

# Wellbeing support for First Nations Communities

You are never alone.  
We are here to help.



# Walking together

## Acknowledgement of Country

As an organisation that supports people from across Australia, Beyond Blue acknowledges First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present.

At Beyond Blue we use the term First Nations Peoples to show respect for the many different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations across Australia.

## Wellbeing for First Nations Communities

For more than 65,000 years, First Nations Peoples have stayed strong by staying connected to Country, culture and community. These oldest living cultures show how caring for each other helps keep mob strong and well.

At Beyond Blue, we recognise the impact that colonisation has had and continues to have, and the intergenerational trauma, grief and loss that First Nations People have carried, and continue to carry.

There's still a lot to do to tackle depression, anxiety and suicide in First Nations communities.

We're here to walk alongside First Nations Peoples and organisations – listening, learning, and acting on what we learn to provide better support.



## Learn more about our work with First Nations Peoples and our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

 [beyondblue.org.au/about/first-nations-peoples](https://beyondblue.org.au/about/first-nations-peoples)

Artwork: 'Strength through Connection.'

About the artist: Kalara Gilbert is a Wiradjuri artist based in Canberra. Her colourful paintings pay homage to Country. Kalara is passionate about telling stories through painting and bringing awareness and understanding of First Nations Culture.



# Staying connected and strong

## Social and emotional wellbeing

For First Nations Peoples, wellbeing comes from strong connections to body, mind, spirit, culture, kin and Country. It's also shaped by social, historical, political and cultural influences.

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) model shows how these connections work

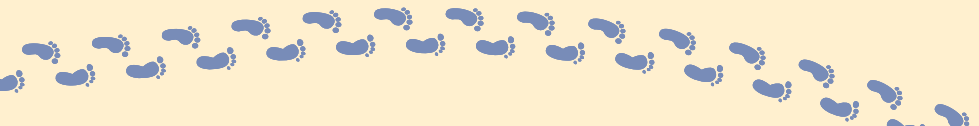
together and why caring for all parts of life matters.

First Nations cultures carry deep strengths in resilience and in connection to land, family, community, culture and spirit. These strengths are powerful sources of healing and wellbeing.



©Gee, G., Dudgeon, P., Schultz, C., Hart, A. & Kelly, K. (2013), *Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice* (p. 57).

Beyond Blue works with communities and First Nations-led services to honour these strengths and build support that feels safe and shaped around you. Together, we can help create a future where First Nations Peoples feel heard, supported and strong.



# Common worries and ways to face them

## Worry and hard times touch everyone

Life can bring some tough moments. It's normal to feel stressed out or sad sometimes but if those feelings stick around, it might be time to reach out.

### Feeling tired most days

- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Eating more or eating less
- Big changes in how you look
- Sadness or worry that stays

### Feeling lonely or shut off

- Hard to yarn with anyone
- Big changes in how you act
- Struggling with identity
- Feeling shame or weakness

### Family worries or tension

- Relationship stress or conflict
- Worrying about money
- Feeling unsafe
- Worrying about someone's safety

### Grief or loss

- Sorry Business or Sorry Times
- Trauma from past or childhood
- Intergenerational trauma
- Distress after racism or discrimination



Staying connected to mob and Country and using cultural healing ways can help you get through hard times.

**13Yarn** fact sheets can help you make sense of things and remind you how culture, Country and community can lift you up in tough times. They talk about depression and anxiety in mob, money worries, Sorry Business and more.

# Taking care of yourself and your mob

## Asking for help shows courage and care for yourself and your community

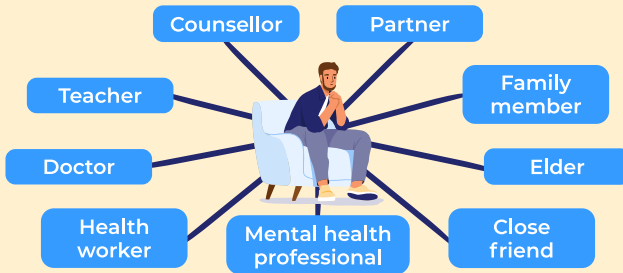
Experiences of racism or cultural disrespect can leave you feeling heavy and cut off from culture, kin or Country. Racism and cultural disrespect are never OK, and you're not expected to just push through.

