

HOW TO BUILD A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORK SITE

The workplace hazards that create risks of harm to psychological (mental) health are known as psychosocial hazards. These hazards, when excessive or prolonged, can cause serious harm. It can have a significant impact on workers, their families and business.

Construction workers are six times more likely to die from suicide than an accident at work. Every year 190 Australians working in the construction industry take their own lives; this means we lose a construction worker every second day to suicide. Young construction workers are two times more likely to take their own lives than other young workers.

PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS CAN COME FROM:

- Work relationships and interactions, including bullying, harassment, discrimination, aggression and violence
- The way the work or job is designed, organised and managed
- The equipment, working environment or requirements to undertake duties

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WORK-RELATED FACTORS THAT AFFECT A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORK SITE?

- Work-related violence and aggression
- Workplace bullying
- Poor support
- Lack of recognition and reward
- Low role clarity
- Poor organisational justice
- Remote and isolated work



Workplaces have a legal responsibility to manage risks to mental health and wellbeing just like they do any other health and safety risk.

Knowing where to start can feel overwhelming but getting started doesn't have to be. Take action to improve the mental health of your team today.



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TIPS TO HELP BUILD AND MAINTAIN A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORK SITE:

- **Create a more positive and supportive work site**
 - Develop an action plan in consultation with your workers about what you can do together.
 - Check in on your workers regularly. Start a genuine conversation. Ask your worker how they are going, and listen.
 - Encourage respectful behaviour and communication.
 - Walk the talk and lead by example. Supervisors demonstrate their commitment by being supportive and positive on site.
 - Show your commitment by supporting mental health organisations and getting involved in awareness events.
 - Reinforce the good behaviours regularly and address bad behaviour as they appear.
 - Commit to zero tolerance for bullying, discrimination and violence/aggression.
 - Encourage and support employees to bring up concerns when they notice unacceptable behaviours.
- **Establish awareness and support for workers experiencing mental health issues**
 - Consistently raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing by having discussions such as 1:1 chats and toolbox talks.
 - Share information with your workers on mental health and how to seek help to help break the stigma. Posters, emails, discussions can all be used.
 - Encourage staff with mental health conditions to seek treatment and support early.
 - Support staff with mental health conditions to stay at or return to work.
- **Celebrate workers and their efforts**
 - Praise employees and give regular positive feedback for good work.
 - Celebrate team success. A morning tea / BBQ is also great for team bonding.
- **Take steps to improve role clarity and job satisfaction**
 - Monitor and manage workloads regularly and increase input in how workers do their work.
 - Have ongoing and regular conversations with employees about their performance and behaviour.
 - Make sure your employees are clear about their roles. Position description, regular 1:1 catch ups and reviews.
 - Offer opportunities for learning, problem-solving and personal development.
 - Support learning – provide opportunities for workers to learn and sharpen their skills, and set interesting challenges.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES:

- [Beyond Blue](#)
- [Black Dog Institute](#)
- [Construction Blue Print](#)
- [Heads Up](#)
- [Livin](#)
- [Mates in Construction](#)
- [Mentally healthy workplaces toolkit](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Mental health at work](#)
- [R U OK](#)
- [Thrive at work](#)
- [Work Well](#)
- [Workers with mental illness: A practical guide for managers](#)

