

2020

# Event Organiser Kit

Helping you run a successful Queensland Mental Health Week event



10-18 October 2020

#QMHW

[www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au](http://www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au)

## In this kit

What is Queensland Mental Health Week? .....	3
Why get involved? .....	3
How to get involved .....	4
Inspiration from last year.....	5
Event ideas.....	7
Prepare for a great event.....	8
Promoting your event.....	9
Getting the most out of the media .....	10
Event day preparation .....	11
Event planning checklist .....	12
Contact information.....	13



Queensland

Mental Health  
Week



@MentalHealthWeek



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QMHW



QMHWTakeTime



qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

# What is Queensland Mental Health Week?

Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) is an annual event that aims to improve community awareness and interest in mental health and wellbeing across the state. The event is linked to National Mental Health Week and World Mental Health Day, held annually on 10 October. Because of COVID-19, we are facing extra challenges this year, but it's also a more critical time than ever to value our mental health.

## TAKE TIME – FOR MENTAL HEALTH

This year's theme is Take time — for mental health

*Take time* is about taking a moment to do some of the simple things anyone can do to boost their mental wellbeing.

*Take time* is also about breaking down the stigma associated with mental illness and reaching out to people in our communities who need support.

Let's take time for mental health together — at home, at school, at work, and at play.

## Why get involved?

Mental health is important to every single one of us, yet it is a part of life we often overlook. Busy lives get in the way of us caring for our mental health, as does a fear of feeling vulnerable if we share our mental health challenges.

Queensland Mental Health Week is an opportunity to bring communities together, reach out to those who need support, and shine a spotlight on the things we can all do to support mental health.

# How to get involved

## Host an event

A Queensland Mental Health Week event is a great way to encourage awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing in your community. An event can also build better understanding of mental health, decrease stigma, and empower people to seek help. If you're planning on hosting, or helping to host an event, this kit is for you!

## Support an event

Last year, 318 events were held as part of Queensland Mental Health Week all over the state. The majority of these were organised and run by volunteers. If you are looking to make a difference, but cannot host an event, you could find an event near you and offer your help. Otherwise, just going to an event makes a difference. Show your support and engage with the community by making time to attend an event.

## Can't make it to an event?

You can still make a big difference! Reaching out to friends, family, workmates, or people in the community is something we can all do. It doesn't take much to start a dialogue, but it can make a big impact. Whether it's sharing your own mental health challenges, or just being there to listen and support others—conversations about mental health matter. We have [shareables](#) available if you want to take this conversation online too.

## Inspiration from last year

We get to hear about so many great events each year. Here is a small selection of some events from 2019 to get you inspired.

### **ISC Staff Well Being Morning Tea**

*A scrumptious morning tea brought all the staff from Innisfail State College together to help mark the beginning of Queensland Mental Health Week.*

### **Gladiator Colour Run @ Glenala SHS**

*LIVIN came to the school to present their LivinWell program to the students. This was followed by Glenala's first ever Gladiator Colour Run after school. The Colour Run was full of fun, music, activities, dance and of course loads of colour! There were also stalls from local mental health service providers with heaps of information and giveaways.*

### **Tackling Tough Times Together (Thallon)**

*This event brought the Thallon community together to connect and support each other, share stories of the impact of the drought, and lift spirits through beautiful food, music, and dance provided by Thallon's incredible Fijian community.*

### **Take Time to Create (Brisbane)**

*An all-day spectacular event that encapsulating all modalities of Creative Arts Therapies and focused on supporting and improving Mental Health for LGBTI+ Sistergirl & Brotherboy young people between the ages of 12-24 and their families, carers and support people.*

### **Goompi Projects - Saltwater Healing (Dunwich)**

*Goompi Projects invited the local community on North Stradbroke Island, Minjerribah to take time to talk about mental health and join in on a range of activities, culture and educational talks. There was delicious food, musical entertainment, art and sport workshops, sound healing, weaving and yarnning circles.*

### **Don't Retire Your Hopes (Logan)**

*The luncheon and mental wellbeing event was held for middle aged and older people and discussed the challenges associated with getting older. The event started with an interactive and relaxed wellbeing workshop, led by a professional and experienced facilitator, followed by a luncheon during which the participants had time to network and socialise.*

### **Being Understood and Accepted (Kilkivan)**

*This event fostered social cohesion and brought those at risk of isolation to an event where they could have fun safely. Games of large chess and other games were held in Lions Park. Staff from Gympie Regional Council and other agencies were in attendance. It was not about having someone lecture about mental health issues but having those with mental health issues join in and talk about their issues with others in an understanding and accepting environment.*



## COVID-19 considerations

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect Queensland and the rest of the world, we understand it might be difficult to run events that involve physical interaction this year. Despite this challenge, it is now even more important than ever for us to connect with one another. We are hopeful that Queenslanders will tackle this challenge and find ways to connect with their community while adhering to any restrictions that are still in place.

