



MEDIA RELEASE

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WAAMH selects Act-Belong-Commit and Together We Can Save Lives as Mental Health Week 2016 theme

WESTERN Australia's peak body for community mental health, the WA Association for Mental Health (WAAMH), with the support of the WA Mental Health Commission, are pleased to announce Act-Belong-Commit with a focus on suicide prevention, 'Together we can save lives', as the official theme for WA's Mental Health Week in 2016.

Following on from the state's biggest ever Mental Health Week in 2015 which engaged over 15,000 people, WAAMH will be partnering once again with Mentally Healthy WA's (Curtin University) Act-Belong-Commit message to encourage the community to take action to protect and promote their own mental wellbeing through being active, and having a sense of belonging and purpose in life.

In line with the Act-Belong-Commit message, this year's Mental Health Week will also focus on suicide prevention, 'Together we can save lives'.

WAAMH Chief Executive Officer, Rod Astbury, said the theme was one of the most important elements of Mental Health Week. "After the success of last year's Mental Health Week, we chose the Act-Belong-Commit message once again because it aligns with the aims of Mental Health Week to improve community wellbeing," Mr Astbury said. "It also complements WAAMH's attitude to mental health promotion, by encouraging positive and preventative approaches which can be protective against suicide," Mr Astbury said.

"Act-Belong-Commit is relevant to a diverse range of people, workplaces, schools, families, ages, and cultures in our community, as people can draw their own meaning and discover what works for them."

The Act-Belong-Commit message is well established, has a strong community presence and encourages individuals to take action to protect and promote their own mental wellbeing, which is particularly important for suicide prevention.

Mentally Healthy WA Campaign Manager, Amberlee Nicholas, said the Act-Belong-Commit theme was applicable to everyone. "This message is for those who are already mentally healthy but want to stay that way, people who feel a bit down and want to enjoy life more, and people that are looking for positive ways to build their mental health to assist in their recovery from mental illness," Ms Nicholas said.

"Being active, having a sense of belonging and purpose in life all contribute to happiness and good mental health - and this aligns perfectly with goals of Mental Health Week. We are looking forward to working closely with WAAMH again this year to deliver a fun-filled Mental Health Week."

Now in its 49th year, Mental Health Week is one of the most recognised and longest running community health campaigns in WA. WAAMH will host a series of community events and activities during Mental Health Week from 8 – 16 October 2016, and release a wide range of resources in the lead up. Some of the proposed events this year include a basketball game, Aboriginal yarning circle, all ages family fun day, plus seminars aimed at parents, workplaces and the mental health sector.

Peak body representing the community-based mental health sector in WA.

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As part of Mental Health Week 2016, everyone is encouraged to adopt and promote the Act-Belong-Commit way for better mental health and wellbeing, with many of the events and resources this year centring on this theme.

“Mental Health Week is an important opportunity for people to connect with the community, break down stigma, and encourage self-care and help seeking behaviour, so I urge everyone to try and get involved,” Mr Astbury said.

Sponsorships are still available for organisations looking to partner with and support events throughout the week. “Sponsoring Mental Health Week is an opportunity for aligned organisations to promote their products, services and brands through cause-related marketing to a large portion of the WA community,” Mr Astbury said.

Sponsors who have already come on board to support Mental Health Week in 2016, are;

- **Gold** - Black Swan Health
- **Silver** - HelpingMinds and MercyCare
- **Bronze** - Rise Network, Mission Australia, Southern Cross Care (WA) and St Bartholomew's House
- **Better thank OK: Parenting Forum** - Anglicare WA
- **Arts and Mental Health Network Arts Exhibition** - Southern Cross Care (WA)
- **Workplace Wellness Sessions** - The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

To find out more about events, activities or sponsoring Mental Health Week in 2016, visit:

mhw.waamh.org.au

About WAAMH

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) was incorporated in 1966 and is the peak body representing WA's community-managed mental health sector and around 100 organisational and individual members. Our vision is that as a human right, every one of us who experiences mental health issues has the resources and support needed to recover, lead a good life and contribute as active citizens. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and sector development, and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. In 2016, WAAMH is celebrating 50 years of developing, promoting and representing the community mental health sector in Western Australia. Further info at www.waamh.org.au

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