



SUPPORT PROGRAMS



Lake Macquarie & Newcastle

Suicide Prevention Network

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Our Story

The Lake Macquarie & Newcastle Suicide Prevention Network has developed a range of evidence-based programs and support services to meet the needs of our community.

Even before the Covid-19 Pandemic, the rate of mental ill health and risk of suicide has been increasing, due to the rising pressures experienced by individuals and families. The impact of Covid-19 as well as bushfires, floods, droughts and economic uncertainty has resulted in an increase in personal challenges across all age ranges, including our children and young people, adults and aging citizens.

We have partnered with a wide range of agencies and Government Departments to provide a suite of support programs and services to address the need that exists in our community.

The Lake Macquarie & Newcastle Suicide Prevention Network are pleased to present to you this booklet of our current activities to ensure that our community is always...

...Connected to Care

Bradley Dunn
CEO

The Lake Macquarie & Newcastle Suicide Prevention Network is located in the Elernmore Vale Community Centre at 129 Croudace Rd, Elernmore Vale. All 'centre-based' programs identified in this booklet will take place at this location.

Connected to Care COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT PROGRAM



Connected to Care (C2C) is designed to support young people aged 12-18 experiencing disadvantage to connect with local support services and social opportunities. Participants will link with a Support Planner who will assist the young person to identifying and address their personal challenges, connecting them to local support services to ensure they are mentally and physically healthy, safe and able to thrive. Young people also have the opportunity to participate in a range of Community Engagement Programs through our partners Rest in Essence and EquiEnergy Youth, providing links to the community to develop social, emotional and educational skills and enhance their economic and social outcomes.

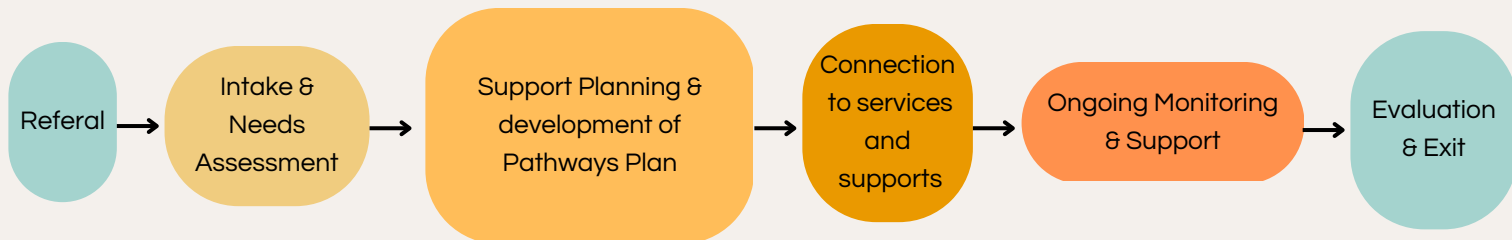
Eligibility Criteria

Age: 12-18
Location: Lake Macquarie / Newcastle resident
Diagnosis: Not required
Venue: Centre Based or in school
Cost: FREE
Referral: Email support@lmnspn.org.au

Individual Support Planning

Available in school or at our centre in Elmore Vale

Our experienced team will assist the individual to identify their current and future needs that will support them to overcome their personal challenges. We operate through a prevention and early intervention approach to support a young person who may be at risk of disengaging from school, experiencing isolation from peers and community or who may be experiencing personal challenges at home, school or socially. The individual works with our Support Officer to develop a Pathways Plan which identifies opportunities for personal growth and development, enabling them to access services, programs and supports that are relevant to them. Ongoing connection is maintained to ensure the individual's long term support needs are met and to provide ongoing mentoring and monitoring of their progress.



For referral to Individual Support Planning please complete referral form and email to support@lmnspn.org.au

Psychosocial Support, Practical learning, and Community Engagement Programs

All programs include school pick up and drop off)



Rest in Essence's multi-disciplinary team is focussed on working with young people and the important adults in their lives. Prevention of escalating distress and early intervention to improve coping and resilience are central to our approach. Our paediatric occupational therapist (Mrs Carly Beer) will assess the therapeutic value of each program activity and provide a written report pre and post program based on observations of the group and facilitator feedback.

Introduction to Floristry Workshop

Up to five participants – four week course

Facilitator: Qualified florist

Schedule: Thursdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants are guided through a practical introductory course including the creation of modern wreaths, flower crowns and flower bouquet arranging. All materials provided and participants retain their completed works.

