



ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Information for parents
and carers

Secondary school can be a stressful time for students. During this time mental health issues such as anxiety and depression arise for one in four children and young people. However, when mental health issues are picked up early, students can be supported to build and manage their wellbeing, leading to better educational and health outcomes. That is why the Victorian Government has established the Victorian Anti-Bullying and Mental Health Initiative (VABMHI).

Face-to-face and regional phone counselling

Victorian government secondary school students with mild to moderate mental health concerns will be able access face-to-face counselling at a **headspace** centre and/or a regional phone counselling service through **headspace**.

This is part of the VABMHI's mental health focus – Enhancing Mental Health Support in Schools initiative, funded by the Victorian Department of Education Training.

How does it work?

Face-to-face and/or regional phone counselling will be available depending on your child's school. Counselling will take place during school hours between 9am and 4pm with a qualified counsellor for approximately 45 minutes.

If a student is referred or self-refers for a face-to-face counselling session, it will take place at a **headspace** centre.

All phone counselling sessions will take place in a safe and private place on school grounds.

Referral

Any member of the school staff can refer a student or a student may wish to self-refer. In accordance with the School Advisory and Policy Guide*, your consent as a parent or carer will be sought if and when your child is not considered to be a mature minor. This means they are incapable of making their own decision about participating in a counselling service.

Privacy

All sessions are completely confidential and the counsellor will only discuss the session with others, such as family and other health professionals, if given student's permission. In this instance, the counsellor and student will agree about what information is shared with who.

However, if student safety is a concern, the counsellor may act to ensure the student remains safe. The counsellor will always try to include the student in decisions about their health and safety.

More information

Please contact your school for more information about the *Enhancing Mental Health Support in Schools* initiative.