

REACH ONLINE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Reach workshops are safe and supportive spaces where young people can connect and share stories honestly; spaces where they can experience belonging, discover their strengths, and build their self-efficacy and resilience.

General aims of our workshops:

- Enhance the social and emotional skills of young people
- Build their resilience and belief in themselves and each other as a group
- Promote self-awareness and optimism
- Provide an opportunity to come together as a group in a meaningful way

Reach provides safe and non-judgemental spaces where young people can push their comfort zones, practice their interpersonal skills, and have open and honest conversations with their peers.

Reach supports young people to develop the social and emotional skills they need to be resilient and make positive life choices. It is our experience that it's only when young people discover and work to accept who they truly are, that they are able to develop a greater sense of self-efficacy and purpose in life.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 we believe that it is more important than ever for young people to have access to safe and supportive physical and virtual spaces where they can connect with one another.

HOW WE SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE

Workshops are run by highly-trained workshop facilitators (Reach Crew) and are underpinned by a solid wellbeing framework and child safe practices.

Reach's wellbeing professionals (social workers and psychologists) are present during the program and provide support or guidance for participants before, during or after the workshop where required.

A SAFE (VIRTUAL) SPACE

Reach is committed to creating safe spaces for young people. We have taken the following steps to make our online workshops safe:

- Participants are required to keep their camera/video on for the entire workshop – this is vital for us to monitor how participants are responding/feeling just as we would in a face-to-face workshop.
- Only the person enrolled can attend the program. This means that we will monitor who else is in the room with them and support them to have a private space to join from.
- Participants are required to be present for the entire workshop. If any content is missed (e.g. due to disconnection), a summary of this content will be provided and your young person will be debriefed appropriately.
- The (virtual) room will open 15 minutes prior to the workshop start time to allow time for participants to be checked in and welcomed by the Reach team

- The workshop will be closed to new participants 15 minutes after the designated workshop start time
- Participants' contact details will not be shared/visible
- A secure platform will be used (RingCentral)
- All communication between participants will be monitored (i.e. participants will not be able to send each other private messages)
- All participants are required to read and agree to a set of agreements regarding how to engage in the workshop safely and appropriately, including consequences for breaking/not adhering to these agreements.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY YOUNG PERSON?

In order to make the online workshop as safe and effective as possible, we ask that you support your young person in the following ways:

- **Help them set up a private, quiet space to log in from** - this should be a space where your young person cannot be overheard and feels comfortable to speak, and should be appropriate (i.e. not in bed). It's important that your young person is the only person in the room they log in from, so it will also be helpful if you can speak to other members of the household about not interrupting your young person during the program, and keeping noise to a minimum. Think of it as giving your young person the same level of privacy and independence as when you have dropped them off at a social or sporting event.
- **Be at home and available during and after each workshop** - it's important that you are available to support your young person during and after the program if needed, including being contactable by the Reach wellbeing team (via phone). If your young person becomes disconnected during the workshop (e.g. due to internet connectivity issues) we will try to contact your young person in the first instance, and if we cannot reach them we will call you directly to make sure everything is ok and help your young person re-join the workshop.
- **Be sensitive to their needs** - Following a Reach workshop you can be sensitive to their needs by being curious and open-minded about their experience and allowing them to share with you if and when they choose. Even if they don't want share or talk about their experience, simply being present is a powerful way to connect (e.g. doing things together like preparing dinner or watching a favourite tv show).

QUESTIONS & FURTHER SUPPORT

If you have any questions about our online programs or Reach in general, contact our community programs manager Emily via return email or phone on (03) 9412 0910.

If you have any concerns or are unsure about how to support your young person, please contact the Reach Wellbeing Team for assistance on (03) 9412 0907. Whilst we do not provide long-term individual support, our Wellbeing Team works in partnership with young people and their current support network to ensure that their support needs are understood, and assist in the process of seeking out and engaging additional support professionals or services where needed.