



We all have a role to play

6-12 OCTOBER

2019 EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

How to run an engaging and successful event or activity during Mental Health Week



Mental Health Week in Tasmania is coordinated by the Mental Health Council of Tasmania

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Background

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania is the coordinating organisation of Mental Health Week (MHW) in 2019, which is supported by the Tasmanian Department of Health

Mental Health Week will take place 6 – 12 October 2019.

This Guide will provide you with tools and resources designed to help make your event a great success and an acknowledged part of state-wide awareness week activities. You'll find specific guidelines about the MHW theme, as well as ideas to support safe and engaging communication about Mental Health Week and mental health more broadly, together with event promotion, planning and evaluation tips.

What is Mental Health Week in Tasmania?

Mental Health Week in Tasmania is part of a national mental health promotion campaign held in October each year, and incorporates World Mental Health Day, held globally on 10 October. The purpose of this awareness week is to engage communities in activities that promote mental health and wellbeing and to raise awareness and understanding about mental illness, and how we can better support people in our community.

Mental Health Week theme for 2019

The Mental Health Week theme for 2019 is, **'Mental Health: We All Have a Role to Play.'** The 2019 MHW logo will be available for download which will help your group or organisation promote Mental Health Week events in your community. The theme provides an inclusive and overarching theme for Tasmanian communities to come together and:

We all have a role to play to:

- Check in on your own mental health
- Check in on a neighbour
- Check in on a friend
- Check in on what's happening in your community.
- Check in for a mental health check up with a GP

The check in options might spark ideas on what you could do for your event and how you might promote your event on social media via the hash tag **#checkin**. The ideas are endless!

For all the updates on 2019 Mental Health Week in Tasmania, join our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) communities.

Planning a great MHW event

Think about the goals of your event

During the planning phase, it is important to consider why your group or organisation is hosting a MHW event. Ask yourself, will my event:

- raise awareness and promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- reduce stigma
- build resilience and foster understanding
- promote the MHW theme '**Mental Health: We All Have a Role to Play**'
- build partnerships and connections within the local community
- encourage individuals to seek help when they may need it
- encourage and self-care

Know your audience

When hosting a MHW event it is important to think about who you are communicating with. You may choose to involve a specific group. Once you know who it is you are communicating with, give some thought to the following questions:

- **What is the audience's level of mental health literacy?** What will they already know about mental health and will I need to consider their knowledge and understanding for what I want to achieve?
- **Who are they? Demographics, gender, culturally and linguistically diverse etc.** These factors might contribute to your communication methods. For example, the way you deliver an event for young people and what you talk about may be very different from an event targeting older Tasmanians.
- **Consider what might be confronting or 'triggering' for this audience.** If the audience is the general public, and you might be discussing things that people could find distressing, a warning is necessary as well as access to appropriate supports.

Agree on your key message

What is the main message/s you want your audience to take away from your event or activity? For example, your event may promote: great self-care ideas, stigma reduction in communities, or ways to seek help. Make sure you convey the key message in all your promotions.

Know your topic

Here are some general tips around talking about mental health or mental illness:

- Avoid jargon or complex descriptions of mental health conditions
- Always talk about mental health in a way that focuses on prevention, mental health promotion and, wherever possible, early intervention.
- Try not to describe illness or mental ill health as someone having 'mental health'. Instead try:
 - they have a lived experience of mental illness
 - they have a diagnosed mental health condition (if this is confirmed)

- they have experienced mental ill health
- they have experienced/are experiencing mental health issues
- avoid saying someone 'suffers' from a mental illness or is 'mentally ill'
- avoid the term 'mental patient'. Please use the term patient (in a hospital situation) with a mental illness (if this is accurate and confirmed)

For more information on communicating safely and effectively about mental health and suicide prevention please visit <https://www.tascharter.org/>

Consider Grants, sponsorships, partnerships and volunteers

Make time to do a scan for what is possibly available for grant, funding support or sponsorship opportunities from organisations, funding bodies, local councils, or other groups or businesses. Think of it as a way to share resources and increase your ability to have an impact. Check out the eligibility and selection criteria on our website, then consider applying for the [MHW Small Grants Program](#) (applications close 5pm, Monday 22 July 2019) as an option.

