

Australians are more stressed and need your support

Australians are grappling with distressing life events, sometimes consecutively, which is leading to significant mental health challenges.

As Beyond Blue launches its annual [tax-time appeal](#) for donations, survey results show the rates of self-reported anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts increase remarkably with each additional stressor faced.

The data, from Beyond Blue's Australia's Mental Health and Wellbeing Check, reflects the mental health impacts of a range of life events including financial pressures, personal relationship challenges, affordability of housing, loneliness or lack of social connection, change of health of family member, major illness or injury, job loss, transition or insecurity, having or raising children, death of a loved one and divorce.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman AO said that nearly half the people surveyed had lived through three or more life stressors in the last 12 months, and reported experiencing anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

"This reinforces the need for free, accessible immediate support that's available around the clock and around Australia, like the Beyond Blue Support Service and its webchat, at beyondblue.org.au," Ms Harman said.

"Every two minutes, someone in Australia hits a low point, and reaches out for help.

"Your donation before 30 June can help make sure free, professional mental health support is always available, because in someone's moment of need, we must be there for them, to answer their call," Ms Harman said.

The data showed that within a 12-month period:

- Four-in-10 people reported anxiety when faced with one-to-two distressing events, but for those who lived through five or more common life stressors, this jumped up to more than eight-in-10 people
- Two-in-10 Australians reported depression while bearing with one-to-two distressing events compared to seven-in-10 people who had experienced five or more distressing life events
- For people who experienced one-to-two distressing events, one-in-20 had suicidal thoughts while the respondents who reported navigating five or more distressing life events, one-in-three had experienced suicidal thoughts

Ms Harman said that people live complex lives.

"We're pretty good at handling one challenge at a time but when issues pile up it can be too much for anyone to handle, and you need help."

"Everyone has a point where things become too much – but you don't need to wait for that tipping point. We want people to know free support is available, and the sooner you reach out for it the better."

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Beyond Blue volunteer speaker Michelle Newland knows all-too-well that the cumulative impact of multiple distressing events can take a significant toll on your mental health.

In 2011 the NSW mother-of-three struggled through a stressful last pregnancy, with high-level anxiety starting six weeks into the pregnancy.

“Perhaps it was my maternal instinct telling me that the little human growing inside me was unwell. Any level of concern expressed by doctors resulted in my anxiety increasing surrounding her wellbeing. I wasn’t sleeping, I was restless and on edge,” Ms Newland said.

“An overwhelming feeling of dread took hold of me as I existed in a constant state of panic. We had an amniocentesis at 24 weeks to screen for any genetic issues, but the results came back that baby was healthy.”

Ms Newland elected to be induced early and baby Isabella was born not breathing.

She was moved to ICU, where she spent the next ten days and had several episodes where she would briefly stop breathing.

Shortly after Isabella was discharged from ICU, she was diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder, the only person at the time in the world registered with what she had.

“Doctors could provide no insight into what the future held, or how long we would have with our little girl,” Ms Newland said.

“While trying to process this news, despite being an amazing dad, I separated from my husband when Isabella was three and a half months old. Our marriage had been on the rocks since before I fell pregnant.

“I was in such a stressed state, I signed away my right to a fair monetary share of our family home. Although I offered it all up, I was not able to cognitively process what this would mean for myself and my three girls as I stepped into single motherhood.”

With her parents living in Victoria, Michelle found herself “in a constant state of fight or flight, while grieving the loss of Isabella whilst she was alive, as the uncertainty around her health left a feeling inside me that she was going to die. When the kids weren’t with me, I would go out drinking. When the kids came back, I tried to be an amazing mum.”

To be present for Isabella’s medical appointments, Michelle needed to drop back to part-time at work.

“This compromised me financially, so I started up my own cleaning business on the side shortly after Isabella’s first birthday,” she said.

Tragically Isabella passed away at 4.5 years old, with June 2025 marking nine years since her death.

“I fell apart when she passed away, but I reached out to a friend, who helped me get the initial and best support that I needed at the time – and I am forever grateful,” Ms Newland said.

The data also showed that 83% of Australians experienced at least one life event that caused them distress in the last 12 months.

“The vast majority of Australians are dealing with something, and for nearly half of Australians, they’re not dealing with just one life stressor, but multiple life stressors at the same time which is having a compounding impact on mental health,” Ms Harman said.

“When things feel overwhelming, talk to the people around you, and make a plan. Taking small steps in a positive direction can help you regain a sense of control, know that you’re not alone with what you’re facing and be kind to yourself as you navigate difficult times.”

A tax-deductible gift goes directly towards the Beyond Blue Support Service, making mental health support available to anyone in Australia.

“Your support matters to people like Michelle,” Ms Harman said.

“A heartfelt thank you to our wonderful donors for making people like Michelle feel heard and understood.”

Make a tax-deductible donation to Beyond Blue and help *answer every call*.

Please visit www.beyondblue.org.au/turningpoint

ENDS

Beyond Blue’s Support Service is available 24/7 on [1300 22 4636](tel:1300224636) and via web chat or email beyondblue.org.au/getsupport

Beyond Blue’s online forums can be accessed here forums.beyondblue.org.au

Media contacts

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Talent

Beyond Blue CEO, Georgie Harman AO

Lived experience, Michelle Newland

Background

Beyond Blue

- Our major partner Downer will match all donations made to the appeal (up to \$250,000) until June 30, 2025.

Australia’s 2024 Mental Health and Wellbeing Check

- Australia’s 2024 Mental Health and Wellbeing Check was undertaken by Australian National University’s Social Research Centre on behalf of Beyond Blue
- Researchers surveyed more than 5000 people around the country to understand the impact of common life stressors on mental health in the past 12 months
- The Check was a representative survey that gives a reliable pulse check on the current state of mental health and wellbeing in Australia
- For individuals who reported experiencing one-to-two distressing events, 40% experienced anxiety, while 20% suffered from depression and 4% had suicidal thoughts
- Those who experienced three-to-four distressing events saw a significant increase, with 71% suffering from anxiety, 51% from depression and 18% battling suicidal thoughts
- The most worrying data was for those people who had experienced five or more distressing events. A staggering 84% reported anxiety, 73% reported depression, and 34% had suicidal thoughts
- Rank order of distressing life events:

1. Financial pressure – 46%
2. Personal relationship challenges – 34%
3. Affordability of housing – 34%
4. Loneliness or lack of social connection – 30%
5. Change of health of family member – 25%
6. Major illness or injury – 21%
7. Job loss, transition or insecurity – 20%
8. Having or raising children – 20%
9. Death of a loved one – 20%
10. Divorce – 2%

Beyond Blue Support Service

- Last financial year, almost 276,000 (2023-24) people reached out to the Beyond Blue Support Service for support – that is on average 762 people per day
- People are often surprised to learn that the costs of the service are covered entirely by donations and philanthropy
- Every dollar raised enable us to be there when people really need us - every dollar, every cent can really help turn someone's life around
- Donations are crucial to ensure this important service is always available to people right across Australia