



mental health **compass**

Introducing the Segments

November 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

89 Degrees East acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work.

We acknowledge and pay respect to Elders past and present and recognise that sovereignty was never ceded.

This report was prepared on Awabakal and Wurundjeri Country.



This report was prepared by 89 Degrees East on behalf of

**Australians for
Mental Health.**

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Thank you to our partners:



About the Research



Research Context

Mental ill-health is increasing at an alarming rate in Australia, with a growing body of research pointing to declining mental health across the community. While more people are seeking mental health support, many still face barriers to accessing the support they need.

These trends are unfolding alongside broader concerns relating to decreasing social cohesion, rising rates of loneliness, and the aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic. Added to this are cost-of-living pressures, wage stagnation, housing insecurity, and insecure work - all of which are contributing to increased stress, anxiety and depression, particularly among young people. Beyond these immediate pressures, the existential threat of climate change and a growing sense that decision-makers are not listening is shaping people's confidence in the future.

Existing research in this area has largely focused on prevalence, impacts, causes, service delivery, and barriers to support. However, there has been limited exploration of how Australians are feeling about the issue of mental health, the solutions they want to see, and their willingness to take action.



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The mental health crisis in Australia demands a collective response – empty sentiments are not enough, we need action.

Chris Gambian
Australians for Mental Health

Research Background

This project aimed to map how Australians are engaging with the issue of mental health. To help reshape Australia as a place where everyone's wellbeing is a national priority, it was necessary to measure the extent to which Australians view mental health as critical to national life, and to identify how to build public understanding of its importance.

Committed to challenging the policies, structures, attitudes, and norms that harm our mental health, **Australians for Mental Health** engaged **89 Degrees East** to develop the *Mental Health Compass* — a tool designed to support advocates in raising issue salience and building support for change. This research, supported by key project partners, provides critical insight into Australians' nuanced attitudes towards the issue of mental health and reveals how their values, beliefs, and experiences shape their views and behaviours.

This research provides a crucial evidence base from which to strategically engage different audiences and build support for solutions that improve the mental health of everyone in our community.

What is a 'Compass'?



What is a 'Compass'?

A 'Compass' is an audience segmentation tool that establishes the distinct ways different people think, feel and behave in relation to a specific issue. Audience segmentations are a well-utilised tool across the private sector and have traditionally been used within public health circles to better understand, engage and mobilise audience cohorts.

Rather than categorising audiences into simple profiles based on levels of support, awareness or demographic characteristics, audience segmentation allows for a more nuanced way to understand an issue and how different audiences perceive it. It captures the complexity of what different people care about and believe in, which is crucial for building issue salience and crafting targeted, effective messages.

A 'Compass' is particularly useful in informing advocacy, action and behaviour change, as it:

- Establishes a baseline of community sentiment on a specific issue.
- Brings distinct audience groups into sharp focus, providing a rich picture of the diversity of community attitudes.
- Delivers the insight needed to tailor communications and guide strategic engagement with key audiences.
- Provides a common language and framework to encourage strategic alignment and facilitate cross-sector collaboration.

Methodology

This report presents findings from a national survey of 3,019 community members aged 18 and over. Responses were collected between July and August 2025 and were weighted to be representative of the national population by age, gender and location (in line with ABS, 2021).

The survey was designed, with input from partners and experts, to capture a wide range of attitudes, experiences, and behaviours relating to mental health. A range of demographic details and information about media consumption habits were also collected.

Analysis of a attitudinal data, using Principal Component Analysis and k-means clustering, identified five distinct audience segments that together form the Mental Health Compass.

Each segment differs primarily in their level of interest and engagement with the issue of mental health, beliefs about the mental health system, and views on whether people should take responsibility for their own wellbeing or if improving mental health requires us to work together.



Introducing the Segments



Mental Health Compass is a unique audience segmentation that maps the diversity of Australians' views and engagement with the issue of mental health.

Analysis of a breadth of attitudinal statements from a nationally representative online survey of 3,019 community members (18+) produced five distinct audience segments. Each segment differs in their level of interest and engagement with the issue of mental health, beliefs about the mental health system, and views on whether people should take responsibility for their own wellbeing or if improving mental health requires us to work together.

Mental Health Compass equips advocates with a practical guide to better understand and connect with diverse audiences. It provides a shared language and framework to engage people more effectively and build support for change that places mental health at the heart of Australia's national life.



Empowered Optimists (23%)

The Empowered Optimists are passionate about mental health and recognise mental ill-health as an urgent issue affecting many Australians. They are enthusiastic in their support for whole-of-system solutions and see good mental health as foundational to stronger, more connected communities.

Energised and informed, they are engaging in a range of advocacy activities and encouraging others to do the same. Though some have lived experience of mental ill-health and mental health services, they are confident in their ability to access support if needed. This segment has faith in the mental health system and feel very confident that the mental health crisis can be fixed with the right approach, investment, and leadership.



Compassionate Onlookers (22%)

The Compassionate Onlookers are progressive in their views but passive in their engagement. Concerned about the mental health crisis, they empathise with those affected and believe it requires a collective response. While not convinced the mental health system works for everyone, they support solutions, particularly those promoting equitable access to services.

However, mental health is not top of mind, and they are less involved in advocacy, engaging mainly by talking about mental health and consuming related content. Despite mixed experiences with services and some lived experience of mental ill-health, they strongly believe the mental health crisis can be solved.



Discouraged Battlers (13%)

The Discouraged Battlers are characterised by their disillusionment and cynicism towards the mental health system. They are acutely aware of the impact of mental ill-health and support action to address the mental health crisis at all levels. They feel socially isolated and face significant barriers to mental health support, perceiving services as difficult to access. They are among the hardest hit by mental ill-health, and are more likely to have experienced hardship. Few are engaging in advocacy.

Though they feel uncomfortable seeking help and tend to be more pessimistic, they remain hopeful that the mental health crisis can be resolved.



Conditional Sympathisers (27%)

The Conditional Sympathisers recognise mental ill-health as a major issue but are not deeply invested in it. Moderate in their views, they are split on whether responsibility for mental health sits with individuals or communities. They value personal resilience and think some people exaggerate their mental health issues for attention.

This segment are less likely to report experience of hardship or mental ill-health, but trust they could access support if needed. They support whole-of-system solutions but view some groups as less deserving of support. Since mental health is not a priority for them, they are less active.



