

The Mental Health Foundation's vision is for a society where all people flourish.

About the Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) of New Zealand is a charity established in 1977 from the proceeds of a telethon, with a governing board.

The MHF provides free support, training and resources for anyone who is going through a difficult time, or for people who are supporting loved ones through a difficult time.

Our work is focused on promoting positive mental health, the reduction of prejudice and discrimination, as well as increasing social inclusion, suicide prevention, and advocating for positive change.

Key Facts

- One in five New Zealanders experience mental illness and/or addiction each year.ⁱ
- At least half of us will experience mental distress in our lifetime.ⁱⁱ
- New Zealanders with a serious mental health condition and/or addiction have a lower life expectancy, dying up to 25 years earlier.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Māori make up approximately 16 percent of New Zealand's population, yet they account for 27 percent of all mental health service users.^{iv}
- New Zealand's youth suicide rate - teenagers between 15 and 19 - is the highest of 41 OECD and EU countries, according to a UNICEF report.^v
- Rangatahi Māori are more than twice as likely to die by suicide than non-Māori youth.^{vi}
- People living with mental illness are no more likely than anyone else to commit a violent crime and are in fact 2.5 times more likely to be victims of violence.^{vii}
- In the year to 30 June 2019, 685 people died by suicide, equating to 13.93 per 100,000.^{viii}
 - The Māori suicide rate increased from 23.72 to 28.23 and the Pacific Island rate from 7.77 to 11.49, deaths per 100,000.
 - There was an increase in the number of young people dying by suicide, particularly in the 15-19 age range increasing from 16.88 to 23.14 and the 20-24 age range from 21.21 to 26.87, per 100,000.

How your donations help

Your donations help support communities care for each other by contributing to all the work the MHF does.

While the Foundation receives some government funding for specific areas of work, we are only able to reach more communities thanks to the generosity of our donors.

Suicide prevention and bereavement

- Over 160,000 free [suicide prevention](#) resources are distributed to communities across Aotearoa each year.
- Between July 2018 – June 2019 almost 400 people were in contact with our [suicide bereavement services](#) and over 4,500 people downloaded our [Crisis Services booklet](#) to enable them to support themselves or some they love.

Resource and information services

- More than 444,000 [free resources](#) about mental health and illness are delivered direct to communities across New Zealand and over 100,000 of these free resources have been downloaded every year.
- In the year to June 2019 our national enquiry service has received 2,832 enquiries.

Positive mental health promotion

- The [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#) are proven to help people stay well and we supply over 175,000 free resources (bookmarks, postcards and posters) to schools, kura, workplaces and communities across Aotearoa to enable them promote wellbeing for all every year.
- [Pink Shirt Day](#) (PSD) is a global day that celebrates diversity and creates environments where all people can feel safe, valued and respected. The MHF leads Pink Shirt Day in New Zealand and has seen an increase in activity throughout schools, kura and workplaces each year, in 2019 over 5,500 registered for PSD.
- Our [Workplace Wellbeing](#) work is to help businesses and organisations obtain optimal mental health for their people through workshops and resources.
- [Mental Health Awareness Week](#) (MHAW) is an annual campaign that has been running since 1993 which works to help Kiwis understand what boosts their wellbeing and improves mental health.

Policy and advocacy

The Mental Health Foundation works to influence public policy that will have a significant long-term effect on the mental health of New Zealanders.

We do this by making submissions to government so that policies and laws are developed to ensure people with lived experience are not discriminated against and ensure outcomes for Māori populations are a priority.

Recent submissions include:

- Suicide Prevention Strategy "Every Life Matters"
- Arms Legislation Bill
- Review of the Mental Health Act
- Establishment of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission
- Cannabis referendum
- Commercial video on-demand (CVOD) classification

The MHF website

We recognise that the MHF website is often a 'first port-of-call' for many people who are either in distress or looking for help for someone else.

In the year up to June 2019 our website had over 1 million sessions and 3,000 users most days.

The most accessed pages include (unique views):

- [After a suicide attempt](#) (103,524)
- [Helplines](#) (76,624)
- [Wellbeing](#) (44,906)
- [Coping with suicidal thoughts](#) (53,899)

Māori Development

Māori are disproportionately likely to experience mental health challenges and have higher suicide rates than non-Māori.

With this in mind we are prioritising providing resources and support which reflect Māori concepts of mental health language and world views, and available in Te reo Māori.

Following the maxim - If we get it right for Māori, we'll get it right for everyone.

Text options

1. Thanks to your generosity the Mental Health Foundation (MHF) can tautoko/support more Kiwis to enjoy good mental health and wellbeing. By supporting the MHF mahi you can be part of creating an Aotearoa where people, their whānau, employers and communities have the know-how to talk about mental health openly and where everyone is supported through tough times with the kindness they deserve.

2. The money you fundraise will provide people with free information, resources and campaigns covering the A-Z of mental health and wellbeing topics. It will also help advocate for helpful and hopeful policies and services for people living with mental illness.

3. The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) of New Zealand is focused on promoting positive mental health, the reduction of prejudice and discrimination, as well as suicide prevention, increasing social inclusion for those with lived experience of mental distress, and advocating for positive change.

4. By donating whatever you can, you'll be helping to support the Mental Health Foundation information service; suicide prevention resources and bereavement support; mental health awareness campaigns and advocacy to influence the long-term effect on the mental health of all New Zealanders.

5. Your donation will help the Mental Health Foundation provide people with the tools they need to improve and sustain their mental health, as well as support their loved ones going through tough times.

6. The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand works towards promoting positive mental health; reducing prejudice and discrimination associated with mental distress; and providing free support, training and resources so that no one has to face a tough time alone.

Need to talk?

Free call or text 1737 Talk with a trained counsellor, anytime.

For a full list of helplines and local mental health services please see our crisis directory [online](#).

ⁱ Health and Disability Commissioner. (2018b). Mental Health Commissioner's monitoring and advocacy report 2018 p 19

ⁱⁱ Oakley-Browne, M., Wells, J. E., Scott, K. M., New Zealand, & Ministry of Health. (2006). Te rau hinengaro: the New Zealand mental health survey.

ⁱⁱⁱ Cunningham, R., Sarfati, D., Peterson, D., Stanley, J., & Collings, S. (2014). Premature mortality in adults using New Zealand psychiatric services. *The New Zealand Medical Journal*, 127(1394), p. 31–41.

^{iv} Ministry of Health. (2017b). Office of the Director of Mental Health annual report 2016. Wellington: Ministry of Health, p. 25

^v Brazier, C., UNICEF, & Office of Research. (2017). Building the future: children and the sustainable development goals in rich countries. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Office of Research.

^{vi} Suicide Facts Deaths and intentional self harm hospitalisations 2013. (n.d.), 74.

^{vii} Hiday(2006), Institute of Medicine, Improving the Quality of Health Care for Mental and Substance-Use Conditions. Washington, DC: Institute of Medicine, 2006

^{viii} Chief Coroner Provisional Annual Suicide figures 2018/18, 2019.