

18 August 2020

headspace Katoomba Now Open

After a strong and persistent appeal from the community, Katoomba officially has its own headspace satellite. The service officially opened on Wednesday 19 August and will provide support for young people and family and friends within the community.

Wentworth Healthcare, provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN) and headspace Katoomba, led by Parramatta Mission, have been working diligently behind the scenes to ensure the opinions and input of young people from the community were factored into the build of the satellite. This will ensure headspace Katoomba is a safe space for young people to access support.

Mim, aged 16, and a member of the headspace Katoomba Youth Advisory Committee, spoke about the importance of having local young people involved in the design of the service. "It's been very important to have had young people input on the design and development of headspace Katoomba. The service is aimed at young people, so having that extra feedback and input means that the service is addressing what young people in the community think is important."

headspace Katoomba will provide support for mental health, work and study, as well as alcohol and other drugs. These are some of the services already implemented across over 115 headspace locations across the country, having supported over 620,000 young people since inception.

The mountains region has been faced with many unfortunate events over the last 12 months such as bushfires, floods, and now COVID. With this in mind, the arrival of headspace Katoomba is a timely one and much needed to support the health of young people in the community to help them get through this challenging time.

headspace Katoomba will also be in the privileged position to provide support to those that affected by the recent bushfires. Parramatta Mission is currently introducing the Bushfire Relief Service across the Blue Mountains region - a service which will utilise headspace Katoomba as a hub to provide support to young people affected.

Keith Hamilton Senior Minister CEO at Parramatta Mission stated, "The need for services such as headspace in the Blue Mountains region is well documented, we are looking forward to working with other youth services in the region to make a collective impact in the community".

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay, said, "We are so excited to see this vital service for young people and their families open in the Blue Mountains. 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."

"Given the unique challenges of the COVID pandemic, I want to recognise the hard work and dedication of all the people involved in getting this service up and running. During these unprecedented times, we hope that this service will be a safe place for young people to seek the help and care they need for their mental health concerns."

headspace Katoomba Senior Clinician, Debra Mainwaring highlighted how easy it will be for young people to access headspace services. "Young people, their friends and family, GPs, school counsellors, and anyone else supporting a young person, will be able to call us or drop into our service to seek help. We will be available for information or for someone to talk to confidentially about any issue young people may be facing."

headspace CEO Jason Trethowan said of the opening, "We know young people across the region have been through a lot recently, and it's great that headspace Katoomba will now be able to provide young people with timely, tailored and youth friendly support, to help them get through tough times and back on track".

Liberal Senator for Western Sydney, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, said headspace Katoomba had come a long way since the government first committed funding towards its establishment in April of last year.

"We knew from the start that getting a headspace which truly met the needs of local young people, and which complemented existing support services, was absolutely critical," Senator Payne said.

"That's why NBMPHN and Parramatta Mission have consulted widely on the centre's design and put the voices of young people first. I have been pleased to play a small part in that process, when in December of last year the NBMPHN and I held a youth roundtable to help establish some key design principles.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has made for an anxious and stressful time, and one in four young people will experience serious mental health issues.

"Knowing that headspace Katoomba is there to support locals as a unique, specialised, early intervention service is a very welcome outcome."

headspace Katoomba is located at 37 Waratah Street Katoomba NSW 2780 and will be opened Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm (later appointments will be available soon). Given the challenges we are all experiencing with COVID, it would be great if you can call and speak to one of our clinicians on 1800 478 626 before walking into the centre.

For more information, please visit www.headspace.org.au