



# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

AND WHAT YOU SAID

**JUNE 2015**

**A REPORT ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT POSITIVE  
MENTAL WELLBEING COLLECTED BY THE TASMANIAN YOUTH FORUM**



Tasmanian youth forum



youth network of Tasmania

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## About TYF

The Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) is Tasmania's peak youth consultative body. TYF is an initiative of the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), the peak organisation for the broader youth sector in Tasmania, with funding from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, through Communities, Sport and Recreation Tasmania.

## Acknowledgements

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**YOUTH, FAMILY  
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## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
What the Key Findings are .....	4
What you did.....	5
Your brainstorming ideas.....	6
What you do to look after your mental health and wellbeing .....	7
What do others need to know? .....	7
What you want to keep and what you would like to change .....	8
What you want to create, your ideas and solutions.....	11
Survey.....	14
Being Mentally Healthy.....	15
Mental health support .....	18
Information about mental health .....	20
Your ideas for mental health in the future .....	21
Your Feedback.....	21
Quotes from the Day.....	22
What happens next.....	22

## Introduction

On Friday 20 March, around 150 young people aged 12-25 from across Tasmania came together at the Door of Hope in Launceston to share their ideas, concerns and solutions about mental health and wellbeing at the Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) *Mental Health Matters* Forum. The Forum was facilitated by Mo, who helped guide the discussions and sharing of ideas. There was also an online Survey that people could fill out. This let people from all across Tasmania share their opinions and ideas about positive mental health and wellbeing, even if they were unable to attend the Forum in person.

The Forum and Survey were initiatives of the Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF) which is the peak consultative body for young people in Tasmania. TYF is supported by the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT), the peak organisation for the non-government youth sector.

The Forum and Survey aimed to:

- Give young people the chance to discuss their ideas about mental health and wellbeing.
- Give young people the opportunity to discuss ideas and solutions related to positive mental health and wellbeing.
- To encourage young people to learn from each other and share their ideas about what they currently do to look after their mental health and wellbeing.

This Report shows the main ideas that were discussed by everyone at the Forum and through the Survey responses.

## What the Key Findings are

*Finding 1: Young people rely on multiple sources and forms of support for their mental health and wellbeing.*

*Finding 2: Stigma, fear and judgement are the main barriers that prevent young people from seeking help with their mental health.*

*Finding 3: Mental health services in Tasmania need to be available in all locations of the State with easy accessibility for young people to reduce barriers accessing these services.*

*Finding 4: Young people want Tasmania to be a safe and healthy place for everyone and understand that this requires structural and societal changes across multiple areas.*

*Finding 5: Young people understand that they need to take care of their mental health and wellbeing, and use multiple strategies to keep mentally healthy.*

*Finding 6: Young people want people they turn to for support to listen to what they have to say and ask then what they need to be supported.*

*Finding 7: Being mentally healthy is something that is important to young people.*

*Finding 8: Young people are more likely to access mental health services in times of crisis or need, rather than as a way to maintain their mental health.*

*Finding 9: Young people recognise the importance of having capable and professional staff at services who can help support their mental health*

*Finding 10: Young people are most likely to go to their friends and family for support with their mental health and wellbeing.*

*Finding 11: Young people report that friends and family are less likely to be well informed about mental health and wellbeing than professionals or other sources of support.*

*Finding 12: Young people want more skills to support their friends and family with their mental health*

*Finding 13: Young people want a positive and caring environment when they seek support to talk about their concerns.*

*Finding 14: Young people want to encourage their peers to seek help and talk to people if they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health.*

## What you did

The Forum included a number of activities and discussion groups, including an ideas wall and a positive mental health wall. The morning started with Mo introducing the day and letting everyone know what was happening. Minister for Health, Hon Michael Ferguson then opened up the Forum and spoke about why it was important to hear young people's ideas about mental health and wellbeing.

Everyone then had the chance to fill out the Survey to share their ideas and concerns about mental health and wellbeing. After filling out the Survey everyone got into small groups with a worker to brainstorm things that encourage or support young people's mental health and wellbeing and things that are barriers or challenges for young people to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing. Mo then asked everyone to think about the future and what they would like Tasmania to be known for when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. Everyone then had the chance to share their future visions for Tasmania and the people living here.