Minimising Resistors (15%)

The Minimising Resistors are dismissive of mental health experiences and believe the mental health crisis has been exaggerated. They place high value on personal resilience and think individuals should take more responsibility for their own wellbeing. They are much less supportive of mental health solutions, particularly those aimed at supporting people who use alcohol or other drugs. They are the least interested and informed about mental health, and very few are engaging in advocacy activities.

They are much less likely to self-report lived experience of mental ill-health or hardship, and are split on whether the mental health crisis can be fixed or is too complex to solve.

A national picture

In addition to the five unique segments, the Mental Health Compass provides a national picture of how Australians are engaging with the issue of mental health. It highlights people's experiences of mental ill-health, their access to services and support, and how they feel about the mental health system. This research tells us most Australians believe good mental health is foundational to stronger, safer and more connected communities, and support a breadth of solutions to improve Australians' mental health. So, how do we activate them?

Executive Summary



Mental health matters

Australians value mental health.

The vast majority consider mental health to be just as important as physical health (88% *agree*), and recognise that when people have good mental health, our communities are stronger, safer and more connected (82%). Many believe mental health to be just as important to the nation's wellbeing as the economy and education (80%).

Australians understand prioritising mental health can deliver a range of benefits, and are broadly supportive of efforts to address mental ill-health in the community. Most believe the mental health crisis can be fixed with the right approach, investment and leadership (76%).

Inconsistent views about issue urgency and scale

While the majority recognise mental ill-health as a major issue affecting many Australians (72%), some are unconvinced of the scale of the problem.

The community is also split on whether Australia is facing a mental health crisis that needs to be addressed urgently (59%), or if the issue of mental health has been overblown.

Varied perceptions of the mental health system

Though most Australians recognise that the mental health system is under significant pressure, their beliefs about how easy or difficult it is to access quality, affordable mental health varies considerably.

For instance, some feel the mental health system is difficult to navigate (43%) and are concerned they could not afford to pay for mental health support if they needed it (40%). Meanwhile, more than half are confident they could access a quality mental health service in their area if they needed it (53%).

These views, often shaped by lived experience (or lack thereof), also shape Australians' sense of the urgency and scale of the problem.

Mixed views about who is responsible

Despite high levels of agreement with whole-of-system solutions to improve the mental health of our community (79% on average), not all Australians are convinced that mental health is a collective responsibility.

Though more than half think we should work together to make sure every person in our community has what they need to live well (58%), the rest lean towards individuals taking responsibility for their own wellbeing (42%).

Everyone is deserving in principle, but stigma remains a barrier

Most Australians think every person should be able to access mental health support when they need it, no matter their circumstances (89% *agree*). However, while stigma, shame and inequality are recognised as barriers to access that need to be addressed, some still hold stigmatising views and consider some groups to be less deserving of community support.

For example, two thirds of the community believe mental illness makes people unpredictable and unreliable (57%) while a third think taxpayers should not have to fund treatment services to support people who use alcohol and/or other drugs to stay healthy and well (34%).

While some Australians feel connected and supported, others feel lonely

Though most Australians feel connected to the people around them (71%), more than a third say they often feel lonely and isolated from others (37%).

Some feel they don't have anyone they trust and talk to regularly about personal things (27%).

Many have been impacted by mental ill-health

Australians' relationships with the issue of mental ill-health are shaped considerably by their own mental health experiences and the mental health of people close to them.

Two in three Australians reported that feelings of stress, anxiety or depression impact their daily life at least some of the time (59%). Meanwhile, self-reported mental health (over the past 30 days) ranged from mostly good days (51%), to a mix of good and bad days (38%), through to mostly difficult days (7%), or nearly every day being a struggle (3%).

A third have attended at least one session with a mental health professional (33%), while more than a third have talked to a GP about their mental health (40%). A quarter of the community shared they had been diagnosed with a mental health condition by a qualified clinician (26%).

There are many who have engaged with mental health services, reporting a mostly positive (34%), neutral (24%), or mixed (36%) experience, with fewer reporting a mostly negative experience (5%).

Australians are providing mental health support to others

Many are also supporting the mental health of people close to them, offering advice (47%) and/or ongoing mental health support (24%). In some cases, this is negatively impacting their own mental health (21%).

A fifth have experience working or volunteering in a role that provides direct or indirect support to people with mental health conditions (18%).

Inconsistent in their engagement and enthusiasm

While most Australians acknowledge mental health is important, the level of engagement and action on this issue varies considerably.

Some are energised and advocating — volunteering their time, donating money, raising awareness of mental health issues and voting based on mental health policies.

Others are standing by, or only engaging in low-effort activities such as consuming mental health content or talking to friends and family about mental health topics.

An opportunity to transform passive support into active support

Many Australians are passively supportive of mental health solutions. Few disagree with proposed actions.

However, only half the community would consider mental health to be an issue they care deeply and often discuss with others.

There is a clear opportunity to engage, energise and activate the many Australians who value mental health, have experienced or been exposed to mental ill-health, believe it requires a collective response, and are hopeful that the mental health crisis can be fixed.

So, how do we move people from *passive* to *active*?

How do we transform support in *principle* to support in *practice*?

The Mental Health Compass brings diverse audience groups into sharp focus.

It tells us:

- Where people are at
- What they care about and believe in
- Which solutions they support
- What they've experienced (and how this shapes their views)
- Who they trust and would listen to about mental health
- The media they engage with and where they get their mental health information from
- What actions they're taking (and what prevents them from acting)
- The change they want to see

Bringing these distinct cohorts into focus can support mental health advocates to strategically engage with diverse audiences, build momentum for change, and put mental health at the top of the national agenda.

Segment Profiles





Empowered Optimists

23%
of the community

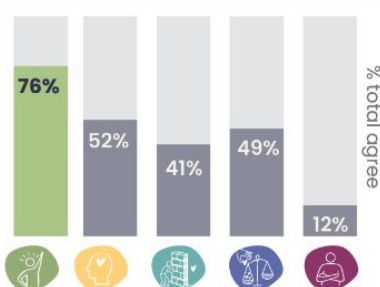
The Empowered Optimists are deeply passionate about mental health. They recognise mental ill-health as an urgent issue affecting many Australians and enthusiastically support whole-of-system solutions. They see good mental health as foundational to strong communities, but recognise shame and stigma remain a barrier to help-seeking.