### Online

The internet can allow for social connection with physical distancing, so will play a huge part in QMHW 2020. You may want to consider:

- Turning a seminar or talk into a webinar
- Using [Zoom](#) or similar software for an online group meet-up
- Holding a virtual lesson for meditation, yoga, dance, fitness, etc.

### Physical

Depending on the restrictions still in place, events may have to consider how they can minimise contact between people. This does not necessarily mean all physical events and activities will be cancelled. Some events that you could consider are:

- Scavenger hunt type activities like the COVID-19 [bear hunts](#)
- Events from individual driveways: neighbourhood dinner parties, art, singing, etc.
- Walks/hikes that people can go on in small groups

Events don't have to be big to make a big impact. We encourage you to plan an event or activity of any size.

Creativity and innovation will be important this year when planning events around COVID-19. It is a year where taking time to reach out to those in our community who are especially vulnerable is more important than ever. Special consideration should also be made for those without internet.

If you decide not to hold an activity or event yourself, you can still take time to reach out to people in your life or attend a public event.



## Event ideas

Whether your goal is to bring your community together, raise awareness, or break down stigma, there are countless ways to be part of QMHW. Think big or think small, whatever is achievable for you. Simply participate in a way that is meaningful to you, your workplace, your school, or your community. Here are a few ideas:

### Get physical

The link between physical activity and mental wellness is well known. Organise a walk, run, cycle, swim, yoga, or meditation session.

### Appreciate nature

Take time to get outdoors and enjoy your surroundings. A guided walk, nature photography session, picnic in the park, or community gardening day would make for an event that can help boost mental wellbeing.

### Support our future

Children and young people are our future; their mental health is critical. Hold an educational event at school or a youth organisation and make sure they feel supported.

### Connect at work

Most of us spend a lot of our time at work, so it's very valuable to have a mentally healthy workplace. Hold a morning or afternoon tea at work and connect with your co-workers.

### Educate

Increase public knowledge and awareness with an educational event. You could organise a workshop, seminar, or expo to help people learn more about mental health.

### Fundraise with food

You could raise money for a mental health organisation or charity and bring your community together to discuss wellbeing while sharing some delicious food. Don't forget to include some healthy food options!

### Help the environment

Get people together and feel good as you care for our planet by enjoying an activity that nurtures our environment. Hold a tree planting event, community clean up, or any activity that reuses, recycles, or repairs.

### Belong

If you're part of a group with unique mental health challenges, consider having an event within that community. A sense of belonging is great for our mental health. Celebrate togetherness by connecting in your community.

### Get arty

Get creative and centre your event around the arts. Hold an art show, concert, pottery class, or movie screening with a mental health theme.



# Prepare for a great event

## Define your 'why?'

Ask, does my event:

- promote activities that enhance mental, physical, social, and spiritual wellbeing;
- provide information on mental health and wellbeing;
- reduce the stigma associated with mental illness;
- promote this year's theme and why it is important to #TakeTime for mental health;
- make or improve connections in the community; or
- encourage help-seeking and self-care?

Your event should address at least one of these elements.

## Identify your audience

Your event can be open to everyone in the community or you may choose to involve a specific group, such as your workplace, your school, a youth or sporting group, or any other community group.

Your event could also involve a particular demographic, gender, or locality.

## Clarify your message

What is the main goal of your event? It may be:

- promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in a particular community
- getting together to build stronger social connections
- providing a place for people to feel and be supported

Decide what your primary goal is and promote your event as such.

## Value lived experience

For those of us living with mental illness, there remain many myths and misconceptions out there. For events during QMHW, it is important we don't unintentionally reinforce these. Get guidance on how to navigate this terrain from [mindframe.org.au](http://mindframe.org.au).

## Make a plan

Once you have made the decision to host an event, start to plan. Consider the budget, venue, local government requirements, marketing and promotion, risk management, and a run sheet. See our Event Planning Checklist on page 10.