After morning tea, everyone had the chance to pick a topic that related to mental health that they would like to talk about. These groups were created so everyone could talk about the good things that were already happening, what needed to be improved or changed and what could be created to assist young people with their mental health and wellbeing. There was a short amount of time for everyone to share their ideas on the ideas wall and also on the positive mental health wall and people were encouraged to share more ideas during the lunch break.

After lunch everyone had the opportunity to choose a second topic to discuss before the whole group came back together so all of the discussion groups could report back on the best ideas their group created. At the end of the day everyone filled out a Feedback form to let us know what they thought about the forum.



Above: People at the Forum discussing their ideas in the small discussion groups



## Your brainstorming ideas

In small discussion groups people talked about what encourages and supports positive mental health and wellbeing and what the barriers or challenges are. There was also time to think about a future vision for Tasmania and share that vision.

### **What currently encourages and supports positive mental health and wellbeing for young people in Tasmania?**

People talked about organisations that encourage and support positive mental health and wellbeing of young people. The following people were listed as people who encourage and support young people and their mental health and wellbeing:

- Social workers
- Teachers
- Family members
- Psychologists
- Counsellors
- Youth workers
- Friends.

There were also many things that people did themselves such as drawing, exercise, yoga, reading, getting enough sleep, playing sport and taking time out to relax that encouraged and supported positive mental health and wellbeing. People also talked about things other people could do to support their mental health and wellbeing. These things included listening, being inclusive of others, kindness, compassion, being friendly and asking young people for their ideas.

### **What are the barriers or limitations to developing and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing for young people in Tasmania?**

People at the Forum talked about the barriers or limitations that make it hard to be mentally healthy. These barriers and limitations included:

- Long waiting lists to get an appointment at mental health services and doctors
- Scared of being judged or being discriminated against
- No services available where people live and not having transport to be able to get to a service
- Stigma associated with mental health and fear of being labelled
- Negative past experiences.

### **What would you like Tasmania to be known for; in the future in relation to mental health and wellbeing, and what would you create to achieve this?**

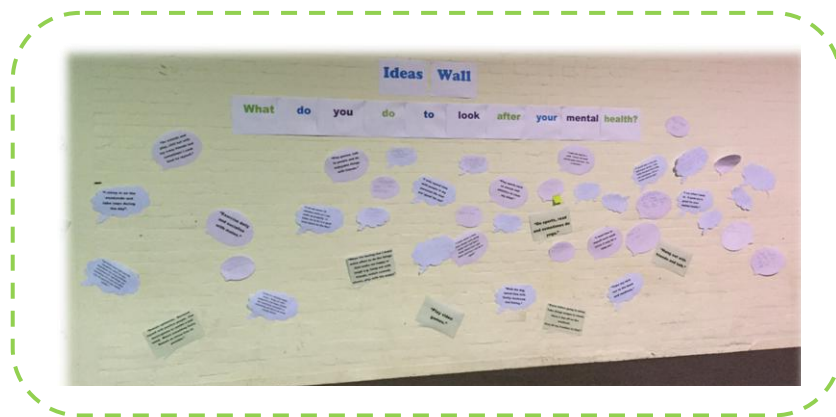
The third question during this discussion invited everyone to share their future vision for Tasmania and talk about the things they would like Tasmania to be known for. People said they would like Tasmania to be known as a state of equal rights. This included equal marriage rights, no racism and discrimination and equal pay for men and women. People also said they would like Tasmania to be known as a bully free zone that is free from stigma. Some schools are bully free zones but people wanted this to be expanded to a state level so bullying would not be tolerated at a State level. Tasmania grows a lot of healthy produce that is sold locally however; people wanted these foods to be more affordable and wanted people to be encouraged to eat healthy foods by making them tax free. People also wanted to Tasmania to be known as a state that provides education and support to teachers and workers so they in the best position to help the young people they work with.

## What you do to look after your mental health and wellbeing

Throughout the Forum an Ideas Wall was displayed with markers, pens and speech bubbles on a table so everyone could share what they currently do to look after their mental health and wellbeing. Other people at the Forum could have a look at the wall and find some ideas they might like to try themselves.

Some of the things people do to look after their mental health are listed below:

- Spending time with pets
- Exercise
- Playing video games
- Positive thinking
- Taking time to relax before going to bed
- Listening to music
- Spending time with friends
- Set alarm early to wake up properly
- Meditating
- Thinking about a time when things were really good and looking how you got to that place and then seeing what you need to do to get there again
- Drawing and
- Taking time out to relax.



