

# mieact

mental health & well-being  
education & training providers



## Youth programs

A safe space for mental health education



## Our Story

Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT) provides a safe space for mental health education. We are the primary local mental health and well-being education provider for workplaces, community groups and secondary schools across the Canberra region and surrounding area.

Since 1993, MIEACT has delivered evidence-informed programs, partnered with lived experience stories that increase mental health literacy, promote early intervention, reduce stigma and emphasise recovery.

What makes MIEACT unique is that we bring small audiences into direct positive contact with our Volunteer Educators who share their stories of living with a mental illness. Such face-to-face contact is a proven, powerful stigma reduction model, importantly guided by a safe and non-triggering DoNOHarm Framework<sup>®</sup> for both storyteller and viewer. This is further partnered with qualified trainers and educational content mapped to the Australian Curriculum.

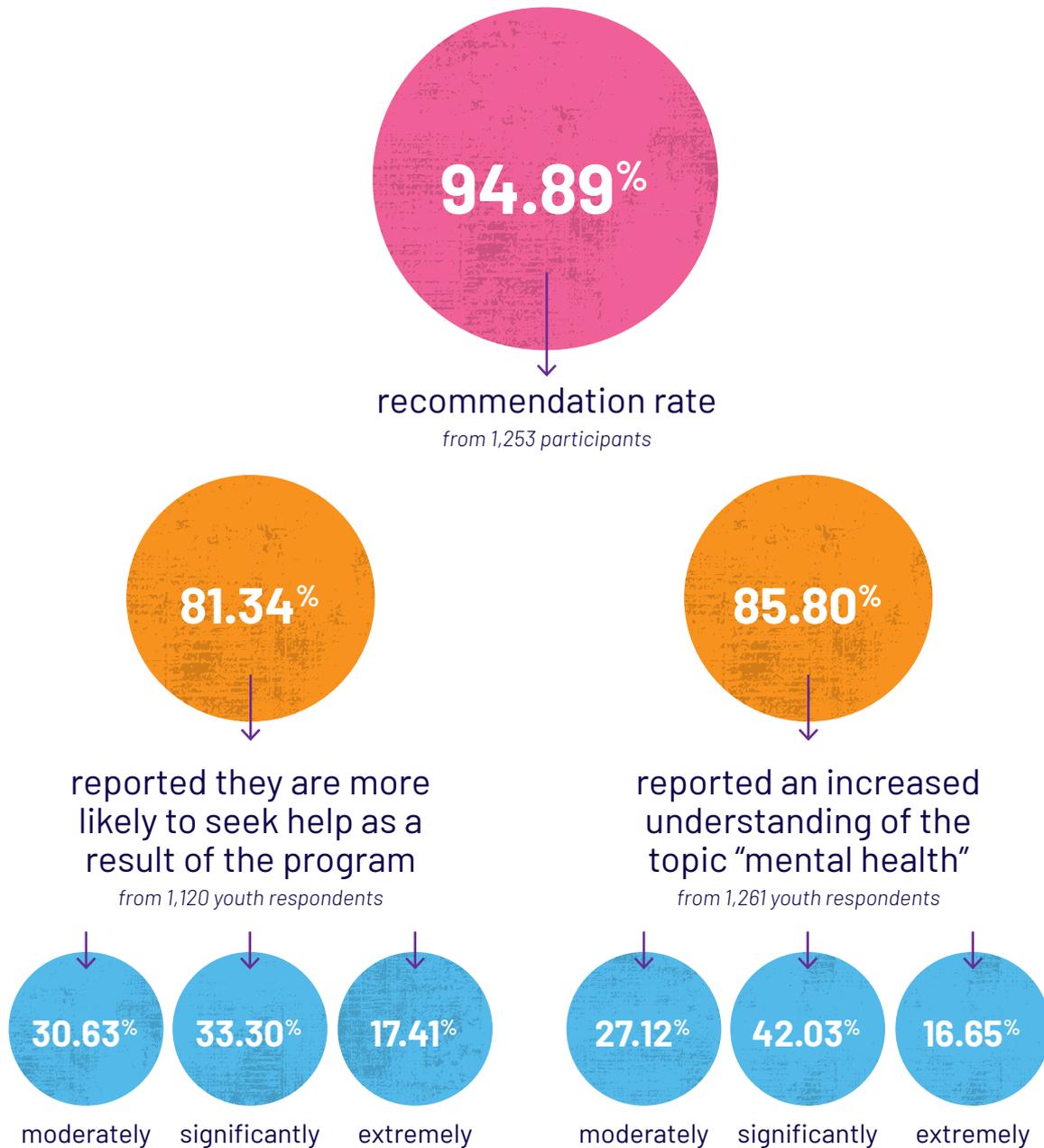
In addition to our overarching mental health workshops, our programs cover topics including stress, body image, trauma, bullying prevention and communicating and hearing stories safely. We ensure participants leave not only with an increased knowledge of mental health, but practical tools to manage mental health concerns, support and practice positive help seeking behaviours.

