

MEDIA RELEASE

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Trent Merrin challenges Australia to dance to improve youth mental health

Penrith Panthers NRL player Trent Merrin wants to get Australia talking and dancing about youth mental health, so those suffering know how and where to find help.

Merrin, who is studying towards a Bachelor of Psychology, says he is very concerned about the high rate of youth mental health and suicide in Australia. One in five Australians will experience mental illness or a problem linked to mental health in their lifetime. Alarmingly, only one in four will receive professional help.

“Some young people in Australia don’t know where to get help for mental illness because it’s not a topic that we talk about often or they fear the stigma of people knowing. I want to help change that.” Merrin said.

To shine a light on how youth can get help, Merrin has designed a social media challenge entitled #moveoutofyourhead. The challenge encourages the community to film themselves doing a dance, upload it to their social media platforms and then challenge a friend to do the same. Those who do not want to dance are encouraged to donate to Kids Helpline.

Merrin is hoping this will start a conversation in the community about healthy ways to move out of your head. As well as communicating where to get professional help if you need it.

For Merrin, when he needs to move out of his head, he finds dancing useful. His unique dancing style has become recognised after a number of post-game shed videos went viral on social media.

“I’m quite fond of doing a little dance to celebrate winning a game. I also love to dance when I need to move the energy from my head, down to my body. So I think this challenge is the perfect way to get this vital message across in a fun, interactive way.” Says Merrin.

The challenge has the support of Kids Helpline, which is a free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online for children and young people aged 5 to 25. Kids Helpline is here anytime and for any reason - free call 1800 55 1800 or kidshelpline.com.au

Kids Helpline CEO Tracy Adams says “We work hard to put services in place to support those needing help, but this is an issue for the whole community. It’s great to see projects like #moveoutofyourhead’ getting behind this issue, encouraging young people to speak up and get help when they need it.”

“I really hope that this message, which is so important to me, can help change someone’s life for the better.” Merrin said.

To get involved in #moveoutofyourhead, take a video of yourself doing your favourite dance, upload it to social media, challenge a friend to do the same and tag #moveoutofyourhead and @trentmerrin.

ENDS



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