Introduction to Yoga

Up to eight participants - four week course

Facilitator: Registered psychologist & qualified Yoga instructor

Schedule: Wednesdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants are guided through the practice of yin yoga including breathing exercises, stretches and poses, mindfulness and unlocking the spiritual mind.

All mats, towels provided

Communication skills development

Up to 10 participants - four week course

Facilitator: Qualified actor/speech and drama coach

Schedule: Tuesdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants are guided through confidence-building exercises to encourage development of effective communication skills across various settings, learning techniques to cope with challenging social environments through fun, engaging group interactions.

Beach activities - surfing, beach volleyball, beach cricket

Up to eight participants - two week course

Facilitator: Experienced surfer and A-grade cricketer

Schedule: Fridays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Learn to surf experience including warm up/stretching, surf awareness and safety, introduction lesson and mindfulness exercises. Beach cricket and/or volleyball. Participants to wear appropriate surf or beach wear depending on activity. All equipment provided.

Lawn Bowling

Up to eight participants - four week course

Facilitator: Craig Allen

Schedule: Thursdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants will learn to play lawn bowls in an interactive, team-building environment. Friendly competition of strategy, skill, and communication enhancement alongside support agency staff, gaining connections to important support services.

Permaculture and Gardening

Up to eight participants - four week course

Facilitator: Permaculture Design Qualified - Craig Allen

Schedule: Thursdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants learn the principles of permaculture and intensive food production from a home garden. Short course on home garden design, ecology, soil health and growing food for the family. All materials provided

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness walk on country

Up to ten participants - one day experience

Facilitator: Local Aboriginal Elder

Schedule: TBA - subject to availability

Summary: An insightful and powerful learning experience by an aboriginal guide approved by the elders of their nation. Walk on country identifying native flora and fauna and their significance to aboriginal peoples. Education on aboriginal history, customs and traditions and their spiritual connection to country

Beach and boat fishing

Two to Three participants - One day experiences

Facilitator: Registered psychologist & qualified Yoga instructor

Facilitator: 30+ year experienced skipper/angler

Schedule: Fridays, 8:30am – 1:00pm

Summary: Sustainable fishing practices education, environmental awareness, fishing techniques, seafood preparation and mindfulness exercises.

Job search training and career guidance

Up to ten participants - four week course

Facilitator: 20+ year recruitment industry experienced

Schedule: Wednesdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Tips to prepare for job searching including resume writing, labour market trends, how and where to apply, interview techniques. Includes sensory profile, aptitude testing and all required materials.

Tennis

Up to six participants - four week course

Facilitator: Carly Beer, Ben Payne, Craig Allen

Schedule: Thursdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Participants will learn to play tennis in an interactive, team-building environment. Friendly doubles competition of strategy, skill, and communication enhancement. Participants must be injury free to play

Transpersonal Art Therapy

Up to four participants - three week course

Facilitator: Qualified artist and Reiki master – Chel King

Schedule: Tuesdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Summary: Immersive experience of art therapy either painting on canvass or mix-material sculpture. Chel guides participants on a journey of spiritual awareness and insight building confidence and self-esteem. All materials provided and participants retain their works.

For referral to Psychosocial Support,
Practical learning, and Community
Engagement Programs please complete
referral form and email to
support@lmnspn.org.au

Mental health has been an increasing issue in Australia, and even more so since 2020 with the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting stress which has led to an increase in mental health concerns in our youth. This is likely to continue into the future, with mental health services struggling to keep up with the demand for support. Considering the high prevalence of mental illness in our children and adolescence in Australia, it is imperative that we focus on preventative approaches that incorporate mental health literacy into classroom learning that is creative and provides opportunity for youth led advocacy and solution focused peer support.

Supported by The Black Dog institute, The Healthy Minds Challenge incorporates a 6-lesson program to help students grasp and understand what mental illness is through content delivered by individuals with Lived Experience of mental illness. Using the TedEd platform, the program delivers short videos and classroom discussions that can be conducted within a single classroom period.

Program design is centred on helping young people to understand mental health, learn how they can have a role in developing a healthy mindset and to help students to develop self-help strategies whilst also supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their peers. The content and activities within the Healthy Minds Challenge are designed to be interactive, encouraging students to participate through exploration of their own experiences, needs, strengths and skills.

Student participation in the Healthy Minds Challenge can occur as a whole class activity, as each lesson plan is tied to the PE/PD/Health Curriculum OR through the selection of students to participate as part of an extra-curricular wellbeing support program. Lessons are conducted by a classroom teacher via access to the Teacher Resource Guide, which can be used in isolation or as a component of existing mental health resources within the school.