### Our Vision

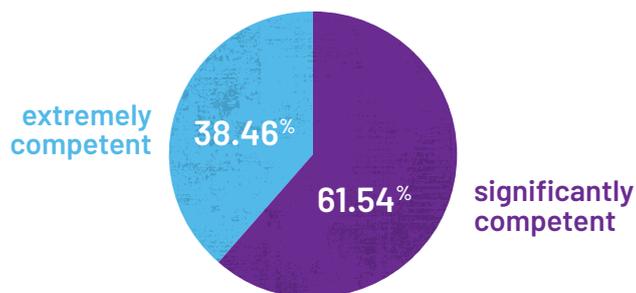
**Address stigma so people are empowered to sustain their mental health and well-being.**

### 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.**



Host/teachers of sessions rated MIEACT at facilitating mental health education programs:



MIEACT program outcomes are of a very high standard based on data analysis over 2019-20

# How do we share our stories, safely?

## Audience size

To achieve the best learning outcomes with the students and to be acutely aware of the response of the audience "hearing the story", MIEACT prefer to deliver to small group sizes of up to 30 students.

## Language matters

The language used when talking about suicide, self-harm and mental illness plays a big role in maintaining stereotypes, myths and stigma. MIEACT Educators ensure this approach is adhered to and is fully authentic, to increase the learning outcomes and engagement of your students.

## Face-to-face

Numerous studies have found that stigma and discrimination is addressed positively when a person meets and interacts with a person with lived experience of mental illness. For most sessions, one of our amazing Volunteer Educators with lived experience will form the team that delivers the workshop to your students.

## Our aesthetic

Our messaging does not end at the language we use. The three primary modes of communication are auditory, visual and kinaesthetic. To ensure that we create safe environments we always consider how our physical and visual communication supports our verbal message.

Our digital or print materials and the imagery and visuals we use do not reinforce stereotypes, myths and stigma or create potentially traumatic aesthetic content.

## Environment

MIEACT is always open to presenting programs within a wide variety of environments and can be adaptive to your school's needs. To optimize learning outcomes however, educators should have access to the following (or provided as pre-reading, if appropriate):

- A quiet and comfortable space for learners.
- Knowledge of audience demographics and needs.
- An understanding of the learners' awareness of mental health.
- Knowledge of any challenging behaviour.
- Knowledge of any vulnerable people.
- Knowledge of any recent, relevant incidents of concern.

This minimises the "unexpected" to occur and allows a story teller to make adjustments to the content considering the experiences of the room.

# Our programs

Delivered by experienced educators guided by our DoNOHarm Framework<sup>®</sup>, a best practice approach to communicating about mental health issues. All educational content is evidence-based and aligned to the Australian Curriculum.

Digital tools are occasionally used to engage formative assessment and allow the facilitator to drive discussion to the experience in the room.

Teacher/caregiver resources are available for each course to consolidate learning in the home or classroom. Our programs also include take home resources to encourage participants to integrate learning into their everyday lives.

## Key

 **Classroom**  
Led by a trained MIEACT Educator

 **Digital**  
Self-directed or teacher-led

 Australian Curriculum links

## At a glance

WORKSHOP	DESCRIPTION	GRADES	MODE	DURATION
<b>Any Body's Cool</b>	Developing attitudes, behaviours and language that impact body image	7, 8		2 x 60 min
<b>No Labels</b>	A behavioural approach to bullying prevention	7, 8		60 min
<b>Stress and Me</b>	An interactive program to help build an understanding of what stress is and how to manage it using effective wellbeing strategies.	7, 8, 9		60 min
				2 x 40 min
<b>Stress Better</b>	Builds an understanding of stress, worry and anxiety, and the connection between the three	10, 11, 12		60 min
				30-45 min
<b>Mental Health and Me</b>	Addressing stigma and promoting help-seeking	7, 8, 9		60 min
				30-45 min
<b>Mental Health 201</b>	Analysing stigma and the power of the lived experience to address mental health concerns	10, 11, 12		60 min
				30-45 min

# Any Body's Cool



Understanding how attitudes, behaviours and language impact body image

This workshop engages participants to critically analyse multimedia messaging and reflect on how attitudes, behaviours, and language impact the body image of themselves and others. This is an interactive session delivered by a qualified facilitator over two classes or a double period. The program covers specific body image issues and highlights the impact that multi-media can have on body image for young men and women.