Energised, informed and curious, this segment is seeking out mental health information and taking action – discussing mental health issues with friends and family, consuming mental health content, donating to mental

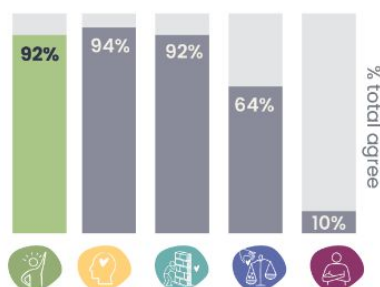
health organisations, and raising awareness about mental health topics. The Empowered Optimists feel connected to the people around them and believe the mental health system is designed to support people like them. They trust they could easily access support if they needed to.

Though some have lived experience of mental ill-health, they tend to report mixed to positive experiences of mental health services. Despite challenges, they have faith in the mental health system and believe the mental health crisis can be fixed with the right approach, investment and leadership.

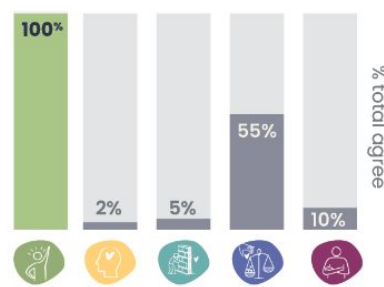
Attitude: Mental health is an issue I care deeply about and often discuss with others.



Attitude: Mental ill-health is a major issue that affects many Australians.



Attitude: The mental health system is designed to help people like me.



Lived experience

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

33%

been diagnosed with a mental health condition

14%

alcohol or other drug dependency

21%

suicidal thoughts

Social Connection

71%

I feel very connected to the people around me

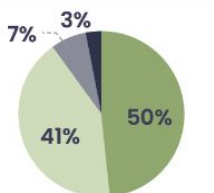
78%

I have a person in my life I trust and talk to at least once a week

39%

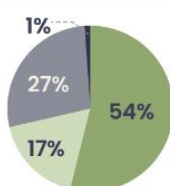
I often feel lonely and isolated from others

Recent mental health



Mostly good days
Mix of good and bad
Mostly difficult days
Struggle nearly every day

Experience accessing mental health services



27% have never accessed a mental health service

Mostly positive
Mixed
Neutral
Negative

What they think

Mental health is just as important as physical health.

94%

Every person, no matter their income, should be able to access mental health support if they need it.

94%

We should do everything we can to support people who use alcohol and other drugs to stay healthy and well.

92%

When people have good mental health, communities are stronger, safer, and more connected.

89%

We can fix the mental health crisis with the right approach, investment and leadership.

84%

% total agree

Services and support

Have you ever done any of the following?

54%

talked to a GP about my mental health

44%

attended a session with a mental health clinician

15%

used a mental health helpline or chat service



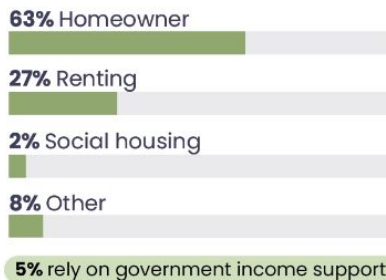
Empowered Optimists

Demographics

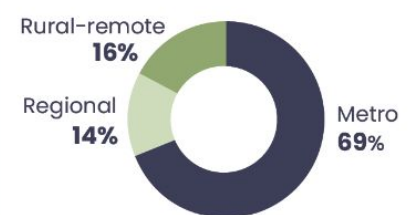
Gender



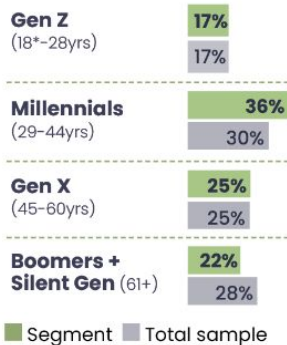
Housing



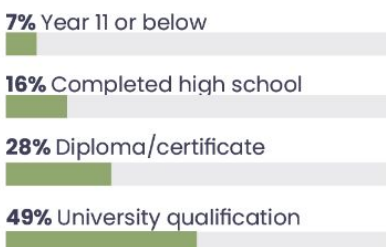
Area



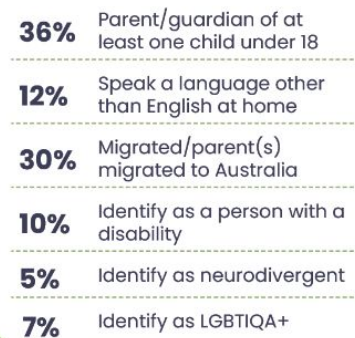
Generation



Education



Identity



Core values

Which of these values are most important to you personally and reflect how you live your life?



Significantly more likely to value: Caring for other people, promoting tolerance and harmony

■ Segment ■ Total sample

Top activities

In the past 5 years, have you done any of the following?



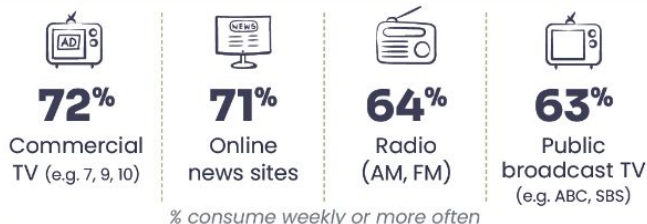
Barriers to action

What currently prevents you or makes it difficult for you to do these types of activities?



Top media sources

Traditional media



Social media





Compassionate Onlookers

22%
of the community

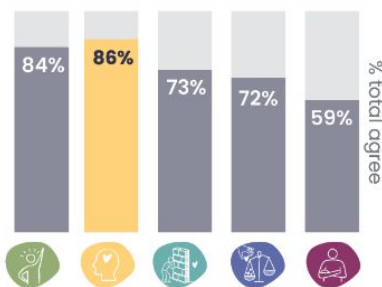
The Compassionate Onlookers are progressive in their attitudes but more passive in their engagement.

They are concerned about the mental health crisis and empathise with those affected by mental ill-health. They have a good understanding of the issue and believe it requires a collective response. This segment is not convinced the mental health system works for everyone. They are more aware of inequality, injustice and barriers — such as shame and stigma — that limit access to support. They are broadly supportive of mental health solutions, especially those that promote equitable access.