Above: The Ideas Wall of what you do to look after your mental health and wellbeing

## What do others need to know?

The Forum also had a Positive Mental Health Wall where people could share their ideas about what other people need to know about supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing. There were many different ideas that people wanted to share and thought people needed to know when working with people aged 12-25 years, these are listed below:

*Respect Diversity* – understanding that everyone is different and will deal with things differently.

*Assuring people that they matter*– assuring people that their mental health and wellbeing matters and is important and encouraging them to take care of themselves.

*Don't give up* – sometimes young people don't feel comfortable sharing what is happening in their lives straight away but it is important not to give up on them. When young people do share what is happening in their lives listening without interrupting is really important.

*Choose the words you use carefully* – it is important to be non judgemental. Sometimes you might think your words are helpful but sometimes it can be best to say nothing at all and just listen and be there.

*Provide space* – young people need their own space sometimes and it is important that other people respect this space.

*Listening* – going over problems and reassurance that everything will be fine is not always helpful. It can be comforting to know there are other people who have experienced similar situations and emotions, however, offering inspirational quotes can be dismissive and not helpful.

*It is normal* – not feeling mentally healthy is nothing to be ashamed of and it is not the person's fault. It is important that people are not blamed or made to feel ashamed.

*Everyone needs support* – everyone needs support and some people need more support than others and people will need different types of support. Ask people what they need from you to feel supported; they will be happy that you are interested in what they need.

*There is always more going on* – it doesn't matter what the issue, experience, problem or situation is there will always be more happening and things that other people don't know about.

## **What you want to keep and what you would like to change**

Everyone was able to pick two discussion topics that they would like to discuss in more details while at the Forum. Once in these groups people discussed what was working well and what they would like to keep and also what wasn't working so well and would like to see changed.

### **1. Study: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

When discussing study and mental health and wellbeing there were many things that people thought were currently working well and wanted to 'keep'. These things included breakaway/study spaces at schools, support from school social workers and counsellors, having a set routine with study, sport, and family commitments outlined. Flexible learning options like the Big Picture Education Program was also discussed as something that already exists that is working well and should be continued. Although flexible learning was listed as something that is working well it was also listed as something that could be expanded so many more people had access to it. People discussed how one model of education does not suit everyone and that people's individual learning needs should be taken into account. People also wanted to see 'change' in education and training for teachers and workers as they thought teachers and workers need to be better supported so they can best support the young people they work with.

### **2. Stress Creators: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People identified things that they would like to 'keep' to help them reduce the stress they experience. Some of these things included listening to music, exercise, keeping a diary, seeking support from friends and family and using problem solving skills and time management. There were also many things people wanted to see 'change', things such as cyber bullying, the constant presence of social media and expectations to succeed. People said that expectations may come from family, friends, teachers or may be self expectations.

### **3. Family: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

There were many things about families that were identified as positive things for mental health and wellbeing. Family members were said to be people that you can talk to and the ones who keep them safe and keep young people on the right track. Keeping in touch with



family was identified as a challenge, especially if family members live far away but it was also something listed as being positive for mental health and wellbeing.

People would like to see 'change' to the process experienced when parents divorce or families separate. Being separated from siblings, feeling left out, not being asked what they want and adjusting to a change in living arrangements can all have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing and people wanted this to change. One other point that was discussed was favouritism in families. People wanted this to 'change' and for favouritism of siblings to stop.

#### **4. Employment: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

There were many things identified as being positive for young people's mental health when it came to employment. Gaining valuable experience, building confidence, being independent and meeting new people were all listed as things that are good for mental health and wellbeing. Something else that was listed as a good thing was meeting people to form connections in the workplace as this may help get more work in the future.

There were also things that people thought could be changed to help their mental health and wellbeing. People wanted effective communication between employers and employees and they wanted to feel comfortable to talk about issues such as workplace bullying and feelings of being overloaded or finding a task hard and needing help. People wanted workplaces to be more youth friendly and comfortable for them to ask for help and also raise any problems they might be having. People also wanted the ways constructive criticism and feedback are given to 'change' because people said when something is not entirely their fault and they feel blamed this has a negative effect on their mental health and wellbeing.

#### **5. Alcohol and Drugs: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People said that, when used responsibly, alcohol can be part of social events, special occasions and celebrations. Having a supportive group of friends who don't pressure others to drink was something that people wanted to 'keep'. Prescription medication was discussed as something that can help people and assist with positive mental health and wellbeing, as long as it is used in the way the doctor has directed.