## After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Know what 'body image' is, and its impact on thoughts, feelings and actions
- ⇒ Be able to identify helpful and unhelpful messages and their sources
- ⇒ Be able to identify the impact of traditional and social media in re-enforcing unrealistic beauty ideals and how this can be challenged
- ⇒ Know where to go for help for body image concerns
- ⇒ Be able to identify how body image can be influenced
- ⇒ Understand the impact that appearance based teasing can have on a person
- ⇒ Have healthy strategies to maintain their physical and mental health
- ⇒ Know where to go for help for body image concerns



## Curriculum links

**ACPPS070:** Investigate the impact of transition and change on identities

**ACPPS074:** Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing

**ACPPS07:** Analyse factors that influence emotions, and develop strategies to demonstrate empathy and sensitivity

**ACPPS077:** Plan and use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities

**"The students heard that things can be achievable despite mental health issues... that the journey may be long but not to give up."**

Teacher

**"I was always feeling horrible about myself. The program changed the way I think about myself."**

Student, Year 7

**92% of participants in 2019 identified their attitude to body image had changed as a result of the session.**



# No Labels

## Taking a behavioural approach to bullying prevention

No Labels takes a three-pronged approach identifying the drivers of bullying behaviour and empowers participants, observers and those experiencing bullying behaviours to manage, support and practice positive help-seeking. This is an interactive session delivered by a qualified facilitator. The program includes evidence-based educational content on bullying behaviours and strategies for managing these behaviours. Digital tools are used in this program.

### After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Understand the prevalence of bullying
- ⇒ Understand the types of bullying behaviour
- ⇒ Have increased understanding of what drives bullying behaviour
- ⇒ Develop strategies to cope with bullying behaviour directed at you
- ⇒ Develop bystander intervention strategies
- ⇒ Have increased awareness of bullying traits



### Curriculum links

**ACPPS071:** Evaluate strategies to manage personal, physical and social changes that occur as they grow older

**ACPPS072:** Practise and apply strategies to seek help for themselves or others

**ACPPS074:** Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing

**"I probably should re-evaluate how I interact with people. And I should check in with people, just to see about the casual teasing and whether it is OK with them or not..."**

Student, Year 9

**69% of participants identified they had previously participated in bullying behaviours at the end of the session. An increase of 20% from the beginning of the session.**

**76% felt more confident implementing strategies to address bullying. With 30% of those feeling very confident.**

# Mental Health and Me



## Addressing stigma and promoting help-seeking

Formally *Mental Health 101*, our leading youth program addresses stigma and promotes help-seeking with lived experience stories. The session helps students articulate an understanding of and ability to identify mental health concerns in themselves and other and identify strategies to support good mental health and positive self-care. This is our flagship program and has been delivered in the ACT for over 25 years.

### After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Understand what stigma is and identify the negative consequences of stigma
- ⇒ Articulate an understanding of mental illness and be able to identify mental health concerns in themselves and others.
- ⇒ Understand the power of real-life stories of people living with or looking after someone with a mental illness
- ⇒ Identify strategies to support good mental health and positive self-care
- ⇒ Contribute to the collective impact in reducing stigma in relation to mental illness
- ⇒ Identify where to go for help (including appropriate mental health services)



### Curriculum links

**ACPPS072:** Practise and apply strategies to seek help for themselves or others

**ACPPS073:** Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing

**ACPPS074:** Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing

**ACPPS076:** Evaluate health information and communicate their own and others' health concerns

**ACPPS077:** Plan and use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities.

**97% of student participants would recommend this session to a friend.**

**98% of students indicated they would be more likely to seek help after taking this program.**

**"The session wasn't overly complicated with statistics, it was mainly people's stories which was more meaningful and personal."**

Student, 16 years

# Mental Health 201



## Analysing stigma and the power of the lived experience

Students will learn to identify, analyse and critique stigma, different diagnoses of mental illness and helpful and unhelpful strategies to manage mental health. They will also listen to real life stories of people living with or looking after someone with a mental illness and use this knowledge to identify different strategies which may support their own mental health and wellbeing. Participants will learn how to plan and implement strategies for help seeking.

