



25 October 2021

Mental Health Council of Tasmania Media Release

Helping Tasmanian small businesses create mentally healthy workplaces

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) are reaching out to help small businesses create mentally healthy workplaces through free Small Business Toolkits, developed with support from the Tasmanian Government. The toolkits, which can be ordered via the MHCT website at www.mhct.org/toolkit, contain information and resources designed to make it easier for small business owners and managers to look after their own mental health and create a work environment that supports positive mental wellbeing.

MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, said that with all the information out there about mental health and wellbeing, the toolkits make it easier for small businesses to access the information and resources that are relevant and practical for them.

“Running your own business can be difficult at the best of times, even before you consider the various hurdles the pandemic has created for small business owners and their employees. There’s been a lot of talk about the impacts on our mental health and wellbeing, finding the right information, resources, and time we need to actually do something about it can be a bit overwhelming. That’s why we created these toolkits – to point small business owners in the right direction and give them a helping hand to create mentally healthy workplaces that supports themselves and their employees.”

The toolkits are an extension of MHCT’s #checkin website, www.mhct.org/checkin, which provides information and resources to individuals of all ages to help them boost their mental wellbeing. The website also contains a section specifically dedicated to workplaces, which points users towards a range of tailored information, as well as local services and training opportunities, all of which are designed to help business owners, managers and employees create supportive, mentally healthy workplaces.

Lifeline Tasmania is one of the organisations offering free training opportunities to small businesses, through their ‘Minding Your Business’ program, supported by the Tasmanian Government. The courses are for small businesses with the equivalent of up to 19 fulltime employees, ranging from a one hour ‘Mental Health Boost’ which teaches strategies to cope with and adapt to stressful and uncertain situations, to two day ‘Mental Health First Aid’ training courses.

Ms Digolis said, “The many mental health training courses on offer, are a great way to increase your understanding of mental health and wellbeing generally, but also gives you a better understanding of the things that you can do to support yourself and those around you.”

She added that, beyond training, there are many other little things that workplaces can do to create a supportive, mentally healthy workplace. “Starting a conversation about mental health and wellbeing is a great first step in any workplace. Chatting over a cup of tea or in your team meeting about mental health and wellbeing is a great way of sharing tips and activities that can help support positive mental wellbeing – even simple things like getting enough sleep, exercising, taking breaks, getting outside in the sun. As a small business owner or manager, encouraging these types of conversations also makes employees feel more comfortable to reach out if they’re struggling.”

Free Small Business Toolkits can be ordered at www.mhct.org/toolkit.

Information about Lifeline’s ‘Minding Your Business’ training session can be found at www.lifelinetasmania.org.au/minding-your-business.

For more information and resources to help boost your mental health and wellbeing, including a range of training options, head to www.mhct.org/checkin.

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Please include the following crisis support services for any story regarding mental health or suicide:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

beyondblue: 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

More information on safely reporting on mental illness or suicide can be found at:

<https://mindframe.org.au/> and <https://www.tascharter.org/>