

MISSION AUSTRALIA Youth Survey 2012-16

In association with



**Black Dog
Institute**

Key policy recommendations:

- Schools should provide evidence-based universal mental health prevention and intervention programs for young people. This will require additional government funding for schools to resource these programs.
- Technology that provides an alternative to face to face service delivery should be supported and invested in to meet the mental health needs of young people.
- Friends and family need to be equipped to provide support to young people when they seek help in relation to their mental health. Peer support networks and peer education initiatives should also be utilised.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people need access to culturally sensitive and age appropriate mental health services that are close to their homes. Intergenerational disadvantage must also be addressed as a priority with these efforts led by Aboriginal elders and communities.
- A gendered approach to the mental health of young people is required that takes into account help seeking preferences as well as other social pressures such as gender-based discrimination and ideals of appearance.
- Community based recovery orientated supports are needed to complement clinical and acute care services.
- Young people should be engaged in designing youth-friendly mental health services and as advocates on important mental health issues. Young people experiencing mental illness should be recognised as experts in their own lives.

There needs to be more talk about mental health issues, so that people won't be afraid to speak up about their issues. (Female, 18, VIC)

There should be more information that is fact-checked and more information on how to help people with anxiety and depression and how to support them. (Female, 15, SA)

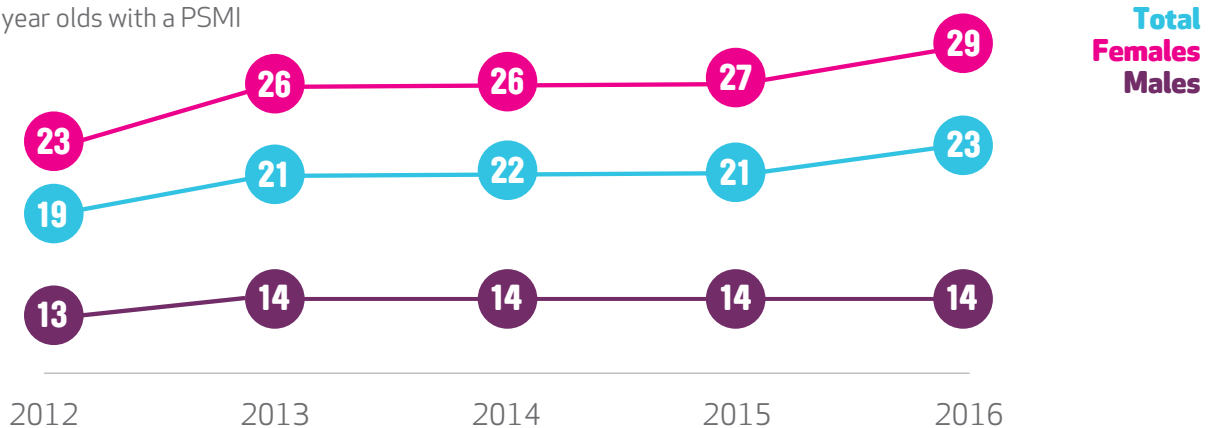
Lifting of the taboo upon mental illness... Even though it has been attempted it is definitely still there. It should be worn the same way as a cut or a bruise is (Male, 15, NSW)





Probable serious mental illness (PSMI) has increased among young people over the past 5 years, particularly among females

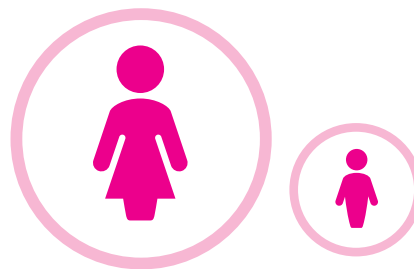
% of 15-19 year olds with a PSMI



3 in 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents met the criteria for PSMI



2 in 10 non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents met the criteria for PSMI



Females are twice as likely as males to meet the criteria for PSMI

Top concerns

Those with a PSMI have been consistently more likely to be 'extremely' or 'very' concerned about a range of issues, particularly:

coping with stress



school or study problems



depression



Top 3 sources of help

for young people **WITH** a PSMI:

- 1 Friends**
- 2 Parents**
- 3 The internet**

for young people **WITHOUT** a PSMI:

- 1 Friends**
- 2 Parents**
- 3 Relatives/family friends**

If you are a young person and need someone to talk with, you can contact Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 (24/7) kidshelpline.com.au

For more information: researchandpolicy@missionaustralia.com.au

To download the report: missionaustralia.com.au