



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

24 May 2022

**YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE GREAT SOUTH COAST  
LEAD THE WAY IN MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING**

More than 450 teens and adults have been trained in Mental Health First Aid in the Great South Coast as part of a landmark initiative to reduce rates of suicide in the region.

**Youth Live4Life** has been supported to coordinate more Mental Health First Aid training in schools. Additionally, over 30 community members have been trained as Mental Health First Aid Instructors to work with local advisory groups, community groups and schools to implement Teen and Youth Mental Health First Aid training.

Live4Life is the only mental health education and youth suicide prevention model designed specifically for rural and regional communities. It aims to improve mental health literacy and encourage positive help-seeking behaviours of young people. The Teen Mental Health First Aid Course teaches secondary school students in years 7-9 and 10-12 how to provide Mental Health First Aid to their friends.

The boost to Mental Health First Aid is part of the **Great South Coast Suicide Prevention Place Based Trial** GSCSPBT - a joint commitment between the Western Victoria PHN and the Australian Government to recognise the benefits of collaborative approaches to suicide prevention.

With the project still running, 12 Teen Instructors have already delivered training in 10 different school settings. It is anticipated that 24 Teen Instructors will be trained by the end of the project in June 2022. Training has already been delivered to over 450 teens.

Additionally, by training 10 Youth (aged 18+) Instructors in 2021, the project aims to have completed 16 Youth Mental Health First Aid courses, delivered to over 120 adults who support young people by the end of the project.

**Rowena Clift, WVPHN CEO** said "Communities in the Great South Coast region are very keen to engage with early suicide intervention approaches such as Mental Health First Aid, but lack the sustainable resources and coordination. This project has highlighted the value of the Live4Life model, which provides a structured platform for sustained mental health education for young people".

**Youth Live4Life Chief Executive Officer Bernard Galbally** said "We applaud the community members who have committed their time to undertake Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid Instructor training. We know that when we work together, we can change lives."

**(Additional Editorial Opportunity):** [Q&A profiles of Lauren, Live4Life Youth Instructor and Cass, a course participant.](#)



To further assist communities in the region, free online training in suicide first aid by [LivingWorks](#) is currently available for all residents of the Great South Coast. Access the training [here](#).

**Support Services**

*Lifeline: 13 11 14 or [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)*

*Head to Health: 1800 595 212*

*Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 or [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)*

*Suicide Callback Service: 1300 659 467*

*Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800*

*QLife: 1800 184 527 (support for LGBTI community)*

*Emergency Services: 000 (triple zero)*

**- ENDS -**

**Available for interview:**

- Rowena Clift, Chief Executive Officer - WVPHN
- Cr Anita Rank, Chair - Great South Coast Suicide Prevention Place Based Trial Leadership Group and Mayor - Glenelg Shire Council
- Bernard Galbally, Chief Executive Officer - Youth Live4Life

**Photography:**

Program photography courtesy of Live4Life - [Click here to download](#).

**Further Information On The Great South Coast Suicide Prevention Place Based Trial:**

The Great South Coast Suicide Prevention Place Based Trial is an initiative aimed at delivering activities to reduce the suicide rate in the shires of Corangamite, Glenelg, Moyne and Southern Grampians and the City of Warrnambool. Coordinated by Western Victoria Primary Health Network (WVPHN) in partnership with the Federal Government and a range of health care service providers, the trial offers a coordinated approach to reducing the suicide rate in the Great South Coast with a range of community network support activities.

Headed by a local leadership committee, the GSCSPBPT comprised 12 community-based projects aiming to reduce the rates of suicide, reduce suicide attempts, build resilience and wellbeing and improve systems to prevent suicide in an ongoing way.

**WVPHN Chief Executive Officer Rowena Clift** said: *"Many families across the Great South Coast are struggling to understand why their loved ones have taken their own lives. From teenagers to adults and both male and female; the suicide rate for Great South Coast is unacceptably high. We want to ensure that every single person who may be struggling with thoughts of suicide or has attempted suicide has support*

## MEDIA RELEASE



GREAT SOUTH COAST  
Suicide Prevention  
Place Based Trial



Australian Government

*networks available to help them when and where they need it. These activities will help us achieve this by filling identified service gaps and giving the community the support it requires.”*

*For more information on the Great South Coast Suicide Prevention Place Based Trials, visit <https://bit.ly/GSCSPBTbackgrounders>.*

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