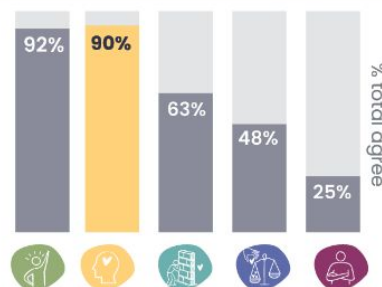
Despite this, the issue of mental health is not top of mind for this segment. Few engage in advocacy or take action beyond consuming mental health content and discussing mental health issues with friends and family. Some feel they lack the time, energy or skills to get more involved.

While some have experienced or been exposed to mental ill-health, and report mixed experiences of mental health services, they are confident the mental health crisis can be fixed.

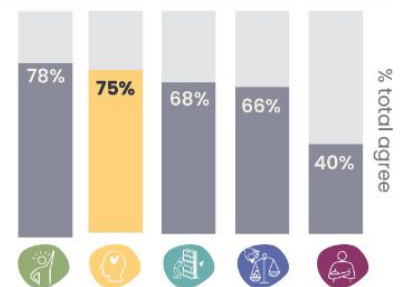
Attitude: We can fix the mental health crisis with the right approach, investment and leadership.



Attitude: We should do everything we can to support people who use alcohol and other drugs to stay healthy and well.



Attitude: Things like racism, poverty, or not feeling safe accessing health services make it harder for some people to get the mental health support they need.



Lived experience

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

29% 
been diagnosed with a mental health condition

11% 
alcohol or other drug dependency

23% 
suicidal thoughts

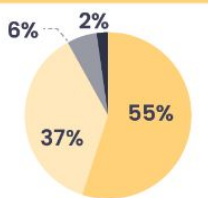
Social Connection

54% 
I feel very connected to the people around me

78% 
I have a person in my life I trust and talk to at least once a week

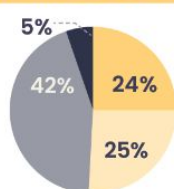
31% 
I often feel lonely and isolated from others

Recent mental health



Mostly good days
Mix of good and bad
Mostly difficult days
Struggle nearly every day

Experience accessing mental health services



42% have never accessed a mental health service

Mostly positive
Mixed
Neutral
Negative

What they think

Every person, no matter their income, should be able to access mental health support if they need it. **92%**

Australia is facing a 'mental health crisis' that needs to be addressed urgently. **91%**

Mental health is just as important to the nation's wellbeing as the economy and education. **90%**

When people have good mental health, communities are stronger, safer, and more connected. **87%**

People who use drugs or drink too much alcohol are just as deserving of mental health support as people with other mental health conditions. **76%**

% total agree

Services and support

Have you ever done any of the following?

43% 
talked to a GP about my mental health

35% 
attended a session with a mental health clinician

12% 
used a mental health helpline or chat service



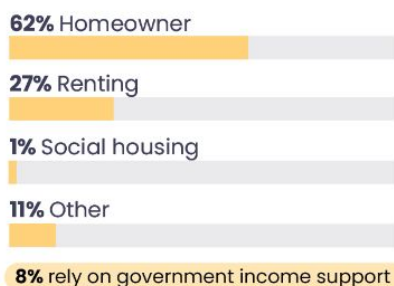
Compassionate Onlookers

Demographics

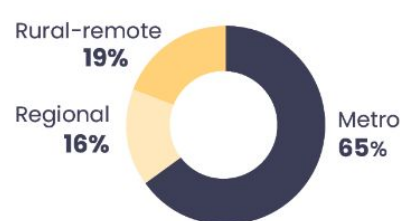
Gender



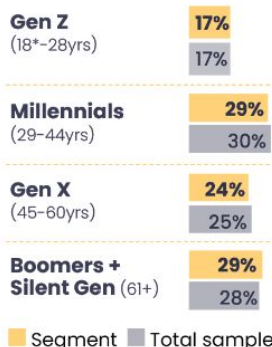
Housing



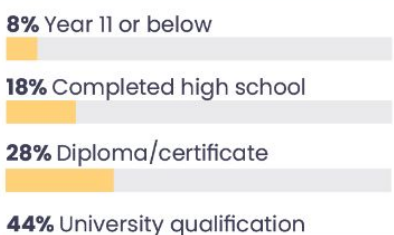
Area



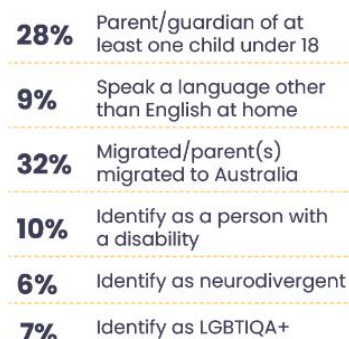
Generation



Education

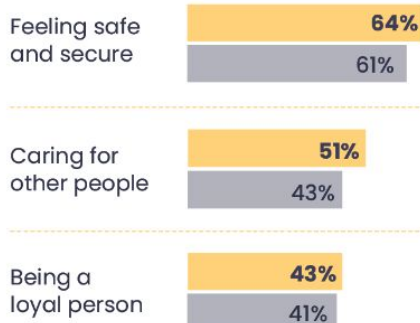


Identity



Core values

Which of these values are most important to you personally and reflect how you live your life?

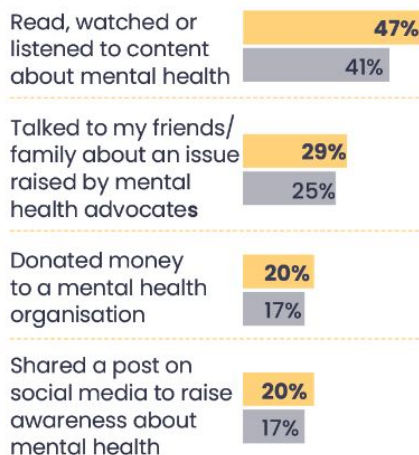


Significantly more likely to value: Fairness and equal opportunity, promoting tolerance and harmony, caring for others.

Segment Total sample

Top activities

In the past 5 years, have you done any of the following?