It's not always easy to see when someone needs extra support – even when it's us. Life's pressures, like grief, stress or big changes, can build up. Opening up to someone you trust can help lighten the load, and it's a brave thing to do.

**"However you're feeling, don't be afraid to reach out, ask for help and share what you're feeling."**

Kyle Vander Kuyp, Worimi and Yuin man, Olympic athlete

If things feel hard, yarning with someone really helps. Think about someone who makes you feel safe and won't judge you.



Remember you're never alone – there's always support when you need it.

**Not sure where to start?** Beyond Blue has free mental health and wellbeing quizzes that can help you understand what you're feeling and find support that fits you.



Everyone has struggles at times. Quiz results are not a test or a judgement – they're a starting point for getting help.

Take a quiz at [beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/tools-and-quizzes](https://beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/tools-and-quizzes)



# Wellbeing through spirit, culture and Country

## Staying strong together

Looking after your health is sometimes a bit of a balancing act. Eating well, moving your body and resting are all great for your mental wellbeing. Feeling safe and having a sense of belonging in community is also really

important. Strong links to culture, Country, spirituality and kin can help you feel grounded. This might mean walking on Country or sitting quietly in nature or connecting with traditional lands and practices.



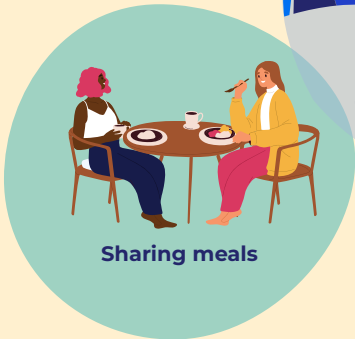
**Yarning**



**Connect with country**



**Take time for cultural practices**



**Sharing meals**



**Reach out for support that feels culturally safe**



## Trusted services

If you're going through a tough time or are concerned about someone close to you, here are some culturally safe services you can trust to listen and keep your chat private.



**Beyond  
Blue**

**Support Service  
Free. Confidential. 24/7**

Beyond Blue's support service is always open and free for everyone. Our mental health counsellors are here to listen without judgement, offer practical advice and brief counselling, and help you find what's right for you.

 **Call** 1300 22 4636

 **Chat online** [beyondblue.org.au/getsupport](https://beyondblue.org.au/getsupport)

### Other phone support services

**13Yarn: 13 92 76**

Call 13Yarn direct to yarn with a Lifeline-trained First Nations Peoples crisis supporter.

**Brother to Brother: 1800 435 799**

Crisis line for First Nations men looking for help and support.

**Thirrili: 1800 841 313**

A free national helpline offering support for First Nations families affected by traumatic loss.

**Qlife: [qlife.org.au](https://qlife.org.au)**

Anonymous and free LGBTIQ+SB peer support (call or webchat) and referral for people in Australia including Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities.

If you need urgent help, please call:

**Emergency services: 000**

**Lifeline: 13 11 14**

### More support from First Nations-run organisations:

**WellMob: [wellmob.org.au](https://wellmob.org.au)**

WellMob brings together online resources for social and emotional wellbeing made by and for our mob.

**Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit)  
Australia: [gayaadhuwi.org.au](https://gayaadhuwi.org.au)**

The national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led body for social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, and suicide prevention for First Nations People.

**National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO): [naccho.org.au](https://naccho.org.au)**

Find your local First Nations Community Controlled Health Organisation.





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 **Chat online [beyondblue.org.au/getsupport](https://beyondblue.org.au/getsupport)**



**Know someone who needs some help?**

If someone you care about is struggling, Beyond Blue has some practical advice to help you support their mental health journey.

 **[beyondblue.org.au/get-support/support-someone](https://beyondblue.org.au/get-support/support-someone)**



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