## Consider grants, sponsorship, or volunteers

To help fund your event you could check out the official [QMHW Grants Program](#), what grants are available from your local council or seek sponsorship from businesses whose values align with promoting mental health and wellbeing. You could also partner with another organisation to spread costs and increase your impact or put a call-out to your networks for volunteers to help assist.

QMHW events grant applications open on 1 June and close on 24 July. There are grants of up to \$2,500 available, with more information available on our [website](#).

## Register your event

By registering, your event will be acknowledged as a QMHW event, with the choice of whether it's listed as a public (open to everyone) or private (which won't display its location). Registration is also a prerequisite for a QMHW grant. To register, visit our [website](#).



# Promoting your event

Once you have registered your event, it's time to start promoting it! Promotion is about making sure the right people show up to your event.

To ensure you increase the number of people who can attend you need to use the right tools at the right time. Above all, don't be shy! Promote your event wherever and whenever you can (while keeping in mind there are government [regulations](#) and [guidelines](#)).

## Resources and merchandise

To get you started, a number of [resources](#) are available for download on our website to support mental health, including QMHW posters and digital media.

A range of merchandise will also be available for purchase closer to the date from our official merchandise partner, Canefield Clubhouse, via our [website](#).

### Register on our website

By registering your event with QMHW, you gain the reach of our social media channels. But that shouldn't stop you using your own social media channels too.

### Send personal invitations

There may be specific people you wish to invite from government or business. Securing 'special guests' can also be a great way to give weight and credibility to your event.

### Use your networks

Consider asking local schools, councils, community organisations, and businesses to help promote your event through their channels. Local Councillors and Members of Parliament will sometimes also make mention of local activities in their communications to their constituents.

### Local media

Newspapers and magazines often use media releases as a source for stories. You should also publish or share any media releases through your own channels.

You can also contact your local newspaper, radio, or television station to see if they will advertise your event or become a sponsor. For more help with promoting your event through the media, see page 10.

### Digital media

Make sure to promote your event on all your social media too.

### Go viral

Viral marketing is about spreading information from person to person. Forward emails or social media posts to friends and ask them to share. Just remember privacy laws and good manners prevail.

You could look up social media pages and groups to post to, such as your local council, local library, or community groups.

### Advertise in newsletters, event calendars, and community notices

Your place of employment, the local library, cafés, shops, and community noticeboard are great places to advertise your event. Local councils, universities, and schools are also great places to advertise. Among these organisations you should be able to tap into a range of eNews and events channels as well as physical noticeboards.



# Getting the most out of the media

Gaining media coverage is a fantastic way of promoting your event! Remember, media outlets are always looking for stories, so make it easy for them and you'll increase your chances of spreading the word.

## Resources

To get you started, [here](#) is a step-by-step guide from Queensland Health on how to write a media release and a list of [media contacts](#).

### Have an angle

Give some prior thought to what's newsworthy about your event. You could follow both a human interest and a local angle, relating the event to social issues or to how 'awareness raising' can help the community. Also consider the call to action. Are you trying to get people to attend an event? Or are you trying to get people to donate? A clear message will come across better.

### Be prepared

Before you contact journalists, have a media release written and ready to go. Make sure you include the event date and time, location, and names of special guests. Also, don't forget to add your contact details so media can contact you.

Add weight to your release by tying it into QMHW. It is also a good idea to have someone with an eagle-eye proofread your release to pick out any typos. Depending on the media outlet, you might also like to invite them on the date to take picture or run a follow-up story.

### Pictures count

Newspapers and websites love photos, so if you supply an image or give them a great idea for a photo and make yourself available for it, you will greatly increase your chances of coverage.

Make sure to supply a high-resolution image (in jpeg format) along with your media release, prior to the event. For example, you can send images of last year's event. You can also follow up your media release with a phone call to pitch a great visual element in more detail.

### Identify your target

How you go about finding journalists will depend on which media outlets you are targeting.

You can look at the front of your local newspaper for general contact details or research the names of specific journalists whose byline appears beside written articles. You can also search for local radio newsreaders and TV news presenters.

Don't be afraid to ring up media outlets and ask for contact details as well.

Here are more ways to find media contact details:

- Media outlets will often have contact details on their website and social media pages.
- If you have a journalist's name, try Googling them or searching for their Twitter profile
- Your local library may have a copy of *Margaret Gee's Australian Media Guide*, a published list of Australian media contacts.

As well as media outlets in your geographic area, you can try targeting specialist media outlets that cover topics related to your event or workplace.

### Help journalists help others

Assist journalists to provide help seeking information where possible. Include at least one source of counselling, treatment, or support service relevant to your audience or event.

