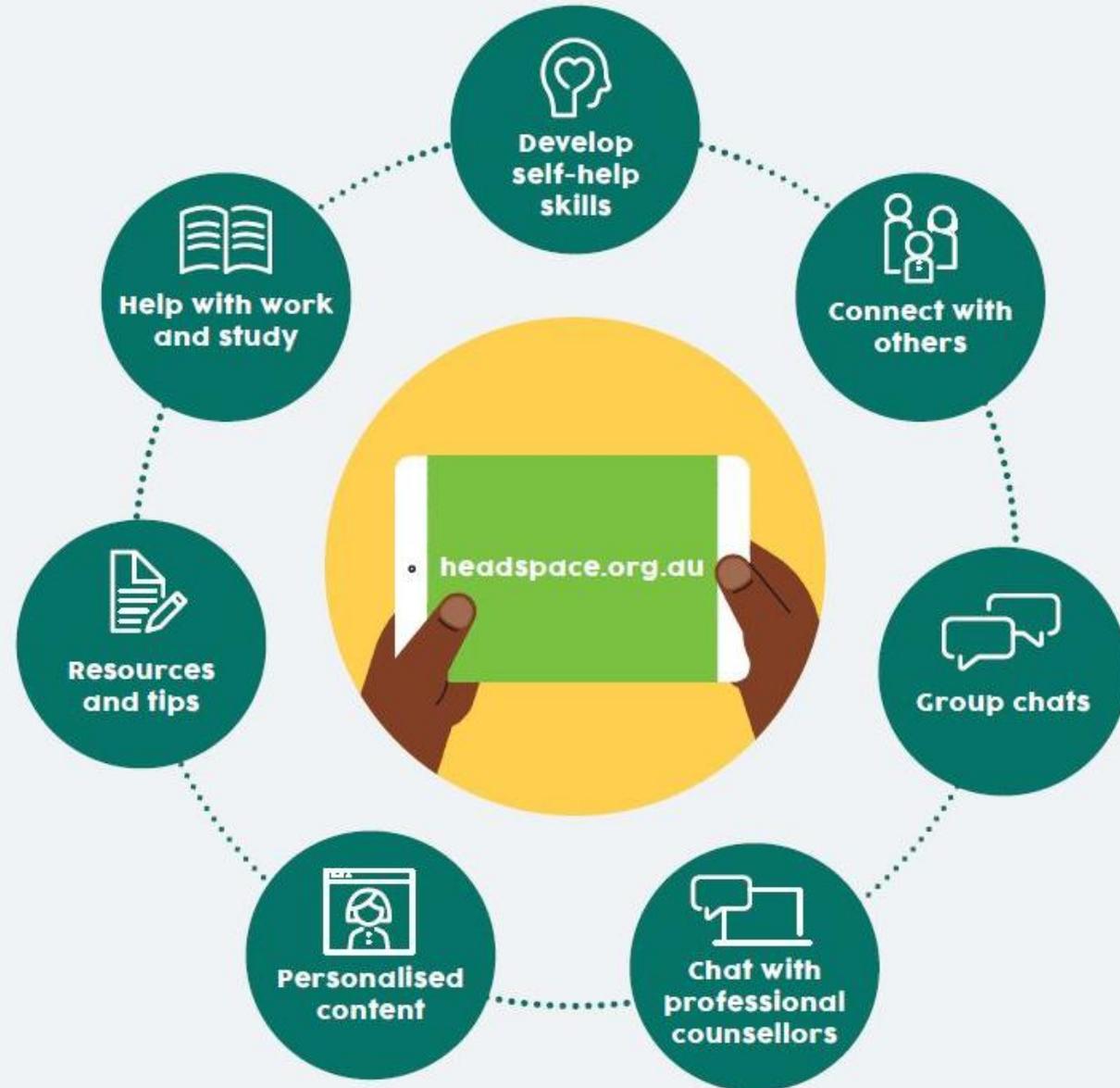


- One-on-one vocational support with a Work & Study Specialist for young people aged 15-25.
- Young people can connect via phone, webchat or video
- Integrated team of clinicians
- Collaborative care and ongoing support between a young person's centre and the service
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people can elect to work with our First Nations team



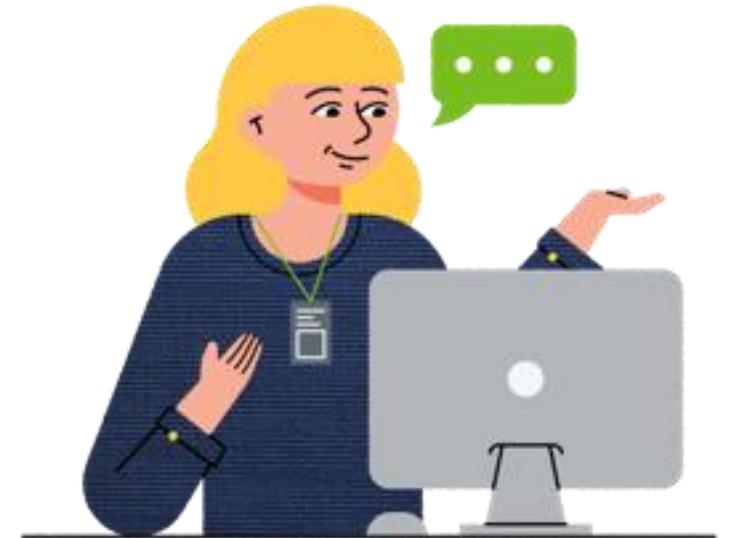
# headspace online & phone support

headspace has a range of ways to support young people online, just by visiting the headspace website and creating an account



# get Work & Study support

- **Through the website:**
- [headspace.org.au/services/work-and-study-support/](https://headspace.org.au/services/work-and-study-support/) to book directly
- **Call:**
- Toll free number staffed by Support Officers in Victorian working hours;  
1800 810 794



# Let's bust some myths



# Questions