At the conclusion of the program students will compile a short video to demonstrate what they have learnt, what supports, and wellbeing activities are delivered in their schools and how they would apply their learnings to create new strategies to support their peers and local community. The video will then become their submission for the 2023 Healthy Minds Challenge Community Showcase which will be held on 21st June 2023. These inspiring and educational submissions will be exhibited and celebrated alongside all participating schools during the Showcase, where attendees will hear from mental health experts and peer advocates.

If you are interested in being a part of the Healthy Minds Challenge we encourage you to speak with our delivery partners CareerLinks to get started! For more information you can download the Teacher Resource Pack and registration form from our website via the link below, or alternatively contact Mark Abele for a one on one discussion and demonstration of the Healthy Minds Challenge.

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The Young Healthy Minds Project empowers young people to gain skills, knowledge and opportunity to promote positive mental health and suicide prevention through training and ongoing support. Participants will undertake the planning and facilitation of events, health promotion activities and public speaking to promote and advocate for positive mental health.

The Young Healthy Minds Project is available to young people aged 12 to 24 across the Lake Macquarie and Newcastle LGA's. Participants will form a Network of mental health advocates who will meet face-to-face and online to discuss, coordinate and plan the delivery of a range of community-based projects including events and health promotion activities as well as public speaking events to better advocate for the mental health and wellbeing needs of young people.

Our Project Officers will meet regularly with participants to facilitate open discussion forums on the barriers young people face that prevent them from participating in their community.

Discussion will focus on the mental health and wellbeing of young people and the effect that recent natural disasters, including the Covid-19 Pandemic, have had on young people's mental health, access to support and social inclusion. From these discussions, young people will identify opportunities to counteract the negative effect of these barriers, using methods of interest to young people, such as social activity and social media.

Participants will prioritise activities and work with the Project Officer to design and implement these activities across the course of the year. A component of these events and activities will involve providing opportunity for young people across the region to have input into strategies that would benefit them, through activities, social media and interactive displays at events.

Participants of the Young Healthy Minds Network will be provided training in:

- Livingworks SafeTalk Suicide Prevention
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - Public Speaking
 - Event Management
 - Social Media training
- Health Promotion training

Young people will also gain hands on experience in event management, social media, health promotion and public speaking.

Eligibility Criteria

Age: 12 to 24yrs

Location: Reside in the Lake Macquarie or Newcastle LGA

Location: Centre Based or Online

Cost: FREE

For referral to the Healthy Minds Project please complete referral form and email to projects@lmnspn.org.au

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For further information go to www.connectedtocare.com.au/projects



Windows of Hope

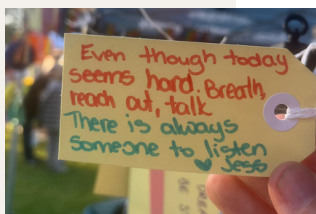
WINDOWS OF HOPE

Windows of Hope is designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing outlook of those from the LGBTIQ+ community. The program provides individualised support to identify challenges and provide linkages to support services, community activities and specialised support to meet these needs and empower all LGBTIQ+ people and communities to reach their full potential.

We are seeking to improve the connection the LGBTIQ+ community has to support services as well as community participation through the provision of ongoing connection to a Support Officer to enhance access to support services and mental health support; access to social connection, activities and community participation; advice and support for employment related issues; advocacy support and self care strategies to support long term outcomes for individuals.

We provide service in an early intervention space to prevent the escalation of mental health concerns and reduce the need for psychological intervention. Participants will develop a Pathways Plan that focuses on their future direction and personal journey. This will focus on the strengths and skills of the individual and target their specific needs to ensure that they are empowered to take whatever steps forward they need to enhance their wellbeing.

Our Peer Work process teaches people that empowerment doesn't mean doing things on your own, rather, it is about making decisions to move forward by building a team of support and being active in the decision to overcome adversity.



