



20 May 2025

COASTREK AND BEYOND BLUE TEAM UP TO HIKE FOR MENTAL HEALTH ON THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

Coastrek and Beyond Blue are teaming up to hike for mental health on the Mornington Peninsula this **Friday, 23 May 2025**, for the annual [Coastrek](#) hiking challenge.

Around 3,000 trekkers will hike either **50km from Cape Schanck, 30km from Point Nepean, or 20km from Sorrento**, all crossing the finish line at Point Nepean National Park – aiming to raise **\$1.1million** to help fund the **Beyond Blue 24/7 Support Service**.

Coastrek is known for showcasing Australia's most scenic coastal trails, and the Mornington Peninsula event is no exception, says Coastrek Founder, **Di Westaway OAM**.

"This is one of our most spectacular routes, combining panoramic ocean views with tranquil bushland and challenging clifftop trails – a wild and rejuvenating way to escape the city and reconnect with nature, others and yourself."

"Both Coastrek and Beyond Blue recognise the vital role that exercise, nature and social connection play in supporting mental health, and taking on a challenge like Coastrek helps people form positive connections with fitness and wellbeing that extend far beyond event day."

Currently, around **5 million Australians are living with anxiety or depression**. Every day, over **750 people reach out to the Beyond Blue Support Service**, resulting in more than **275,000 life-changing conversations each year**.

A recent Beyond Blue survey of 5,000 Australians found that **77% use exercise** and **72% use time in nature** to support their emotional wellbeing – making events like Coastrek more relevant than ever.

"Everyone who takes part in Coastrek is not only supporting their own mental health - they're helping ensure Beyond Blue's Support Service remains free and accessible to every Australian, whenever and wherever they need it," said **Beyond Blue CEO Georgie**

Harman. Ms Harman will be hiking alongside her teammate, singer and entertainer **Rob Mills**, a keen hiker and advocate for men's mental health.

In Australia, 1 in 6 men are likely to experience anxiety and 1 in 8 will likely experience depression in their lifetime, however, statistics show men are less likely to speak up, leading to declining mental health. **Of the 9 people who take their lives in Australia each day, 7 are men.**

"There is support available and we owe it to ourselves and our loved ones to reach out if we're struggling. It's okay not to be okay - and it's okay to talk about it," says Mills.

"As a bloke, who's often struggled with the lows of life, walking and having a chat with your partner, or a friend or family member is the best way I've found to open up. There's less pressure, you seem to drop your guard, there's no eyes on you judging... plus, you also add nature into the mix, and there's a real sense of calm. A problem shared is a problem halved.

"That's why I'm proud to be taking part in Coastrek and supporting Beyond Blue. Hiking is one of the ways I look after my own mental wellbeing - being out in nature, moving my body, and having real conversations with mates. Coastrek brings all of that together with a powerful message: we're not alone, and help is always available."

While women experience higher levels of anxiety and depression (1 in 3 will experience anxiety and 1 in 5 will experience depression in their lifetime), they have a greater tendency to seek help – both for themselves and others. Over 60% of the contacts made to the Beyond Blue 24/7 Support Service each year are made by women, seeking advice and support either for themselves or loved ones.

Coastrek Ambassadors **Jen Willis**, celebrated mountaineer and the first Australian with MS to attempt Everest; and **Leila McDougall**, rural mental health advocate and filmmaker, know firsthand how vital mental health support is for those seeking help:

"Participating in Coastrek allows me to combine my passion for the outdoors with supporting mental health initiatives. The Beyond Blue Support Service is a vital resource – which I have leaned on when supporting a family member through mental health struggles - and I'm committed to helping raise awareness and funds to ensure it remains accessible to all who need it," said Willis, a Mornington Peninsula local hiking the 50km event with her son.

Leila McDougall shed a light on rural mental health issues in her film 'Just a Farmer' and continues to raise awareness:

“Living in a rural community, I've witnessed the unique mental health challenges faced by farmers and their families, and by participating in Coastrek, I hope to further raise awareness and encourage conversations about mental health in rural areas. The Beyond Blue Support Service plays a crucial role in providing support, and I'm proud to be part of this initiative,” said McDougall, who is hiking the 20km event.

Donations can be made to Rob, Jen or Leila's teams at
www.coastrek.com.au/donate

Coastrek is a team event, with a minimum of two people per team and fully supported with a 12-week training program. The Coastrek Mornington Peninsula event is one of five events taking place on Australia's coastlines in 2025. Other events include Sydney (which took place last month), the Sunshine Coast QLD (18 July 2025), the Fleurieu Peninsula SA (5 September 2025) and Margaret River WA (31 October 2025) – all hiking for mental health in support of Beyond Blue.

Visit www.coastrek.com.au for further information.

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Overview of Mental Health in Australia:

(www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/statistics)

- Around 5 million Australians are living with anxiety or depression and nearly half of us will experience a mental health condition in lifetime.
- More than 750 people reach out to the Beyond Blue 24/7 Support Service every day – that's over 275,000 life-changing conversations every year.
- 1 in 3 women will experience anxiety and 1 in 5 will experience depression in their lifetime. While women are more impacted by anxiety and depression than men, they have a greater tendency to seek help – both for themselves and others. Over 60% of the contacts made to the Beyond Blue 24/7 Support Service each year are made by women, seeking advice and support either for themselves or loved ones.
- Anxiety and depression rates are found to be lower in men (1 in 6 are likely to experience anxiety and 1 in 8 will likely experience depression in their lifetime), *however*, men are less likely to seek help, leading to declining mental health. Of the nine people who take their lives in Australia each day, seven are men.
- In the workplace, 1 in 5 people will take time off work each year due to stress, anxiety or depression.

Beyond Blue 24/7 Support Service:

1300 22 46 36

www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support