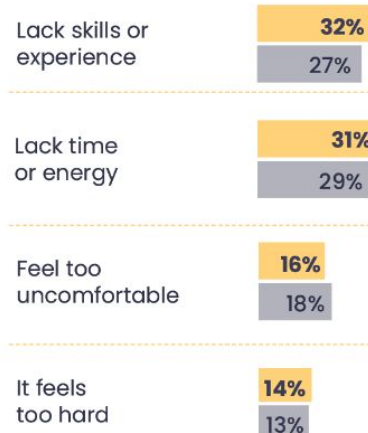


34% haven't engaged in any activities connected to this issue

Segment Total sample

Barriers to action

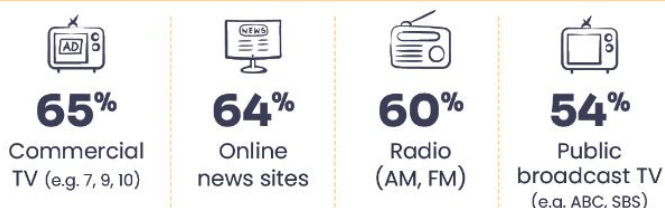
What currently prevents you or makes it difficult for you to do these types of activities?



Segment Total sample

Top media sources

Traditional media



% consume weekly or more often

Social media



% use weekly or more often



Discouraged Battlers

13%
of the community

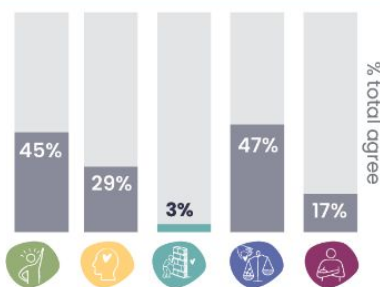
The Discouraged Battlers are characterised by their disillusionment and cynicism towards the mental health system. They feel socially isolated and pessimistic about the direction society is heading. Acutely aware of the impact mental ill-health has on many Australians, they support action to address this issue at every level.

This segment face significant barriers to mental health support. They perceive services as difficult to access and don't feel comfortable seeking help. They are among the hardest hit by mental ill-health, more likely to report experiencing suicidal thoughts, self-harm and mental

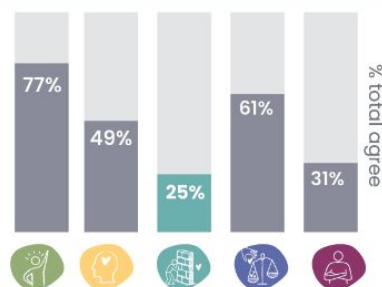
health diagnoses. Their experiences with mental health services tend to be mixed to negative, and they are more likely to have experienced hardships such as financial stress, debt and being at risk of losing housing. Despite shared struggles, this segment is the most diverse in their views, with some leaning progressive and others conservative.

The Discouraged Battlers are more likely to be affected by the issues raised by mental health advocates than actively engaging in advocacy. Nevertheless, they remain hopeful that the mental health crisis can be resolved.

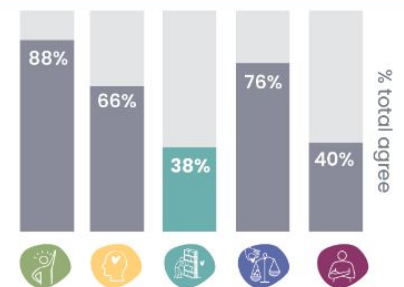
Attitude: Things are generally improving in society.



Attitude: I could access a quality mental health service in my area if I needed to.



Attitude: I would feel comfortable seeking mental health support if I needed it.



Lived experience

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

39%
been diagnosed with a mental health condition

22%
alcohol or other drug dependency

39%
suicidal thoughts

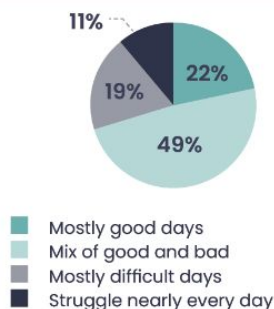
Social Connection

22%
I feel very connected to the people around me

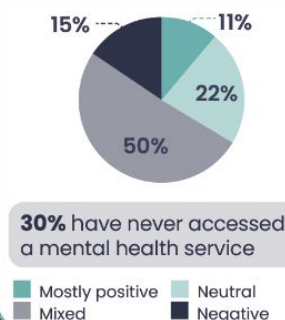
53%
I have a person in my life I trust and talk to at least once a week

60%
I often feel lonely and isolated from others

Recent mental health



Experience accessing mental health services



What they think

Every person, no matter their income, should be able to access mental health support if they need it. **92%**

Mental ill-health is a major issue that affects many Australians. **92%**

Mental health is just as important as physical health. **92%**

Australia is facing a 'mental health crisis' that needs to be addressed urgently. **69%**

It's hard to figure out what mental health support is out there. **53%**

Services and support

Have you ever done any of the following?

50%
talked to a GP about my mental health

43%
attended a session with a mental health clinician

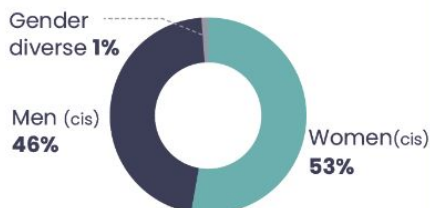
17%
used a mental health helpline or chat service