Eligibility Criteria

Age: Open to any age

Location: Lake Macquarie / Newcastle resident

Diagnosis: Not required

Venue: Centre Based or outreach

Cost: FREE

Referral: Email support@lmnspn.org.au

Proudly funded by



For referral to Windows of Hope please complete referral form and email to support@lmnspn.org.au

For further information go to www.connectedtocare.com.au/projects

The Evolve Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub has been designed by the Lake Macquarie & Newcastle Suicide Prevention Network (LMNSPN) as a collaborative space for allied health and wellbeing support agencies to cohabitate. It is a place where we can work in unison to address the need identified by those experiencing mental ill health and risk of suicide. At the Evolve Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub, our community can access support from a range of services and receive ongoing support through connection with a Mental Health Support Officer to ensure their ongoing needs are met. The Hub will operate under a collaborative care model which involves shared information (where required), cross referrals and inter-agency planning to identify new opportunities for service provision to those who are vulnerable in our community, experience mental ill health and reduced wellbeing and may be at an increased risk of suicide.

At the Hub we are always seeking to partner with local services to provide Psychology and Counselling Services, School Support Services, Community and Corporate Educational Workshops as well as other allied health support services such as Behaviour Therapy, Family Therapy, Peer Work, Domestic Violence services and Child Youth and Family Support Services. Our Windows of Hope program, Connected to Care Youth Engagement Program and the Young Healthy Minds Project will be delivered from the Hub, alongside the coordination of our Community Health Promotion activities and events.

It is hoped that through collaboration, we can provide integrated support to assist those in need across a range of concerns.

We will seek to continue to value add to the Hub's range of services and activities by engaging services such as Counsellors, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Behaviour Therapists, Child Play Therapists, Nutritionist/Dieticians, Financial Counsellor, Career Counsellor, Family Therapist, Art Therapist, General Practitioners and additional Peer Workers. It is also envisaged that we will provide recreational supports such as Yoga and Art Therapy, skill development classes

Hours of Operation

The Evolve Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub is open from Tuesday-Friday 9am to 4:30pm, with opportunities for additional days to suit agency and community need.

For those who are seeking support, respite or connection are able to access the Evolve Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub at any time during our opening hours on a casual basis without need for referral. Individuals can access information about local supports, dig in one of our community gardens or simply sit and chat to one of our many volunteers who are trained to engage, support and refer an individual who is seeking support.

Grant Writing

Partner agencies will be provided with the opportunity to secure collaborative funding through our grant writer, thanks to our status as a charitable organisation and Deductible Gift Recipient (Type 1)

Social Media

Our dedicated Social Media Officer will promote each partner agencies programs and services through our social media channels as well as developing other media opportunities through print and digital media.

Volunteering

We have a range of volunteering opportunities available to those seeking to connect with our work and the community. This includes our Green Team, Market Stall Team, Health Promotions Team and our Welcome Team. All volunteers receive training and ongoing support, fostering a sense of connection, team work and shared interests.



Community Connect

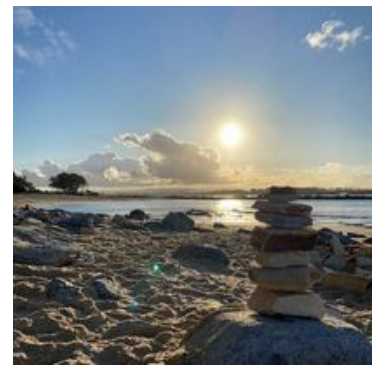
COMMUNITY CONNECT EVENTS & ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

Community Connect is a suite of 18 events and community activities that are designed to improve community participation and inclusion across the Lake Macquarie community.

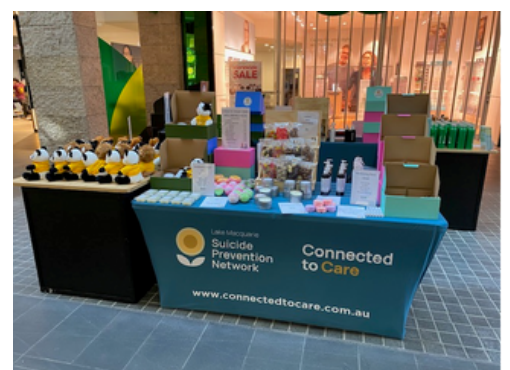
These events are health and wellbeing related, targeting those who have been affected by droughts, fires, floods and the impact of covid in our local area. These events include the delivery of our popular FREE Yoga and Massages, Community Picnic Days and a range of other activities and events that will link individuals and families with their community, local services and opportunities that improve social outcomes.

We have also partnered with our local Aboriginal services to deliver a range of culturally aligned activities that support the skills, aspirations and experiences of local Aboriginal communities.

The Community Connect project will operate until the end of 2025.



