

Advice for asking R U OK

TRUST your instincts when it comes to how your loved ones are feeling and don't be afraid to speak up.

"As instinctual beings, we are able to sense uncertainty and danger around ourselves, our companions, and the ones we love," Centacare SWNSW safety and family education practitioner Dylan Oliver said.

"Follow the signs like what they are saying, doing, and experiencing."

Dylan has the following tips on how best to ask someone how they're doing.

Location and timing

The place you ask the question is important. Make sure it's a confidential and quiet place where the person feels safe and trusted. It's also vital to ensure you have enough time to talk.

"Ensure you have no upcoming appointments or places you need to be - the individual may need some time to communicate how they are feeling, so it is important that you have enough time to ask, listen, and talk," Dylan said.

What to say

Simply ask "are you okay?"



ASK: R U OK DAY on September 9 is a chance to start a conversation around mental health but the question can and should be asked anytime you're concerned about someone. **Photo:** Shutterstock

and let them know you're there to listen.

"These three words can go a long way in helping someone, because most the time many of us just wish to feel seen and be heard," Dylan

said.

Encourage action

"A lot of the time people who need help are too afraid to ask," Dylan said.

"In this way, if we ask them what support they would

like the individual may feel more inclined to ask for help - practically inviting them to ask what they need.

"If you believe you have experienced something similar to the person, tell

them how you got through the difficult time, and what strategies and coping skills you may have used."

"Suggest any resources or referrals that may link the individual to professional

health help such as a GP."

Follow up

Keep in touch every couple of weeks or more if they seem to be struggling.

"This shows you care and they have someone to rely on when things get tough," Dylan said.

"Ask them how they have been and if there is anything further you can do to support them. Keep in touch with the individual, and also their progress - if you identify weeks of struggling, then it may be time to suggest another approach."

Be respectful

Avoid interrogating (asking too many questions), criticising or judging.

"To be respectfully curious - let the individual answer and further explain that answer - once you have established congruency and trust, an individual will answer all your questions without you having to ask," Dylan said.

"Be conscious of your body language and facial expressions, and relay the individual's answers back to them in your own words to demonstrate you are listening."

WHO IS CENTACARE?

At **Centacare** we are passionate about supporting all people in our community. We belong to the **Wagga Wagga, Albury, Griffith, Mulwala and surrounding communities** We believe in the wellbeing for all.

PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

Centacare provides professional psychology services to support individuals with various mental health concerns. Our registered psychologist can also provide a wide range of developmental assessment services

LET US ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR NDIS PLAN

Your NDIS coordinator will work with you to provide supports and link you to other providers, build your capacity to self-manage, and give encouragement.

Your NDIS core support worker can assist you to engage with your community, build your self-reliance and support with your daily living skills

SCHOOL COUNSELLING

Our School Wellbeing Practitioners work within Pre-schools, Primary and High Schools with students, families and staff to help guide student academic, behavioral and social - emotional growth.

PARENTING ORDERS PROGRAM (POP)

Our Parenting Orders Program (POP) is child-focused and helps parents to manage disputes and increase cooperation and communication for separated families

SUPPORT FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Speak confidentially with one of our counsellors who can help you improve your wellbeing and discover your potential

COUNSELLING

We offer individual, couples, or family counselling to help support you to strengthen and improve your relationships.

Individual working one on one in a safe and confidential environment

Couples helps two people resolve conflict and improve relationship satisfaction

Families learn new ways of relating to each other, resolve conflicts, and open lines of communication between all family members

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

We can offer your workplace our Employment Assistance Program (EAP) which offers short term counselling support and debriefing for staff.

FAMILY AND PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

We offer a wide range of parenting and education groups that focus on building skills, strategies and knowledge so you can enjoy positive relationships. These programs can be run individually or in a group

MEDIATION

We offer mediation services to assist in resolving disputes related to separation and divorce, children and parenting plans.

And more ...

Here for you...



Supporting Couples, Families, Individuals & Children.

Call **1300 619 379**
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