

R U OK? DAY

R U OK? Day, celebrated on 15th September, is a national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone that any day is the day to ask, "Are you ok?" and support those struggling with life. Taking part can be as simple as learning steps so you can have a conversation that could change a life.

The Day is about inspiring people to start these conversations every day of the year. If you need help to understand how to reach out to a person you might be worried about, you can use our free online mental health training tool, which can be accessed here:

www.relationshipswa.org.au/connect

The online training tool introduces the STRES model – five simple steps to give people the confidence and tools to talk to someone they may be concerned about.

The STRES Model:

Signs

Signs - What you could look for in someone's behaviour that may indicate they are at risk of mental health decline.

Time

Time - Finding a good time to talk and what to check before approaching someone.

Reach out

Reach out - How you can ask if someone is OK emotionally and what to say to them.

Empathise

Empathy - How to listen well and what you can say in response, so the person feels heard and understood.

Support

Support - Knowing your role and responsibilities in support; ways to support someone; and how to encourage a person to seek professional help if they need it.

R U OK? At Work

A place where asking the question “are you ok?” can be effective in the workplace. As employers or staff, we can all create a culture where people feel confident asking and answering this most important question. Besides our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace, these conversations can make a real difference to someone going through a tough time.

To help manage conversations with individuals struggling in the workplace, R U OK? has developed a practical guide. Learn how to ask “Are you ok?” of any team member who might be struggling, then respond appropriately and safely to anyone who says that they’re not.



How do I know if someone needs support?

Over the last fortnight, have you noticed 2 or more of the below?

1. Changes in their physical appearance?

- Look more tired than usual
- Seem “flat” or drained of energy
- Have had a pattern of illness or being constantly run down
- Complain of physical health issues such as headaches or migraines
- Eat more or much less than usual
- Drink more alcohol than usual
- Seem more fidgety and nervous than usual.

2. Changes in mood?

- Seem irritable, snappy and fly off the handle when they didn’t use to
- Appear more anxious and worried about everything (i.e. work and personal things)
- React more emotionally than the situation deserves
- Quick to anger
- Overwhelmed by tasks that they had previously found manageable.

3. Changes in behaviour?

- More withdrawn than usual
- Don't enjoy hobbies/interests like they use to
- Have difficulty concentrating or seem constantly distracted
- Taking on more work to avoid being in social situations with others
- Not performing to their usual standard.

4. Changes in how thoughts are expressed?

- Tendency to catastrophise everything (“It’s always terrible...”)
- Interpret situations negatively (might conclude that two people in a meeting are discussing their performance or future with the company)
- Personalise situations (“I knew I’d get the toughest roster – they’ve got it in for me”)
- Sound more confused or irrational
- Complain about constant thoughts and difficulty switching them off.

If you have noticed 2 or more of any of these for any team member, that person might need some extra support. This may be the time for you to start a conversation.

For more information on R U OK? Day and their resources, please visit their website here: www.ruok.org.au/every-day-resources

What are useful contacts for someone who’s not ok?

- Lifeline (crisis support, 24/7): 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service (professional telephone crisis support): 1300 659 467
- beyondblue (info about anxiety and depression): 1300 22 4636
- SANE Australia (info about mental illness and referral): 1800 18 SANE (7263)
- More contacts: ruok.org.au/findhelp
- If life is in danger, call 000