In future, people wanted to see less promotion of alcohol and stricter rules about identification as well as a 'change' in the way people view alcohol and drugs. It was suggested that if these things changed it would be a good thing for young people's mental health and wellbeing. It was acknowledged that drug and alcohol services are available but people wanted to see a 'change' in the way these services are delivered. People wanted these services to begin having an outreach focus so more people would have access to the services and feel comfortable knowing the service provider would come to them.

#### **6. Experiencing Change: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People discussed their ideas about experiencing change with education, family and friends and how there can be some reluctance to experience change because people get comfortable in certain situations. People said that experiencing change can impact on mental health in a negative way but it can also be a positive thing as change can be good.

#### **7. Grief and Loss: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People thought it was important to define grief and loss. It was defined as something that can be experienced in many different ways and can be due to death or loss of possessions,

a relationship or sense of self. It was reported that people wanted to 'keep' the feelings experienced with grief and loss because it is good to work through those feelings and go through the grieving process. The support received from friends and family was also discussed as something to 'keep'. Pets were discussed as an important factor that has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing while grieving or experiencing a loss. Some people spent time with their dog while exercising; some people spoke about sharing their troubles with a pet and other people liked having a pet close by when they were grieving.

There were some things that people wanted to 'change' about grief and loss and their mental health. One thing was to have more discussions about grief and loss because they wanted to create more awareness of the different forms of grief and loss and hoped this would lead to more understanding and acceptance. More education about how to support someone who is grieving or experiencing a loss was something people also wanted to see 'change' because it was suggested people don't really know what to do for others in this situation because it is not something that is talked about openly.

### **8. Friendships and Relationships: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People discussed several factors in their friendships and relationships that they thought impacted positively on their mental health and wellbeing and wanted to 'keep'. These things included having regular contact with friends, loyalty, respect, trust and how they help to build confidence and social skills. There were also some things that people wanted to 'change' in their friendships and relationships. Peer pressure was the main thing that people wanted to see 'change' in the future however things such as bad influences and people moving away were also discussed as things that could be changed. Discussion groups also had a focus on being mentally prepared for a relationship. It was stated that being mentally prepared for a relationship was a positive thing that people wanted to 'keep' however it was also acknowledged that not all people are mentally prepared for a relationship and therefore it was also something that could be improved to help more young people.

### **9. Hobbies and Interests: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People said that hobbies and interests were positive things for their mental health because they provide enjoyment and fun and "keep you out of trouble". People also discussed hobbies and interests as a way of meeting new people and creating new friendships while doing something that can be relaxing and a way to reduce stress. Learning new skills were also identified as a positive aspect of hobbies and interests.

Looking for opportunities to move outside of their comfort zone is something people at the forum wanted to do more of in the future. Many people also wanted to expand their hobbies in order to increase their knowledge. Hobbies and interests that are more about participating and having fun, rather than focused on competing and winning was something people wanted to see change in this area.

### **10. Sleep and Diet: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People wanted to 'keep' the current education in schools on these two topics as this was seen as a positive. Getting the recommended eight hours of sleep was also something that was identified as something that is positive for mental health and wellbeing. Many people at the forum suggested turning technology off before going to sleep was good for sleep and mental health.

People wanted to 'keep' the availability of healthy and organic foods however they wanted to see the cost of it 'change' and be reduced to make it more affordable. They also wanted to see more detailed and honest labelling on food. In relation to sleep, it was suggested that school begins too early and it was suggested that school would be better if it began at 10am. Body image was discussed in this topic group and people stated there is currently too much emphasis on being a certain size and looking a certain way to be considered attractive and wanted to see this 'change' in the media, their peer groups and society.

### **11. Technology: what you want to keep and what you want to change**

People said that technology gave them with a way to keep in touch with people which was discussed as being a positive thing. People were also happy with the age restrictions that are placed on using social media.

More effective processes for responding to complaints and dealing with incidents of cyber bullying was something that was discussed as needing improvement. People also want to see more education about social media and being responsible online and also discussed the desire to have more services provide a phone service to make them more accessible to young people.

## **What you want to create, your ideas and solutions**

People then had the opportunity to 'create' solutions to the issues they had identified and share their ideas with the whole group.