For help with how to talk about mental illness in the media, a great resource is [mindframe.org.au](#).

# ▶ Event day preparation

You've registered what you are doing on the Queensland Mental Health Week website, you've got your media release locked and loaded and your social media accounts are buzzing. Now it's time for the event!

## The day before

- ✓ Gather staff/volunteers for full briefing
- ✓ Distribute a final run sheet outlining event sequence, timings, and responsibilities
- ✓ Organise volunteer registration area or entertainer's area
- ✓ Circulate contact list with mobile numbers to all staff/volunteers
- ✓ Review chain of command in case of an emergency
- ✓ Contact media (if attending)
- ✓ Get your gear packed and ready to go

## After the event

- ✓ Remove all equipment and rubbish
- ✓ Send thank you letters to staff, volunteers, performers, and special guests
- ✓ Engage and ask for feedback on social media
- ✓ Close off budget
- ✓ Hold a debrief session to look at ways of improving the event next year

Queensland Mental Health Week is designed to get people talking about positive mental health and wellbeing, so come event day, be prepared.

## Respectful communication

Given the reason for the event, people are likely to want to talk about their own mental health and wellbeing. If someone starts talking with you about a mental health challenge, they trust you to be understanding and non-judgemental.

While it can be helpful to share your own experiences, try to avoid making comparisons and respect that everyone is entitled to determine their own course of action.

Sometimes people just want to be heard.

## Support resources

Be prepared! Valuable things to pack for the day include leaflets and information packs from local mental health and wellness providers and services.

For many people, reaching out to seek help can be a huge barrier to overcome. They may only reach out once, so be ready to act. Ask directly if they need to talk to someone, encourage the person to seek help, and give them information about where they can find help.

## Know your boundaries

Before the event talk to all staff and volunteers asking them to think about their boundaries.

Consider the following questions as prompts:

- What do you feel confident talking about?
- What are your competencies?
- What might you need more information or support with?
- How can you direct people to support resources or services?
- When might you need to refer someone to another source of assistance?



# Event planning checklist

The following list is big, but if your event is small, don't let this list intimidate you: use it as a starting point to help you think through your 'to-do' list.

## Local government requirements

- Inform local government of event and gain approval if required

## Budget

- Prepare an event budget if necessary and monitor your spending

## Participant registration and invitations

- Consider using a free online event registration form
- Link to it from your website if you have one
- Email past participants an invitation

## Event agenda/run sheet

- Develop event timeline
- Include timings, responsibilities, and key contacts

## Contractors

- Insurance: public liability, staff, volunteers
- Order equipment such as stage, lighting, PA, etc
- Book portable toilets, marquee, generators, etc
- Book entertainment and MC if needed
- Book and confirm all contractors in writing

## Risk management

- Conduct risk assessment
- Create risk management plan
- Contingency plans—wet weather, low attendance
- Book first aid officer/s
- Book security, two-way radios, etc
- Consider crowd control and cash security

## Essential services

- Notify police, ambulance, and fire brigade

## Food vendors

- Book food vendors
- Ensure compliance with food laws
- Request details of electrical requirements

## Toilets, cleaning and maintenance plan

- If not on-site, book toilets, cleaners, etc
- Clean up venue/mow lawn/clear area of debris

## Sponsorship

- Create a sponsorship proposal
- Identify potential sponsors
- Deliver sponsorship packages and follow up
- Use sponsor testimonials
- Acknowledge sponsors, before, during, and after the event

## Marketing and promotion

- Develop marketing/communication plan
- Design promotional material
- Create a website or use your page on the Queensland Mental Health Week website
- Distribute flyers/posters/email/brochures
- Submit event information to local events calendars and websites
- Prepare and distribute a media release

## Location

- Design plan of venue/event site
- Consider transportation and parking

## Permits and licences

- Apply for any food permits required
- If using music, apply for a noise permit
- Road closures—send applications early

## Waste management

- Develop waste management plan
- Promote reducing waste in marketing material

## Traffic management

- Design traffic plan
- Consider signage, disabled parking, pedestrian access, marshals, entry/exits, lighting, road closures
- Promote alternative transport

## Other

- Adequately brief staff and volunteers
- Organise awards/trophies/certificates and decorations

## Contact information

For further information, please visit our [website](#).

Email: [info@qldmentalhealthweek.org.au](mailto:info@qldmentalhealthweek.org.au)

Phone: 1300 640 709



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