

Media Release

16/9/15

SCHOOLS ENCOURAGED TO GET CHATTY WITH NEW SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

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Today Premier Will Hodgman launched the new program from Relationships Australia Tasmania and leading suicide prevention charity SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY at McKillop College in Mornington.

The program, called #TeamChatTY, is designed to enhance young people's awareness, and build their knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain positive mental health.

Founder of SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY, Mitch McPherson, said that the key message of #TeamChatTY is to look after your friends and let them know that nothing is ever so bad that they can't talk about it.

"I started the charity after my younger brother Ty took his own life. I didn't have the knowledge or skills to have a conversation with him about mental health issues and I was unable to identify the signs that he needed help. I want to make sure that every child in Tasmania is empowered to have these conversations with their friends and loved ones and has an understanding of the importance of their own mental health."

#TeamChatTY has been funded by the Tasmanian Community Fund, and Relationships Australia Tasmania (RA Tas) developed the program in collaboration with SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY. It involves one 2 hour session delivered to a group of no more than 30 students, facilitated by Mitch and with a counsellor from RA Tas, and a one hour follow up session.

RA Tas CEO, Mat Rowell, said that his organisation was proud to be involved with #TeamChatTY.

"This important program builds on our existing suicide prevention work in the community."

"It is vital to work with schools to provide support, information and resources because any life lost to suicide is one too many."

For more information about #TeamChatTY email Mitch on mitchm@reltas.com.au or call him on 0488 454 001

For crisis or suicide prevention support, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or visit:
www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp.

For further information please contact

Angela Wilson, Senior Communications Officer, on 0487 325 217 or angelaw@reltas.com.au

About RA Tas

Relationships Australia Tasmania (RA Tas) provides counselling, relationship and parenting education seminars and courses, dispute resolution, community support and professional training. Services are available to all people regardless of cultural background, family structure, economic situation, religious beliefs, gender or sexual orientation.

For more information call 1300 364 277 or visit our website: tas.relationships.org.au

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