



MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Record number of Mental Health Week events**

If you haven't planned anything exciting for October yet, you may want to put time aside for a jam-packed week of fun during Mental Health Week. As sunny Spring settles in by mid-October, it marks the perfect setting to head outdoors and participate in activities happening near you.

The Western Australian Association of Mental Health, working in partnership with the Mental Health Commission, is coordinating the events and activities during Mental Health Week, running this year from October 6-13.

Events during this year's celebration include 'Turn Blue 4 a Day' on October 10 in the Murray Street Mall, Perth Town Hall art exhibition, poetry and painting competitions, and wellbeing at work lunchtime speakers in Central Park. The opening ceremony at the Luna Theatre in Leederville will screen a WA premiere of the Australian film based on a true story, *Sunnyboys* on Sunday October 6. We have also secured *Sunnyboys* director, Kaye Harrison to talk to the audience at the premiere about the making of the film.

At the end of Mental Health Week, closing celebrations will be held in regional WA with a ritzy Ball of Hope on Saturday evening in Esperance and the Navigating Teenage Depression forum ending the week in Bunbury in the afternoon, filled with plenty of guest speakers and entertainment.

This year a record number of community event registrations were received from organisations and individuals wanting to participate and celebrate Mental Health Week. All events are open to the public and displayed online at WAAMH's Mental Health Week calendar, where details for more than 40 Mental Health Week events can be found.

The aim of Mental Health Week is to promote social and emotional wellbeing to the community, encourage people to maximise their health potential, enhance the coping capacity of communities, families and individuals, and increase mental health recovery.

Mental health issues affect more than one in five Australians every year, with anxiety disorders being the most common mental health challenge, followed by depression. Mental Health Week creates an opportunity for people to think about the ways in which we can enhance our social and emotional wellbeing, thereby building our personal resilience and support networks.

WAAMH executive director Rod Astbury said Mental Health Week was a great opportunity to engage all members of the community in activities which can enhance their mental health and wellbeing.

"Mental Health Week is a useful reminder for all of us to think about the mental health of ourselves and those around us," Astbury said. "It's also a good excuse to get out there and have some fun.

"Mental Health Week is a wonderful example of what can be done through strong partnerships as we successfully engaged with our sector, the broader community, and encouraged government and corporate organisations to participate in the promotion of positive mental health messages."

This year's theme is *Celebrate, Connect, Grow* which encourages people to celebrate the positive things in their lives, their strengths and values; connect with others by paying close attention to their



relationships; and grow by expanding their horizons and trying something new to create meaning and purpose.

### **About Mental Health Week**

Mental Health Week is funded by the Mental Health Commission and coordinated by the Western Australian Association for Mental Health. WAAMH first coordinated Mental Health Week more than 15 years ago and it's now an annual event. The event coincides around World Mental Health Day, which is celebrated annually on October 10. This year, Mental Health Week will run between Sunday, October 6 and Sunday, October 13. The week long festivities will embrace art, music, sport and community to promote awareness about mental health and wellbeing for ourselves and those around us. Further information can be found at <http://mhw.waamh.org.au/>

### **About WAAMH**

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) has been engaged in the mental health sector for more than 50 years. WAAMH is the peak body representing the community-managed mental health sector in WA with more than 100 organisational and individual members. Our vision is to lead the way in supporting and promoting the human rights of people with mental illness, their families and carers, through the provision of inclusive, well-governed community-based services, focused on recovery. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and development, and promotes positive attitudes to mental health and recovery. Further information on WAAMH can be found at <http://www.waamh.org.au>

### **Executive Director**

Rod Astbury  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 9420 7277  
[rastbury@waamh.org.au](mailto:rastbury@waamh.org.au)

### **Media Contact**

Brooke Showers  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 9420 7277  
[bshowers@wamha.org.au](mailto:bshowers@wamha.org.au)



***WAAMH - Peak body representing the community-managed mental health sector in WA***

**A:** 2 Delhi Street, West Perth WA 6005 **T:** 08 9420 7277 **F:** 08 9420 7280

**E:** [communications@waamh.org.au](mailto:communications@waamh.org.au) **W:** <http://www.waamh.org.au>