

Understanding Trauma: Information for Young People

What is trauma?

Trauma is how your body and brain respond to something scary, overwhelming, or unsafe. Everyone reacts differently to experiences of trauma.

What trauma can feel like

- Scared
- Angry
- Not caring
- Worried
- Easily frustrated
- Withdrawing
- On edge
- Numb
- Confused

What trauma can look like

- Difficulty sleeping
- Having nightmares
- Feeling jumpy or more scared than usual
- Thinking about what happened over and over
- Eating more or less than usual
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Wanting to be alone or avoiding people
- Not able to be alone and seeking contact

Your brain's alarm system is working extra hard to keep you safe

The responses that you are having are your brain's way of keeping you safe.

Your brain remembers danger and it is trying to warn you about future ones. Sometimes your brain is reacting even when you are safe now.

Important things to know

These reactions are normal. You are not going crazy.

Your feelings can change over time. Things can get easier for you with support.

You might feel unsure

You might not understand why you are feeling like this. You might be wondering if something is wrong with you.

It is okay to ask for help – even if you don't have the words

What might help

- Talking to someone you trust
- Doing things that help you feel calm or safe
- Taking breaks when you are feeling overwhelmed

Where can I get help?

- **Kids Helpline** – 24/7 support by phone on **1800 55 1800** or chat on their website: kidshelpline.com.au/get-help/webchat-counselling
- **SECASA Intake** – during business hours on **8769 2200 – opt 1**
- **Sexual Assault Crisis Line** – after hours and weekend support on **1800 577 011**