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Health AND WELBEING FESTIVALS



Our Health and Wellbeing Festivals are a series of community 'picnic days' that are aimed to provide positive social activity and connection to wellness activities and support services. Each of the 3 days in this series will involve food, lawn games, music, positive wellbeing activities and stallholders from local support services in a vibrant and active environment. Our vision is for 'A vibrant, active and aware community united to reduce the impact and incidence of suicide'.

The Health & Wellbeing Festivals will be held at Toronto Foreshore, Speers Point Park and at a new location on the eastern side of Lake Macquarie.



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SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION

It has not been until the significant crisis of Covid-19 that we have realised the importance that positive wellbeing and community education plays in the management and support of those at risk of suicide. Around the world we have seen communities, cities and countries enter into periods of lockdown to ensure the health and safety of the world's population. As a result, significant adjustments to day to day living have occurred that have forced the modification of how we live, work and play.

Both our paid and volunteer staff are equipped with extensive experience in the delivery of mental health and suicide prevention education. Our CEO has assisted in the delivery of numerous LivingWorks SafeTalk workshops and has previously and delivered mental health training workshops for schools, community and sporting clubs across the Lake Macquarie and Newcastle region. We have several staff trained in the delivery of Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) as well as those who have extensive experience as Lifeline telephone counsellors.

We work closely with Wesley Mission to support the delivery of community mental health and suicide prevention workshops as well corporate workshops for small business, allied health providers and large healthcare providers.

If you are interested in attending a Mental Health or Suicide Prevention education workshop, or would like our team to come to your workplace please contact us at projects@lmnspn.org.au

For further information go to www.connectedtocare.com.au/projects

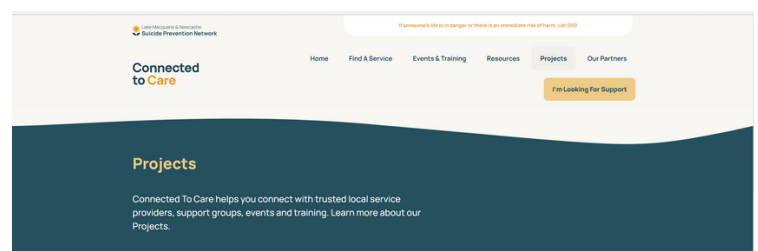
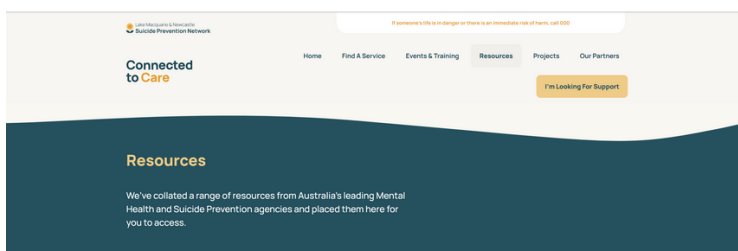
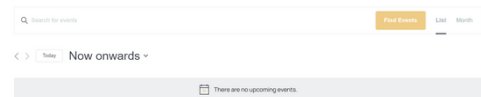
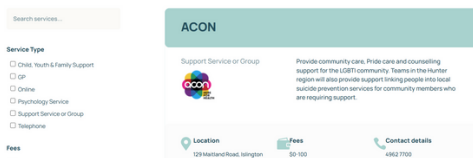
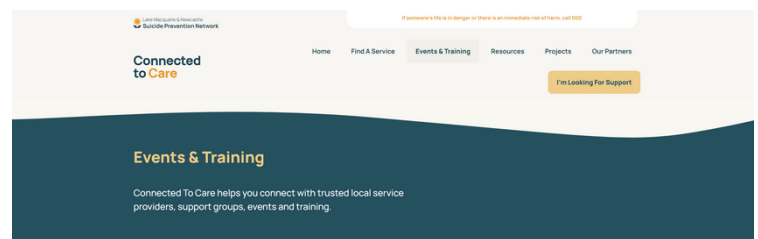
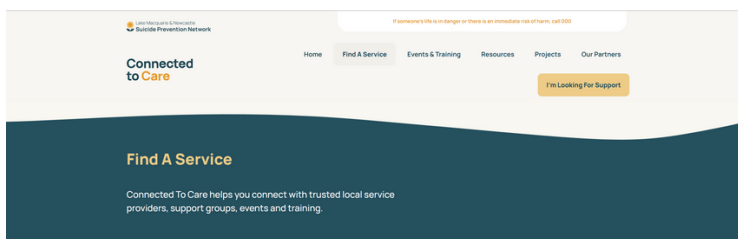
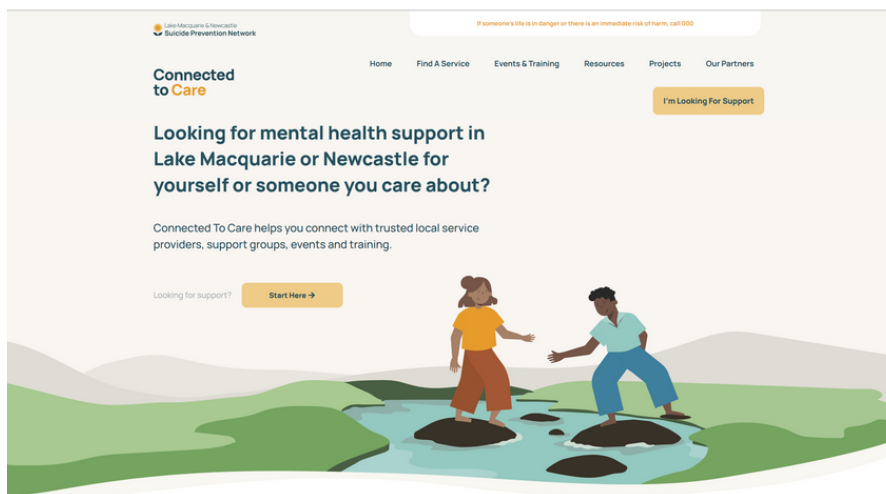
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nabfoundation



