



Supporting  
your team's  
mental health  
& wellbeing

# SelfCare Canberra

13 July - 31 August

**mieact**

mental health & well-being  
education & training providers

Over the last few months, we have all rapidly adjusted our lives in the face of the **Covid-19 pandemic**.

This adjustment, while keeping us safe,  
has greatly affected our  
**autonomy, social connection, and certainty:**  
three major predictors for mental wellness.

# Our current state

- When we perceive ourselves to be in a threatening environment our bodies activate the stress response to remain heightened to danger and keep us safe, which is mentally taxing and causes a **drastic reduction in productivity**.
- The current environment takes **25% more energy** for us to navigate, so it is not unusual for our staff to report feeling exhausted, drained or challenged.
- Practicing self-care is an everyday activity to maintain the mental health of your workplace and our community. **Only 40% of Australians intentionally implement self-care strategies into their lives.** Self-care looks different for everyone but the positive impacts are consistent and can help address the impact of mental illness for you and the people you care for.

## How our workplaces are changing during the pandemic

25%

more energy required  
to process our new  
working environments

3:1

positive reinforcement  
required to meet the  
same outputs

73%

of Australian workers  
felt stressed about  
work **before** COVID-19



## Recalibrating ideas to maintain productivity

- Where possible reduce workloads or relax expectations, and actively communicate this to your team.
- Focus on outcomes rather than time. Be flexible with work hours.
- Build an inclusive and supportive workplace culture
- Become a leader in self-care and well-being for you and your team
- Utilise your team members and their strengths
- Start meetings with wellbeing (grounding techniques, sharing self-care, gratitude)
- Prepare staff for changes in the environment with forward focused communication.

One of the biggest predictors for mental wellness or increased positive recovery from mental illness, is **relatedness and social connection.**



## Create safe environments

1. There needs to be an **intentional** activation of **reward state**.
2. Use the **3:1 ratio**
  - Celebrate specific achievements in the day to day
  - Be clear about short term productivity and measurable ways to determine success
  - This is not the time to reduce staff benefits
    - encourage leave
    - encourage **self-care**
    - encourage proactive access to EAP (i.e. don't wait for things to build up, consider a check in appointment.)
    - keep checking in
    - give opportunities to activate
  - Consider what to do when the organisation is experiencing restrictions due to funding, service increases etc.

## **Certainty and autonomy**

both help us to have a sense of control over our lives,  
and decreases our overall stress response.



## Provide certainty

1. Uncertainty is **over two times more likely** to elicit a negative stress response than expected life stress (e.g. finance, study, job stress)
2. Where possible, clarify potentially unknown variables in your workplace to reduce staff stress related to uncertainty. e.g. Reassure staff that their positions are currently secure or if budget cuts need to be made, be transparent as soon as possible with your team. i.e. Explain how budget cuts will specifically impact job function, rewards, or security.
3. Provide positive feedback about specific tasks so that employees feel seen and valued.



## Build autonomy

1. Focus on outputs (instead of start and finish)
2. Engage employees in co-design pivot planning
3. Reduce micromanagement behavior
4. Make it safe to make mistakes. A workforce afraid to fail is a workforce that will shy away from trying new things and thinking outside the box. Let your staff know it's OK to make mistakes and the best way to communicate when a mistake has been made.
5. Give clear boundaries to work within. Autonomy doesn't mean free-reign. Providing clear boundaries allows staff to choose HOW they accomplish a task.

**Next step** – Implement **intentional** self-care practices into your workplace

# Participating in Self Care Canberra is a good start and it's **FREE**

# SelfCare Canberra

**13 July - 31 August**

1. **Register to participate.** We will get in touch with you and organise for one of our Educators to come and talk to you and your staff about your mental health concerns for free.
2. **Download the free resources**
3. **Share and start talking about self-care in your workplace.**  
Try some of our suggestions on how to engage your staff using the resources provided.
4. **Set up a staff meeting or event** with our MIEACT Educator to talk to your team (online or face to face)

**Follow up** - Equip your team with mental health skills, strategies and knowledge through embedded education and training programs

# Workplace Mental Health 101

**An introduction to mental health that builds an understanding of the myths and facts. This workshop includes real life stories and provides practical examples of help-seeking behaviours.**

**Suitable for:** staff at all levels of an organisation

**Effective as:** new staff inductions and annual staff well-being awareness programs

**Customised to:** address the specific operations of individual workplaces and/or the impact of specific mental health experiences

**Delivered by:** trained volunteer educators and guided by the MIEACT DoNoHarm safe story telling framework.

**This program will benefit your workplace by:**

- Creating a safe and supportive environment for staff to have open conversation about mental health
- Minimising absenteeism by connecting your staff to the benefits of early help seeking
- Empowering your staff to explore self-care strategies leading to increased workplace engagement

