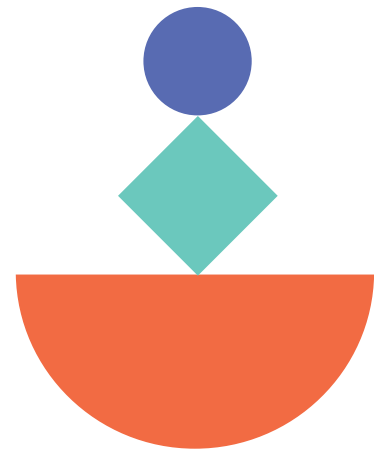


Seeing the signs

abound.org.au/seeingthesigns



What are the wellbeing warning signs?

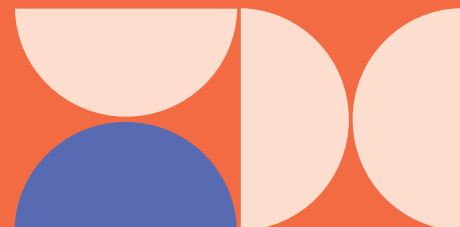
What does good mental health look like at church?



- They are consistent and spiritually stable.
- They have the ability to regulate their emotions.
- They have emotional maturity and take an active role in mentoring and guiding others.
- They are able to cope with the challenges that life throws them.
- They are actively contributing in the church community.
- They know their strengths and weaknesses and take active steps to cultivate and grow in areas that need improvement.

What are the wellbeing warning signs?

- They are withdrawing from regular activities like bible study.
- They are experiencing mood swings like teariness or anger.
- They are turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse.
- They have difficulty concentrating, or making decisions - even with simple things like attending church.
- They are feeling hopeless or worthless. They are losing sight of their faith.
- They're experiencing changes to sleeping patterns - either not enough sleep, or too much



Why start a conversation about mental health at church?



Promoting overall well-being

Mental and emotional health directly impact a person's overall well being, and addressing these challenges can lead to healthier and more fulfilling lives.



Providing support and empathy

Church communities are often a source of support and understanding. Being aware of mental and emotional health challenges allows us to extend empathy, care, and hope to those who may be struggling.



Strengthening community bond

When our church community comes together to support one another during difficult times, it fosters stronger connections and a sense of belonging.



Reducing stigma

Openly discussing mental and emotional health challenges helps reduce the stigma associated with seeking help. It encourages people to seek professional support without fear of judgement.

Why a Christian counsellor might help your church.

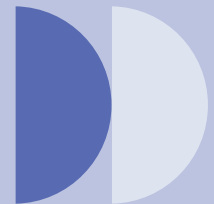
Holistic

Christian counselling addresses the whole person - spiritual, social, emotional and physical wellbeing.



Values-aligned

Christian counsellors bring an understanding of spiritual practices like reading the bible, worship, prayer and the faith community, and how they fit into a healthy spiritual life.



Part of your church's plan

It's important for churches to have access to support beyond pastoral care and before a crisis comes. Equipping your team leaders to navigate difficult pastoral situations should be an extension of your 'first aid' training.



Preventing pastoral burnout

It's important to know the line between pastoral care and professional support. Counsellors work hand-in-hand with pastoral teams on the ground by providing an objective voice and practical skills to your people.



Next Steps

Learn more about Seeing the Signs



1

Understand the signs

Equip yourself, your team, and the broader church community to see the signs of mental or emotional distress before it's needed. Utilise abundant resources around your church so that people can educate themselves.

2

Care for the whole person

For many who are struggling, it's hard for them to get help by themselves. Sometimes, it means that you will need to support them and advocate for them. This could look like waiting with them for their appointment, or sitting with them as they make the appointment.

3

Have a plan

Dealing with mental or emotional health should have a process and a plan - just as if it were physical first aid! Implement plans before they're needed so that your team feels ready and equipped for whatever comes their way.