The Connected to Care website provides a local solution to the endless list of websites, directories, FAQ sheets, blogs and calendars regarding mental health support. This website was created after a considerable amount of time was spent in consultation with those who have a lived experience of mental illness and suicidality. From this we heard that those experiencing mental ill-health and those caring for someone often have challenges in finding the right support or the right information to support someone who is at risk, at the right time.

The Connected to Care website contains a directory of available services and support groups, a list of local events to help engage people in community, a calendar of training opportunities to better educate community members on mental health literacy and suicide prevention, resources to assist people in a caring role to know what to say to someone at risk of suicide and other resources to support wellbeing and positive mental health. It is built with a local context and is supported through weekly updates to ensure the information found on the website is up to date and relevant to the needs of our community.



Are you seeking information on what to do when you're feeling down?
Are you supporting someone and want to know what you can do to help?
Remember, reaching out for support shows courage and strength. If you need additional support please contact one of the services in our Directory or phone Lifeline on 13 11 14 to ensure you are always connected to care.

Are you experiencing mental illness or thoughts of suicide?

Are you caring for someone who is experiencing mental illness?





Bradley Dunn
Chief Executive Officer

Bradley has been a member of the Lake macquarie and Newcastle Suicide Prevention Network for over 12 years, taking on the role of CEO in 2023 after leading the Network to a period of significant expansion since relaunching the Network in June 2021. Bradley has extensive experience in community development, business development and mental health advocacy and is a passionate family man and sports lover.



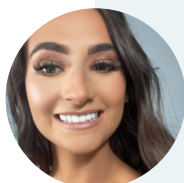
Imogene
Support Officer | Project Officer

Imogene finished her Bachelor of Psychological Science in 2022 and is completing her Master of Mental Health Counselling. She has over 6 years of combined volunteering experience, working with children and young adults in psychoeducational programs and buddy mentorship programs. Imogene is also an artist, and loves to paint portraits in her spare time.



Rachel
Support Officer

Rachel is our most recent staff member to join the team. Currently studying Psychology, Rachel has extensive experience in a range of Mental Health issues and programs. She is eager to get to know all the people who are interested in our services and help them find the right programs and activities to suit their needs. Rachel also enjoys doing crochet and playing lots of boardgames.



Ruby
Social Media Officer | Project Officer

Ruby is a dynamic and creative individual with a flair for social media and graphic design. She is at the forefront of our digital media projects and is developing her skills in community services after completing her TAFE qualifications in 2022. Ruby will be leading our Youth Advocacy Group and delivering a range of projects as part of our Community Connect and Community Wellbeing Festival programs.

For Support or Referral:

Email: support@lmnspn.org.au

Phone: 0447 81 61 49

For information on community activities and events:

Email: projects@lmnspn.org.au

Phone: 0447 81 61 49

For all media enquiries:

Email: mail@lmnspn.org.au

Phone: 0417 220 520

For Partnerships and Collaboration:

Email: ceo@lmnspn.org.au

Phone: 0417 220 520

CONTACT US