Register your MHW event

By [registering your MHW event](#) your event will be an official MHW event in Tasmania, and we'll help you spread the word via our social media community. To register, simply fill in the [event details](#). Contact MHCT if you have any questions on 03 6224 9222 or enquiries@mhct.org



MHW event ideas

MHW provides the opportunity for communities to come together. The best events encourage participants and local communities to engage in practical and interactive activities to improve their mental health. If you have a great idea but are uncertain of how to get started, give us a call and we can chat through your ideas and provide some guidance (62249222 ask for Cat or Nick). This year we want to encourage people to branch out and look at holding an event that is open to the general public and widely promoted. **Do** seek out collaborations and partnerships with other organisations to maximise impact.

The theme this year is **‘We All Have a Role to Play.’** Below are some ideas that encompass ideas about what our role is and how we can ‘check in’ in a variety of ways.

Check in on your own mental health

- There is more and more research into links between mental health, nutrition and exercise. Organise a wellness walk, cycle, swim, run, yoga or meditation session.
- The benefits of engaging in something creative for your mental health is well documented. Organise workshops in painting, pottery or creative writing in your local area. Hold a photography competition that explores the ideas of the MHW theme. It’s a great idea to look at activities that will have a lasting impact on participants.
- Hold a self-care session that looks at the ideas of mindfulness or music therapy. What’s the latest trend that helps people stay mentally healthy?



Check in on a friend or neighbour

- Hold a neighbourhood mental health week celebration. Encourage different generations to socialise together.
- Have a getting to know a neighbour 'speed' find a mate (rather than speed find a date) event.
- Set up a 'have a chat' bench in your local area similar to the concept of a buddy bench you might see in primary schools.



Check in on what's happening in your local community

- Develop a community forum with a panel of guest speakers to consider questions about mental health, wellbeing and stigma reduction in your community from the audience.
- There may be community groups, your local council or neighbourhood house that already have great initiatives that could be held or promoted during mental health week.
- Music or comedy performances are excellent ways to get people talking or thinking about difficult issues. Why not hold a concert or comedy gig? Just make sure it's got some link to Mental Health Week and the theme.



The ideas are endless and remember creativity will be rewarded if you are applying for a grant. It will be school holidays in Tasmania this year during MHW. So, it is worth bearing in mind that schools will be able to celebrate on a date adjacent to MHW in order to hold their own events. It is also worth noting that you can hold events on the 6th and 12th of October which are weekend days where many people will be available that are not normally able to engage during regular business hours. Or consider having an event at your workplace and get the whole team involved.



Promoting your MHW event

Effective promotion will ensure your MHW event is successful. Consider using the right tools at the right time to maximise participation. Don't hold back! Promote your MHW event far and wide. MHW events are a great opportunity for the media to bring attention to mental health and assist in the reduction of stigma.



Effective ways to promote your MHW event include:

- **Utilise your networks.** Consider asking schools to include your MHW event information in their newsletter. Ask shops, councils, community organisations and businesses to support your MHW activity, put up your poster or have flyers on display to help spread the word.
- **Use social media.** Register your MHW event on the [MHW registration webpage](#), and we'll help you promote it via our social media community. Use your own social media channels too!
- **Contact local media.** Chat to the local newspaper, radio station or local TV station to elicit their support to promote your event.
- **Send personal invitations.** Target VIPs or specific people and invite them to participate or speak at your event and utilise their networks to build engagement and participation.
- **Write a media release.** The easiest method to get the attention of media.
- **Sharing is caring.** Consider asking friends and colleagues to help you share organically, person-to-person. Forwarding e-invitations, emails or sharing social media posts is an easy and effective way to spread the word about your MHW event.
- **Consider advertising.** At your place of work, local library or community hall, cafes and shops.

MHW event Planning Checklist

We know the below list is large - but don't feel daunted! If your event is smaller in scale, much of this may not be relevant. Simply use this as a starting point to consider what to do as you start planning your MHW event.

Local government requirements

- ☐ Inform local government of event and gain approval
- ☐ Check if other events scheduled for the same time

Budget

- ☐ Prepare event budget, monitor spending

Participants, Event Agenda and Run Sheet

- ☐ Consider using a free online event registration form
- ☐ Link to it from your website if you have one
- ☐ Develop invitation list
- ☐ Develop event timeline
- ☐ Include timings, responsibilities and key contacts
- ☐ Be sure to include dignitaries, VIPs
- ☐ Register your event on the [MHW webpage](#)

Contractors

- ☐ Order equipment such as stage, lighting, PA system
- ☐ Book portable toilets, marquee, AV, etc
- ☐ Book and confirm all contractors in writing
- ☐ Insurance—public liability, staff, volunteers?

