

17 August 2021

## Katoomba headspace celebrates one year of helping local young people

headspace Katoomba is celebrating its first birthday and one year on, it continues to work with young people in the community to ensure better mental health outcomes.

Over the past year, 380 young Blue Mountains locals have received vital mental health support through the Katoomba service. The centre has provided young people support in mental health, work and study, as well as alcohol and other drugs.

headspace is a unique service in that it gives young people a voice and encourages them to play an active role in shaping the services and spaces that young people access for mental health support.

One of the main aspects of this goal is the Youth Advisory Committee. The committee are young, active, local community members who aim to improve and promote headspace services for those who need them.

Committee member, Abbie, is particularly proud of how they have made the service space welcoming for all people over the last year.

"We all know that finding ways to keep a daily routine with study and work, connecting with family and friends and reaching out for additional help are some of the small steps that can make a big difference,"

"I think it's really important to create spaces where people can reach out for help and feel comfortable to start to get into that routine"

"I love that we have commissioned artists to create mindful murals in the service. Partnering with TAFE and Farm It Forward has also been a small way to ensure people can feel comfortable visiting our permaculture garden and hopefully use the services available."

During the COVID-19 pandemic the need for youth mental health services has dramatically risen. A recent study by the headspace National Youth Mental Health Survey released on Sunday 27 June 2021, shows more than one in two young people (54%) feel a sense of loneliness.

Debra Mainwarring is the senior clinician at headspace Katoomba. She is happy to be able to provide such a vital service for young people and their families in the Blue Mountains during this time.



"We knew that there was a high-demand for a service like this in the Blue Mountains. In partnership with other services in the community we continue to work to meet this demand and ensure young people are supported." she said.

"Early intervention programs such as headspace are critical, as they not only impact young people's lives in the present but can influence the whole community as these young people mature into adulthood."

Liberal Senator for Western Sydney, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, who delivered the election commitment funding for the headspace service, said headspace Katoomba has been embraced by the community.

"One year on, it's clear that the headspace model is a good fit for the Blue Mountains and has resulted in better mental health outcomes for young people," Senator Payne said.

"headspace Katoomba is a practical example of the Morrison Government's absolute support for mental health initiatives, with the headspace network a key part of the \$2.3 billion National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan, the largest Commonwealth mental health investment in Australia's history.

"As we continue to face the challenges brought on by the once-in-a-century COVID-19 pandemic, new resources have been rolled out by the federal government, such as the #ChatStarter program, which children, young people, parents and carers can access at [headtohealth.gov.au](https://headtohealth.gov.au)."

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network, is the local funder of headspace Katoomba and worked closely with the community and other stakeholders to advocate for the service.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay said, "I want to congratulate the headspace Katoomba team on this milestone and recognise the hard work of everyone involved in getting this service up and running during the unique challenges of the past 18 months. During these unprecedented times, this service has been a safe place for young people to seek help and care for their mental health concerns and it will continue to provide vital support during the current COVID-19 crisis in our community."

If you are a young person in need of further support, you can visit [ehheadspace](#) (online and phone support), contact your nearest [headspace centre](#) or [talk to your GP](#) about options.

headspace has also designed a series of online [Interactive Activities](#) that young people can check out to source practical tips for [connecting with others](#), [goal setting](#) and [problem solving](#).

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## About Uniting | [uniting.org](http://uniting.org)

Uniting is responsible for the social justice, community services and chaplaincy work of the Uniting Church in NSW and the ACT, providing care and support for people through all ages and stages of life and with a focus on people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability. Our purpose is to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice. We celebrate diversity and welcome everyone exactly as they are.

## About headspace

headspace is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25-year olds. headspace has 110 centres across Australia in metropolitan, regional and remote areas, as well as online and phone support services through eheadspace. headspace can help young people with mental health, physical health (including sexual health) alcohol and other drug services, and work and study support. Centre details, as well as factsheets and resources for young people and their families and friends, can be located on the headspace website: [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)