

Major funding boost to uplift student mental health and wellbeing

Tens of thousands of primary school students have found invaluable support through Kids Helpline @ School, and the future now looks brighter for Australia's students, with new funding promising to extend this essential service to high schools nationally in 2024.

Today, Kids Helpline @ School receives a significant boost as the Bupa Foundation, the principal partner of Kids Helpline, steps forward with \$300,000 of funding for the new high school program along with additional financial support for the primary school program, following increasing demand.

Almost 70 per cent of all young people who reach out to Kids Helpline are high school-aged, with their top concerns being mental health, emotional wellbeing, relationships with family and friends, bullying, and suicide and self-harm concerns

"Children in Australia are bearing the brunt of a global environment characterised by change, crisis, and uncertainty. It's our shared responsibility to equip as many of them as possible with the tools they need to stay mentally healthy, resilient and to keep themselves safe," said Tracy Adams, CEO of **yourtown**, which operates Kids Helpline.

"The negative impact of poor mental health on educational outcomes and personal wellbeing is increasingly a major focus for schools. This is why this early intervention program is so important; it will enable high schools to connect classrooms to a Kids Helpline counsellor free of charge by simply booking a session online," said Ms Adams.

"Young people also tell us that they value the connection of their peers and the material covered in the Kids Helpline @ school sessions can be the catalyst for meaningful conversations between peers and with their teachers," said Ms Adams.

Kids Helpline counsellors have created sessions for all high school year levels on topics, including:

- Coping with changes & transitions
- Cyberbullying & mental health
- Emotional intelligence
- Everyday resilience

Bupa Asia Pacific Chief Sustainability and Corporate Affairs Officer Roger Sharp said mental health was a major concern among young Aussies and this partnership reinforced Bupa's commitment to helping young people live happy and healthy lives.

“Supporting the mental health of our young people has never been so important. At the Bupa Foundation we are proud to be investing in innovative prevention and early intervention mental health programs that help kids live life to their full potential.

“This support is more than just a financial investment; it is an investment in the future of our children and in the longevity of Kids Helpline who have for decades been on the frontline of youth mental health support,” Roger said.

Speaking at the launch event, St Bede's College principal Deb Frizza said, “The magnitude of the mental health needs in the Australian general population, but particularly for young people, has been increasingly recognised by society and Governments, but also by schools. The part played by Kids Helpline at the primary school level has been one very significant aspect of this increased consciousness and it is exciting that they now move into the secondary school space.

“Improving student mental health literacy, coping, and resilience skills and promoting help-seeking behaviours are now embedded in the core business of schooling. Thankfully, young people in schools—but not all—are increasingly prepared to speak up, but also to provide support to one another,” Ms Frizza concluded

To book a free Kids Helpline counsellor for your high school classroom, simply go to schools.kidshelpline.com.au

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contact

For more information or to arrange a media interview, please contact Maree Reason-Cain, **yourtown** Corporate Affairs & Media Advisor.



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about Kids Helpline

Kids Helpline, powered by **yourtown** is Australia's only free and confidential, 24/7 online and phone counselling service for young people aged 5 – 25. Free call 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au

about Kids Helpline @ School

Is a free curriculum-aligned prevention and early intervention program delivered virtually into classrooms across Australia that encourage help-seeking by connecting your students directly to Kids Helpline's support service. Students will improve mental health literacy by learning directly from a qualified counsellor. [Kids Helpline @ School | Home](#)

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yourtown is a trusted provider of services for young people, with a focus on mental health and wellbeing, long term unemployment, prevention of youth suicide, child protection, as well as support for those experiencing family and domestic violence. yourtown.com.au