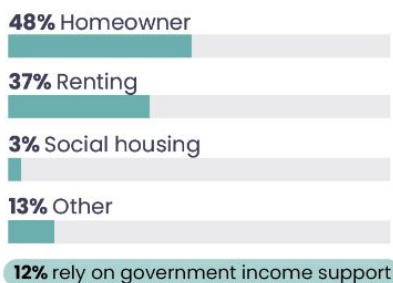
Discouraged Battlers

Demographics

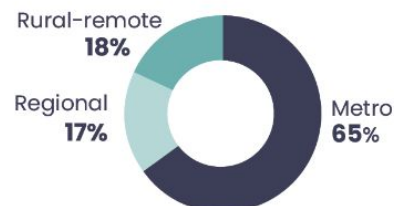
Gender



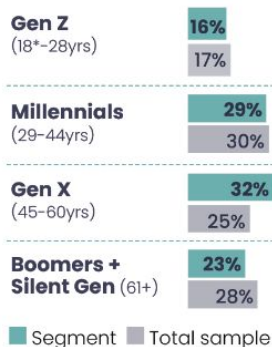
Housing



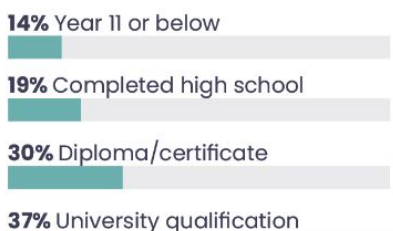
Area



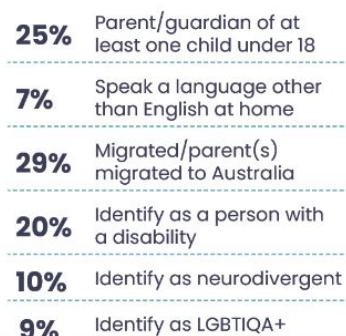
Generation



Education



Identity



Core values

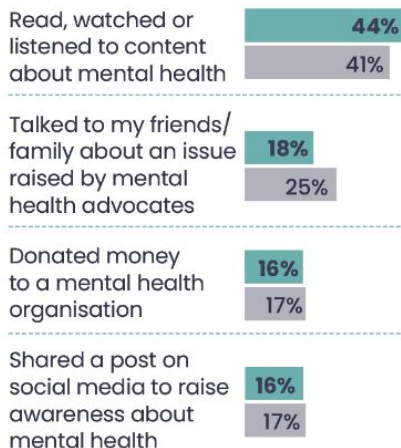
Which of these values are most important to you personally and reflect how you live your life?



Significantly more likely to value: Feeling safe, personal freedom, economic security

Top activities

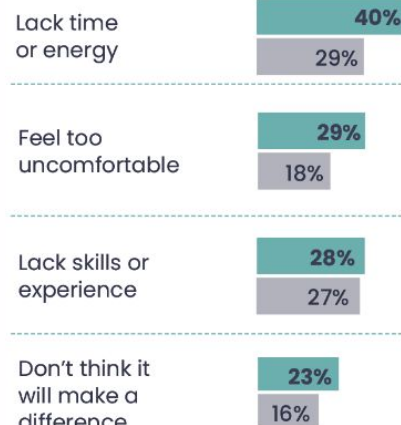
In the past 5 years, have you done any of the following?



39% haven't engaged in any activities connected to this issue

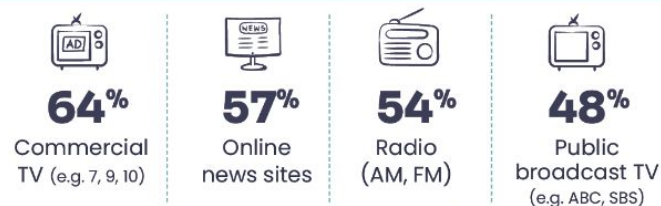
Barriers to action

What currently prevents you or makes it difficult for you to do these types of activities?



Top media sources

Traditional media



% consume weekly or more often

Social media



% use weekly or more often



Conditional Sympathisers

27%
of the community

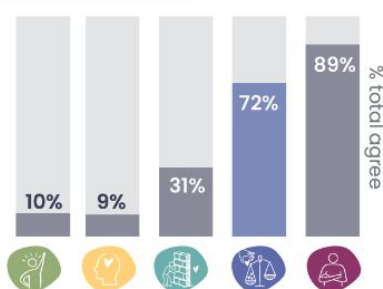
The Conditional Sympathisers recognise mental ill-health as a major issue, but are not deeply invested in it. Moderate in their views, they are split on whether responsibility for mental health sits with individuals or communities. They value personal resilience and are more likely to believe people often exaggerate their mental health issues for attention.

This segment has faith in the mental health system and passively supports whole-of-system solutions. However, they tend to view certain groups, such as people who use alcohol or other drugs, as less deserving of support.

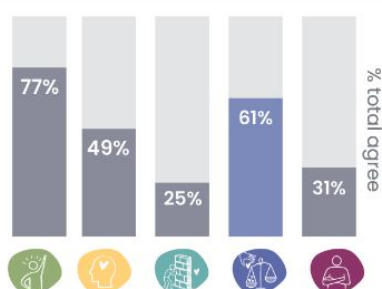
Despite their interest in news and current events, mental health is not a priority issue, and they are less engaged in advocacy activities.

Satisfied with their lives and connected to the people around them, the Conditional Sympathisers are more confident in their ability to access mental health support if needed. They are less likely to have experienced hardship or mental ill-health, and those who have engaged report positive to neutral experiences of mental health services. Though less confident, they believe the mental health crisis can be fixed.

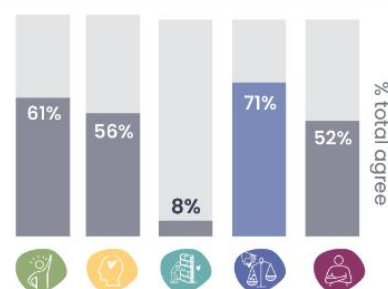
Attitude: Not every life challenge is a mental health issue — we should stop calling this a 'crisis' and focus on building personal resilience.



Attitude: I could access a quality mental health service in my area if I needed to.



Attitude: I feel satisfied with my life — there isn't much I would change about it.



Lived experience

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

17%



been diagnosed with a mental health condition

10%



alcohol or other drug dependency

15%



suicidal thoughts

Social connection

70%



I feel very connected to the people around me

73%



I have a person in my life I trust and talk to at least once a week

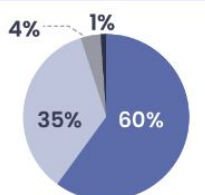
34%



I often feel lonely and isolated from others

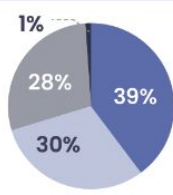
% total agree

Recent mental health



Mostly good days
Mix of good and bad
Mostly difficult days
Struggle nearly every day

Experience accessing mental health services



41% have never accessed a mental health service

Mostly positive
Neutral
Mixed
Negative

What they think

If people choose to use drugs or drink too much alcohol, they have to take responsibility when it affects their mental health

69%

Too many people are being labelled with mental health issues when they're really just facing normal life challenges.

67%

Mental illness makes people unpredictable and unreliable.

65%

Young people these days are too soft and lack resilience.

62%

Too many people are using mental health services for small problems, which makes it harder for those with serious issues to get help.

57%

% total agree

Services and support

Have you ever done any of the following?