Risk management

- ☐ Book first aid officers (consider trained counsellors as well depending on content of your event)
- ☐ Conduct risk assessment with all key stakeholders
- ☐ Create risk management plan
- ☐ Obtain relevant insurance and send to Council
- ☐ Contingency plans (wet weather, for example)
- ☐ Notify police, ambulance & fire brigade

Food vendors

- ☐ Book food vendors
- ☐ Ensure compliance with state food laws
- ☐ Request details of electrical requirements
- ☐ Application for temporary food premises permit

Toilets, cleaning and maintenance plan

- ☐ If not on-site, book toilets, cleaners if needed
- ☐ Clean up venue/mow lawn/clear area of debris

Sponsorship

- ☐ Create a sponsorship proposal
- ☐ Identify potential sponsors
- ☐ Deliver sponsorship packages and follow up
- ☐ Use sponsor testimonials
- ☐ Acknowledge sponsors

Marketing and promotion

- ☐ Develop marketing/communication plan
- ☐ Book entertainment and MC if needed
- ☐ Design promotional material
- ☐ Create a webpage or Facebook event
- ☐ Distribute flyers/posters/email/brochures
- ☐ Prepare and distribute a media release

Venue Location, parking and licences

- ☐ Select a location or venue for your event
- ☐ Consider transportation to and from and parking
- ☐ Apply for any food permits required
- ☐ If using music, apply for a noise permit
- ☐ Request for approval to erect promotional signage
- ☐ Road closures—send applications early

Your Security Needs

- ☐ Book security and two-way radios
- ☐ Crowd control
- ☐ Cash security Waste management
- ☐ Develop waste management plan
- ☐ Promote reducing waste in marketing material

Traffic management

- ☐ Design traffic plan including:
- ☐ Signage, disabled parking, guest parking, pedestrian access, marshals, car parking, entry and exit points, lighting, road closures
- ☐ Promote alternative transport

Site preparation and plan

- ☐ Design plan of venue/event site Other
- ☐ Adequately brief staff and volunteers
- ☐ Organise awards/trophies/certificates

The big day!

Your event is registered on the [MHW registration page](#), you have your media release ready to go, your social media community is engaged, now – for the big day!

Pre-event

- ✓ Provide your staff/team with a full event briefing, and encourage questions
- ✓ Provide a run sheet for the event, including timings and locations, and responsibilities, and contact names and numbers
- ✓ If you have volunteers, make sure you have a meeting point organised, and water and food
- ✓ Review your event checklist, emergency arrangements and other important logistics
- ✓ Pack your gear – event bag, collateral, water for staff, phone and charger, IT
- ✓ Bump in! Organise your transport and support team to help set up

Post-event

- ✓ Bump Out! Organise your transport and support team to help pack down
- ✓ Thank you letters to staff, volunteers, speakers, performers and special guests
- ✓ Engage and ask for feedback on social media
- ✓ Close off budget and acquit any funds
- ✓ Hold a de-brief with your team and encourage ideas and feedback on how the event can be improved next year

Stress Less Tips

MHW can be a time when people are prompted to find out more about their own mental health and seek help when needed. Following are some tips that you might find useful if someone approaches you for help when holding your event.

Be prepared

If you work in the mental health sector, you will have some experience in responding to enquiries about mental illness. Otherwise, consider asking a local health professional to assist and attend the event to be on hand to provide support and advice if necessary. Make sure you have a handout with details of helplines and appropriate services available. Check out MHCT's [‘Getting Help’](#) webpage for guidance.

Know your boundaries

Before the event, give some thought to your boundaries. What are you confident and comfortable to talk about? What might you need more information or support with? When might you need to refer someone to another source of assistance? Remember, it is OK not to know everything.

Look after your team

Remember that looking after yourself and your team is just as important as looking after others. Keep the lines of communication open with your team on the MHW event day. Include a discussion about this element with your team in your pre-event briefing and post-event review.