### After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Understand the negative consequences of stigma and investigate ways this effects individual's and communities' views on mental health and wellbeing
- ⇒ Articulate and analyse different diagnoses and identify concerns in themselves and others.
- ⇒ Analyse the power of real life stories of people living with or looking after someone with a mental illness and reflect on how this insight could guide their own self-care and help-seeking practices
- ⇒ Identify, analyse and critique a wide range of strategies that are both helpful and unhelpful for good mental health and positive self-care behaviour.
- ⇒ Plan and implement ways to contribute to the collective impact in reducing stigma
- ⇒ Identify where to go for help



### Curriculum links

**ACPPS093:** Investigate how empathy and ethical decision making contribute to respectful relationships

**ACPPS095:** Critically analyse and apply health information from a range of sources to health decisions and situations

**ACPPS090:** Examine the impact of changes and transitions on relationships

**ACPPS094:** Evaluate situations and propose appropriate emotional responses and then reflect on possible outcomes of different responses

**ACPPS098:** Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence health and wellbeing of diverse communities

### Behavioural Science

Psychology

**"The students really enjoyed listening to the presenter. They were amazed about how honest and open they were about their life. It was a great session."**

Teacher

**"Phenomenal. It was interesting and further guided my interest in mental health. Hopefully I will become a psychologist one day."**

Student

**95% of participants would recommend a MIEACT program to a friend.**

# Stress and Me



Builds an understanding of stress, worry and anxiety and the connection between the three

Co-designed with our lived experience volunteers, this course will help students identify ways to respond positively to challenging situations where stress arises using strategies such as early help-seeking and optimistic thinking, to promote health, safety and well-being in relation to stress for themselves and others. Students will complete interactive quizzes, watch videos including powerful lived experience stories, try out some stress response techniques and finish off by creating their own personal stress response plan.

## After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Identify ways to respond positively to challenging situations using appropriate strategies including early help-seeking and optimistic thinking.
- ⇒ Begin to develop an understanding of stress and how it can have an impact (both physically and emotionally) in their lives.
- ⇒ Participate with community resources and investigate ways to seek help about health, safety and well-being in relation to stress tolerance and the ways we are affected by stress levels.
- ⇒ Plan, practice and formulate simple strategies to promote health, safety and well-being in relation to stress.
- ⇒ Practice and apply strategies to seek help for themselves and others.



## Curriculum links

**ACPPS072:** Practise and apply strategies to seek help for themselves or others

**ACPPS073:** Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing

**ACPPS074:** Investigate the benefits of relationships and examine their impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing

**ACPPS075:** Analyse factors that influence emotions, and develop strategies to demonstrate empathy and sensitivities

**ACPPS076:** Evaluate health information and communicate their own and others' health concerns

**ACPPS077:** Plan and use health practices, behaviours and resources to enhance health, safety and wellbeing of their communities

**"I thought it was useful for me because I have done a lot of stressful things like gymnastics competitions and auditions."**

Student

**"The session was engaging and held my interest by having a variety of presentation tool rather than death by PowerPoint."**

Student

**"It helped quite a lot and hearing other people's stories made me feel more normal."**

Student



# Stress Better

Equips students with practical tools to manage and respond to stress more effectively

This workshop equips participants with the tools to manage stress more effectively. Guided by our DoNOHarm Framework, a best practice approach to communicating about mental illness, this is an interactive session delivered by a qualified facilitator. It includes evidence-based educational content on stress and anxiety in Australia and lived experience of managing high stress situations.

## After completing the program young people will:

- ⇒ Have increased understanding of stress and the effects it can have on us.
- ⇒ Understand stress tolerance and the ways we hurt or help our stress levels.
- ⇒ Identify areas of influence and control for individual stress.
- ⇒ Learn a simple formula to help manage stressful situations.



## Curriculum links

**ACPPS093:** Investigate how empathy and ethical decision making contribute to respectful relationships

**ACPPS095:** Critically analyse and apply health information from a range of sources to health decisions and situations

**ACPPS090:** Examine the impact of changes and transitions on relationships

**ACPPS094:** Evaluate situations and propose appropriate emotional responses and then reflect on possible outcomes of different responses

**ACPPS098:** Critique behaviours and contextual factors that influence health and wellbeing of diverse communities

## Behavioural Science

## Psychology

**“Expectations are really high for us and I always feel I’m worried I won’t meet them. I liked breaking down what I can’t control and what I can influence.”**

Student, 15

**Of the participants 92% felt their understanding of the topic had increased *Extremely* (69%) or *Significantly* (23%) as a result of the session.**

**School/study was identified as the primary stressor (47%) for all youth participants, followed by family/relationships (18%).**

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