31%



talked to a GP about my mental health

24%



attended a session with a mental health clinician

9%



used a mental health helpline or chat service



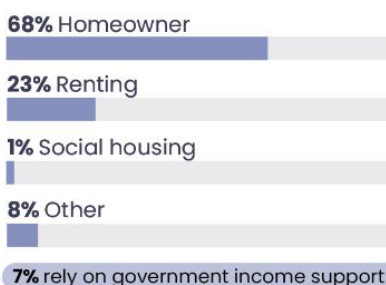
Conditional Sympathisers

Demographics

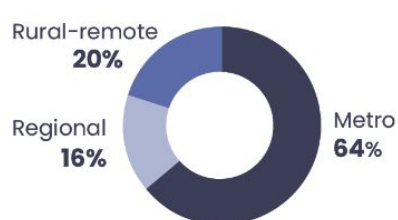
Gender



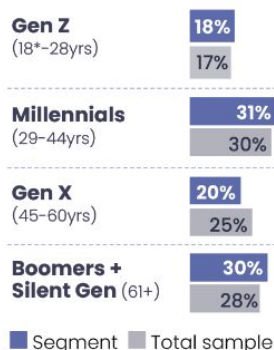
Housing



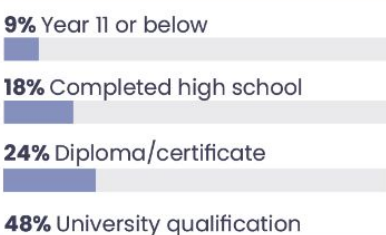
Area



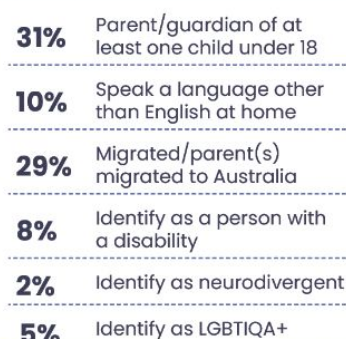
Generation



Education

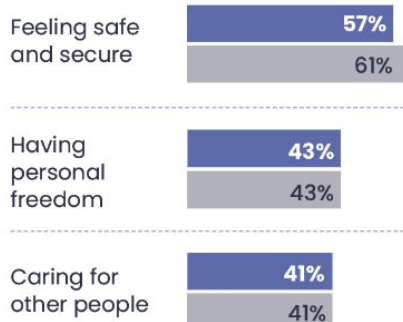


Identity



Core values

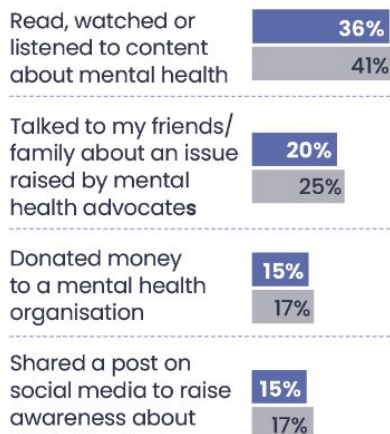
Which of these values are most important to you personally and reflect how you live your life?



Significantly more likely to value: Being successful and achieving goals, having efforts and accomplishments recognised, being a leader, influencing others

Top activities

In the past 5 years, have you done any of the following?



37% haven't engaged in any activities connected to this issue

■ Segment ■ Total sample

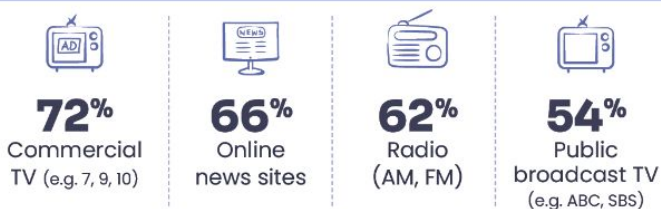
Barriers to action

What currently prevents you or makes it difficult for you to do these types of activities?



Top media sources

Traditional media



Social media





Minimising Resistors

15%
of the community

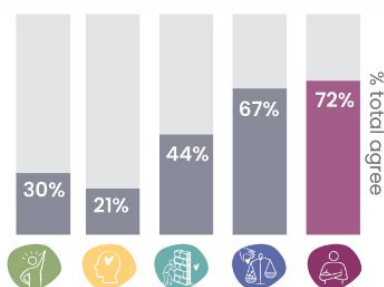
The Minimising Resistors are dismissive of mental health and believe the 'mental health crisis' has been overstated. They believe personal resilience is very important and are concerned that people experiencing 'normal life challenges' are being labelled with 'mental health issues'. They are broadly pessimistic about society and believe people should take responsibility for their own wellbeing. This segment is sceptical of mental health diagnoses, questioning whether some conditions are being over-identified or self-diagnosed because they are 'trending' online. They are much less supportive of mental health

solutions overall, particularly those aimed at supporting people who use alcohol or other drugs. They are the least interested and informed about mental health, and few are engaging in advocacy activities.

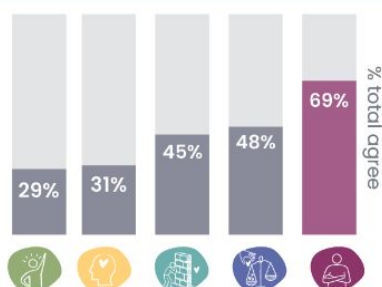
The Minimising Resistors are much less likely to self-report lived experience of hardship and mental ill-health, including diagnoses and accessing support. Those who have accessed mental health services report varied experiences.

Despite their pessimism, this segment is split on whether the 'mental health crisis' is too complex to solve.

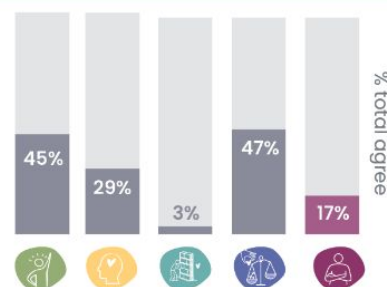
Attitude: Too many people are being labelled with mental health issues when they're really just facing normal life challenges.



Attitude: It's up to each person to take responsibility for their own wellbeing.



Attitude: Things are generally improving in society.



Lived experience

Have you ever experienced any of the following?

