

# SelfCare Canberra

## 13 July - 31 August

### What is Self Care Canberra and why is self-care important right now?

Taking an active and deliberate role in maintaining our overall health and wellbeing is important for extending the quality and length of our lives, only 40% of Australians intentionally implement self-care strategies in their lives.

Self Care Canberra is a free initiative created to address the increasing mental health concerns of Canberrans in the workplace and wider community. Self Care Canberra provides resources and support, helping workplaces and community groups to understand the benefits of implementing self-care strategies and connect with local service providers.

Self-care is one of the most important tools we can implement right now to address mounting stressors in our community and promote increased experiences of wellbeing, autonomy and connection.

1. Over the last few months, we have rapidly adjusted our lives. While keeping us safe, these adjustments have impacted our autonomy, social connection, and certainty: three major predictors for mental wellness.
2. As we settle in to new work environments and process the health information surrounding us it's common to feel heightened perceptions of threat. This 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.
3. 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 will my workplace benefit by participating in Self Care Canberra?

The impact of stress on our overall health is felt by the majority of us - 64% of Australians feel that stress has negatively impacted their mental health and 72% of Australians feel that stress has negatively impacted their physical health.

The benefits of having a mentally healthy workplace are manifold. Evidence has shown that these benefits extend from the individuals experience to transforming the culture of an organisation.

By focusing on self-care in the workplace you will be:

1. Empowering your staff to explore self-care strategies leading to increased workplace engagement
2. Building resilient teams by equipping staff with effective self-regulation skills
3. Optimising workplace performance when staff understand the effects of stress and how they respond individually
4. Building a mentally healthy workplace culture by establishing best practice communication techniques across the organisation
5. Reducing harmful behaviours through an in-depth understanding of stigma, its effects and the role all staff play
6. Attracting and retaining engaged staff by demonstrating you prioritise the wellbeing of your employees leading to increased workplace engagement
7. Creating a safe and supportive environment for staff to have open conversation about mental health
8. Minimising absenteeism by connecting your staff to the benefits of early help seeking
9. Driving a positive workplace culture by equipping staff with strategies to handle difficult situations and the opportunity to relieve stress

# How can my workplace participate in Self Care Canberra?

75% of Australians will experience a potentially traumatic event in their lifetime. Our responses to trauma are common, help for enduring responses is available, and we can all take an active role in lessening the impact of trauma for ourselves and those we care for.

Join Mental Illness Education ACT and promote self-care in your workplace between 13 July and 31 August. Speakers, resources and videos are available to suit your workplace.

1. [Register](#) to participate in Self Care Canberra through MIEACT's 'Contact Us' form. 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](#) MIEACT free Self Care Canberra resources
  - Self Care Canberra information
  - Self Care Canberra Management presentation
  - Mental Health information on Self-care, Stress and Anxiety, Trauma care and Help seeking
  - Self care videos - to share with your team on social media, intranet or email
  - Wellbeing technique videos - to share with your team on social media, intranet or email
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 (free, online or face to face)
5. [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.

# Ideas for using the Self Care Canberra resources in your workplace.

Some of the benefits of self-care include greater capacity to manage stress, increased resilience and reduced negative symptoms of mental illness.

1. Using the PDF's choose a theme to focus on each week, ask your team to share their own ideas about self-care with the group and expand on the suggestions listed. Encourage staff who share the same self-care strategies to start practicing them together.
2. Utilise an Educator from MIEACT to either share their experience of how self-care impacts their mental health, or facilitate a discussion about the importance of self-care with your workforce.
3. Implement a 5 minute break throughout the day to practice one of the breathing techniques. Think about doing this at the beginning and end of a long meeting.
4. Grab your team for a 10 minute self-care stretch session before you kick off your work day
5. Share a Wellbeing video each day and ask staff to reflect on each of the key questions posed.
6. Pay-it-forward. Encourage staff to reach out to their own social and community groups and share-on the resources to help others.
7. Host a "No Business Talk" event or lunch – come together solely for the purpose of social interaction.
8. Celebrate your co-worker's daily or weekly wins with a Toast Session at the start of your team meeting. "I'd like to give a toast to Sarah for ... this week!"
9. Schedule a (paid) late start or an early finish to allow your workforce the TIME to engage in a self-care activity