**By the end of the session staff will:**

- Articulate the prevalence of mental illness
- Understand what stigma is
- Identify negative consequences of stigma
- Identify where to go for help

# Workplace Stress Better

**Designed to build an understanding between stress and anxiety. This workshop equips participants to respond to, manage and cope with stressors.**

**Suitable for:** staff at all levels of an organisation

**Effective as:** team building program, preparing teams for change, major projects or peak period training

**Customised to:** address the specific operations of individual workplaces

**Delivered by:** trained educators and guided by the MIEACT DoNoHarm safe story telling framework.

**This program will benefit your workplace by:**

- Building resilient teams by equipping staff with effective self-management skills
- Optimising workplace performance when staff understand the effects of stress and how they respond
- Driving a positive workplace culture by equipping staff with strategies to handle difficult situations

**By the end of the session staff will:**

- Increase their understanding of stress and the effects it can have on them
- Understand stress tolerance and the ways we hurt or help our stress levels
- Identify areas of influence and control for individual stress
- Learn simple strategies to respond to stress and identify when to seek help

# Workplace Trauma Awareness

**This workshop increases the understanding of unresolved trauma. Participants learn to recognise the trauma response in themselves and others and how to seek help.**

**Suitable for:** front of house, service delivery teams, supervisors and management

**Customised to:** address the specific operations of individual workplaces and/or the impact of specific mental health experiences

**Delivered by:** trained educators and guided by the MIEACT DoNoHarm safe story telling framework.

**This program will benefit your workplace by:**

- Preventing crisis situations by empowering staff to respond and communicate effectively to trauma.
- Preparing your organisation to identify the trauma response to minimise long term impacts
- Developing a workplace that understands the differences between performance and a trauma response and introduces modifications that create safe work environments.

**By the end of the session staff will:**

- Know about unresolved trauma and have an increased understanding of available treatments and ways to seek help
- Know how to decrease escalation and communicate effectively with those who have experienced trauma
- Be able to identify people at risk of trauma, possess positive coping strategies and know how to apply them
- Understand the importance of social connectedness

# Workplace DoNOHarm

**Explore personal and professional boundaries to stay safe when hearing and sharing potentially triggering information and build skills to use inclusive language and minimize referred trauma.**

This program is a practical application of MIEACT's DoNOHarm Framework(c)2011 a best practice approach to communicating about mental illness.

**Suitable for:** all staff starting with management, support staff, teams and executive groups

**Customised to:** address the specific operations of individual workplaces

**Delivered by:** trained educators and guided by the MIEACT DoNoHarm safe story telling framework.

**This program will benefit your workplace by:**

- Building a mentally healthy workplace culture by establishing best practice communication techniques across the organisation
- Reducing harmful behaviours through an in-depth understanding of stigma, it's effects and the role all staff play
- Attracting and retaining engaged staff by demonstrating you prioritise the wellbeing of your employees leading to increased workplace engagement

**By the end of the session staff will:**

- Explore the 6 principles of DoNOHarm
- Build an in-depth understanding of stigma and it's impact on people with a lived experience
- Communicate about mental health confidently
- Learn practical strategies to sustain their own wellbeing when supporting others

## Our story

Established in 1993, **Mental Illness Education ACT** is a not-for-profit organization providing mental health education to the Canberra community for over 25 years.

### Our vision

Address stigma so people are empowered to sustain their mental health and well-being.

### Our mission

As a recovery driven organisation we embrace the lived experience to provide mental health education awareness programs in schools and the community to address stigma, increase knowledge and promote help seeking

## Our impact 19/20

**32,511**

people reached

**305**

sessions delivered

**25,891**

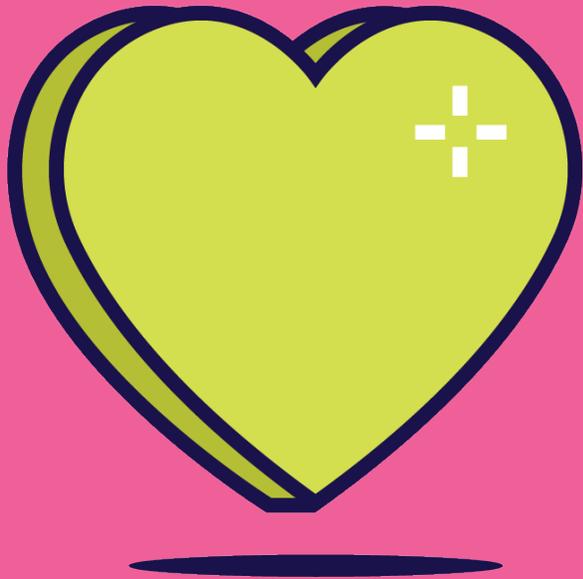
participants

## Contact us

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**Donate** to MIEACT through the Canberra Recovery Appeal. Every donation is doubled and together we can support all Canberrans to build self-care strategies into their daily lives.