9% 
been diagnosed with a mental health condition

11% 
alcohol or other drug dependency

15% 
suicidal thoughts

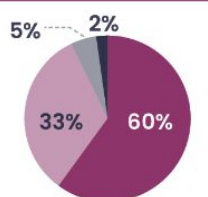
Social connection

47% 
I feel very connected to the people around me

67% 
I have a person in my life I trust and talk to at least once a week

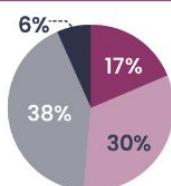
27% 
I often feel lonely and isolated from others

Recent mental health



■ Mostly good days
■ Mix of good and bad
■ Mostly difficult days
■ Struggle nearly every day

Experience accessing mental health services



61% have never accessed a mental health service

■ Mostly positive
■ Mixed
■ Neutral
■ Negative

What they think

Not every life challenge is a mental health issue — we should stop calling this a 'crisis' and focus on building personal resilience. **89%**

Taxpayers should not have to fund treatment services for people who use drugs or drink too much alcohol. **75%**

It feels like everyone is diagnosing themselves with 'anxiety', 'depression' or 'ADHD' just because it's trending online, but most people don't know what they're talking about. **70%**

It's up to each person to take responsibility for their own wellbeing. **69%**

Young people these days are too soft and lack resilience. **69%**

% total agree



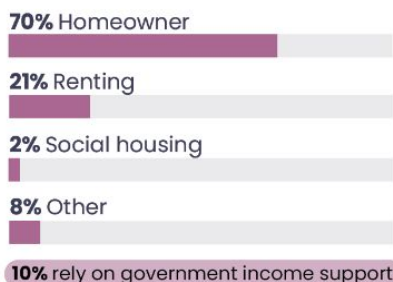
Minimising Resistors

Demographics

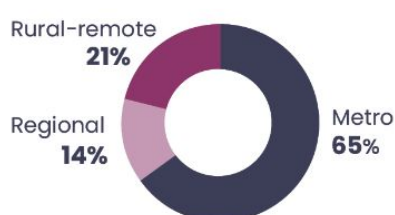
Gender



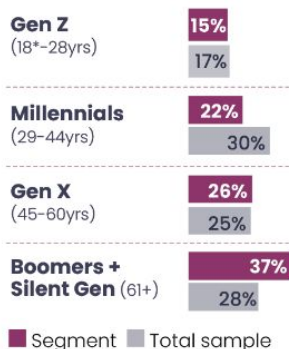
Housing



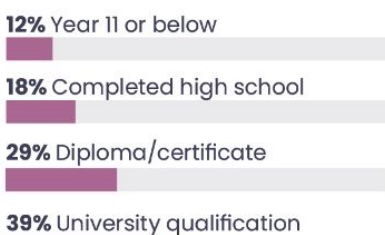
Area



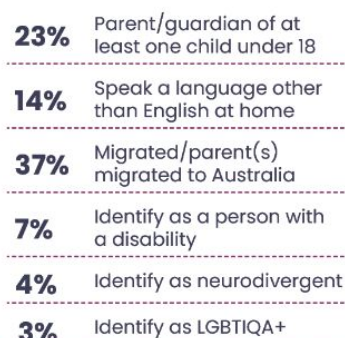
Generation



Education

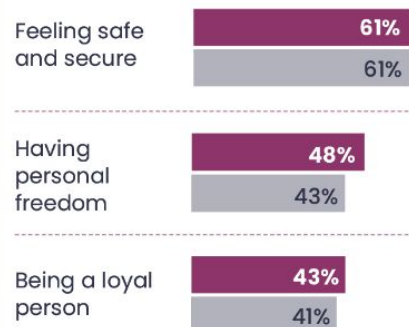


Identity



Core values

Which of these values are most important to you personally and reflect how you live your life?



Significantly more likely to value:
Having economic security, respecting rules and norms, respecting tradition

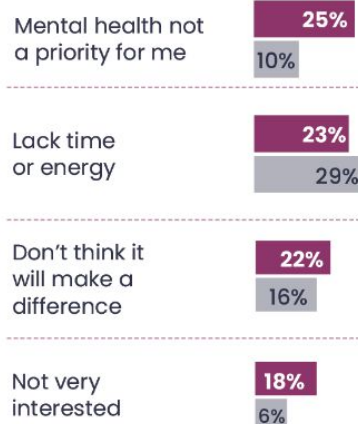
Top activities

In the past 5 years, have you done any of the following?



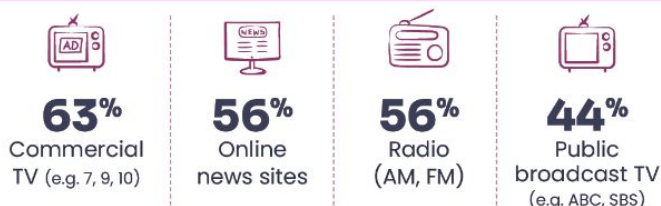
Barriers to action

What currently prevents you or makes it difficult for you to do these types of activities?

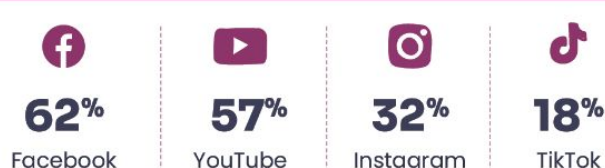


Top media sources

Traditional media



Social media



Key Terms



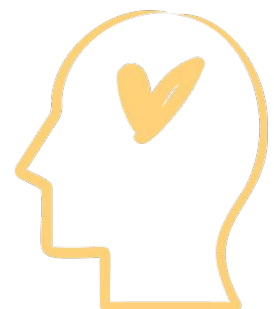
Defining mental health

The key mental health terms used in this report are defined below. These definitions were provided to participants throughout the survey and were developed in consultation with mental health experts and advocates. They were intentionally written in clear, accessible language to aid comprehension and improve the accuracy of responses.

Good mental health is when people feel mostly positive and can cope well with everyday stress. In this state, people can manage their emotions and can enjoy learning, relationships and activities. Even when challenges come up, people can handle them in healthy ways.

Mental ill-health is when someone often feels low, anxious or overwhelmed, and it starts to affect their everyday life. They might struggle with learning, relationships, or daily routines, and may need extra support to cope and feel better. Not everyone with mental ill-health has a diagnosed mental health condition.

Mental health conditions are more than a brief period of mental ill-health. They persist over time and cause major changes to how someone thinks, feels and behaves, impacting their ability to function well in everyday life. Some, but not all, examples include anxiety, depression, substance use disorder, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders. This includes neurodivergences such as ADHD and/or autism.





This original research was commissioned by Australians for Mental Health and was conducted by Dr Rebecca Huntley and Holly McCarthy (89 Degrees East) with support from Chris Strods (CPS Insights). For more information on how we could help you start a discussion and shape Australia's future, contact research@89degreeseast.com

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Dr Rebecca Huntley (89 Degrees East) is a fellow of The Research Society.

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