

# Media release



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## Kids Helpline welcomes Bupa Health Foundation's mental health support funding

Kids Helpline, a service of **yourtown**, welcomes the financial commitment from the Bupa Health Foundation of \$1.375 million to grow **yourtown's** Kids Helpline Services at a time when demand continues to surge.

"This funding will grow our world first, purpose-built, counsellor-moderated mental health and emotional wellbeing social media platform, My Circle, and support continuation of the Kids Helpline @ School program," said **yourtown** Chief Executive Officer Tracy Adams.

"The Bupa Health Foundation funding will allow the My Circle digital platform to support up to 10,000 young people over the next two years," Ms Adams continued.

Hisham El-Ansary, Bupa ANZ CEO, said this support is an extension of Bupa's ongoing commitment to improve the mental wellbeing of Australia's young people.

My Circle digital platform delivers peer support and expert group counselling supported by professional Kids Helpline counsellors for youth 13–25 years of age and is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"My Circle sessions are a mental health specific social network for 13–25 year olds, seeking 'group' counselling that is anonymous, age- and issue-specific. It is a model of care and support for short-term mental health issues and chronic mental illness.

"With My Circle, we have been able to provide a secure, safe and modern social networking environment to help young people navigate challenges in their life. They can anonymously share their experiences, understand that they are not alone and learn how their peers have dealt with the same challenges. A qualified counsellor is available to provide extra support to the Circle," Ms Adams said.

"We are very pleased to continue our partnership with world-leading researchers at The University of Sydney's Cyberpsychology Research Group. The additional funding will enable us to continue our work to further evaluate the evidence-base of the My Circle platform and service and develop an innovative, cost-effective Digital Mental Health Practice Model that can be adopted by other organisations to support vulnerable groups."

Dr Andrew Campbell, Chair, Cyberpsychology Research Group, The University of Sydney said the development of an evidence-based, mental health specific social network for young people was long overdue.

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