

Going for Gold: Promoting Student Wellbeing

ABSTRACT FOR ISANA/ANZSSA 2014 JOINT CONFERENCE 2014

Australia leads the world in its provision of mental health services for young people. Online support such as ReachOut.com by Inspire Foundation, *youthbeyondblue*, Lifeline, and kidshelpline are backed up with face-to-face services like headspace: the youth mental health foundation, and professional support services and clinics run in settings that young people spend time, such as universities, schools and workplaces. Despite this focused attention, the system is failing to catch all of those who need assistance. Within this current framework of support, young people are not getting help when they need it, and are often reaching crisis point before receiving support.

Young people do not differentiate between their online and face-to-face interactions, and both are used as a mode of communication. Online technologies are accessible, user-friendly, and they allow individuals to express themselves by sharing their interests, likes, dislikes, and opinions to a wide audience via social media. Participation in the online world can promote inclusion, community, and involvement in the 21st century context. It provides young people experiencing mental health problems with a genuine space where they can connect with others facing similar hurdles, all at the click of a mouse.

The Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre, set up in 2011, unites young people with researchers, practitioners and innovators from over 70 partner organisations across the not-for-profit, government and corporate sectors to explore both the positive and negative role of technology in young people's lives, and how it can be used to support them to feel safe, healthy and resilient.

This presentation will focus on results from the Young and Well National Survey, which shows that an increasing number of young people aged 16-25 are accessing support online. The presentation will also explore the importance of involving young people in the design of services by exploring a number of Young and Well CRC projects that have used 'Participatory Design' and 'Rapid Prototyping'. This will include work conducted by the Australian National University to develop a 'University Clinic', the work conducted by the University of Sydney to develop 'hAPPiness Central,' and the work conducted by the University of Melbourne to develop 'Link'. Finally, the presentation will finish with an overview of what an integrated system of care could look like for university students, which would focus on wellness through to clinical care.