### **1. Study: your ideas and solutions**

The solutions and ideas discussed during the 'create' discussion groups were focused on increased education and the use of individualised study plans. People wanted to 'create' regular classes at school that have a focus on mental health and wellbeing as they said this would help young people to develop and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

Individualised learning plans could be online and have calendar app that incorporates classes, due dates of assessments, personal commitments and extracurricular activities. If teachers, parents, coaches etc could also access this it would be most effective.

### **2. Stress Creators: your ideas and solutions**

Expanding the youth spaces that are currently available so they are available to young people State wide was suggested. It was also suggested that mandatory pre parenting training would give parents resources and knowledge to assist their children to be mentally healthy. It was suggested that this training should be free and that it would be run by Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Department of Education.

### **3. Family: your ideas and solutions**

People developed the idea to provide families with free education about mental health to make sure families are able to assist their children and young people with their mental health and wellbeing.

Formal agreements between children and their separating parents was an idea that people wanted to create as it would ensure that everyone has their feelings and ideas heard. These agreements would be a collaborative process involving both parents and all children and would take into consideration things like living and school arrangements, religion and cultural

practices and the costs associated with the children. People said that it would assist with their mental health if, within these agreements, both parents agreed to not put each other down in front of the children.

#### **4. Employment: your ideas and solutions**

The idea of *Junior Seek* was created and would be an online networking base for young people to find employment, find tips for writing resumes and selection criteria and will provide advice for maintaining work. It would also include help getting a tax file number and assistance with literacy and numeracy. This resource would be most helpful if it also included information about interview and social skills and tips for how to behave in the workplace. It was suggested that this resource would be most useful for young people if it was easily accessible by making it available as an app, as well as, a website.

Being unable to find work or not feeling work ready can both impact positive mental health. Increased opportunities for work experience during high school was something people wanted to create so they could learn practical work skills and begin creating networks that may result in gaining employment in future. This idea was combined with the idea that young people who are already working should be encouraged to continue working while studying and the education system could take into account the necessity of learning skills, earning money and maintaining employment and allow young people to have a certain amount of study hours that they can take off to work in paid employment.

#### **5. Alcohol and Drugs: your ideas and solutions**

Increased education in schools about the potential harms of drugs and alcohol was something people wanted to create because it would be helpful for making healthy and safe choices. This education would be most effective if it was taught by people who have personal experience with drugs and alcohol.

People at the forum suggested that new Government issued ID cards that cannot be reproduced is something that they would like to create so young people are unable to access a fake ID to buy alcohol.

#### **6. Experiencing Change: your ideas and solutions**

Pathway planners were identified as a needed form of support in schools and rather than create something new people wanted to see pathway planners increased and available in more schools state wide. Alternative education options were also discussed and participants wanted to see programs already operating in this space, such as the Big Picture Program, expanded to accommodate more young people.

#### **7. Grief and Loss: your ideas and solutions**

One group at the forum wanted to create a place called *The Living Room* which would serve as a safe space that young people can go to when they are experiencing grief or loss. *The Living Room* would be a nationwide initiative that would be confidential and would be young people helping other young people to get through their grief and loss but workers would also be there to help.

People also discussed creating an app called the *Talk to Me Pocket Social Worker*. They wanted to create this app as a way of avoiding stigma and judgement that young people sometimes feel when seeking face to face help from a service. When the app is downloaded it would ask a series of questions that will enable each user to be matched with other young people and also a worker who best meet their needs and are a good match for them to

provide support. The app will also let young people share their personal stories and provide links to services and organisations for additional support.

## **8. Friendships and Relationships: your ideas and solutions**

People shared their ideas about creating a group that focuses on education about friendships and relationships. In particular, the indicators of positive relationships compared to negative relationships. These groups would be most effective if they were facilitated by other young people who had experiences to share. These groups would also include an educative component and provide information about how to get out of a bad relationship and how to assist friends who may be in a relationship that is impacting negatively on their mental health and wellbeing.

## **9. Hobbies and Interests: your ideas and solutions**

People wanted to see current youth centres expand to include more interests and hobbies. These spaces would include hobbies and interests such as music, art, sport and other recreational activities. These expanded youth centres would also give young people the opportunity to connect with workers, learn new skills and meet new people outside of their friendship group or school networks. It was also suggested that involving parents and schools in hobbies and interests would create a better understanding of what young people are interested in and how they spend their time.

## **10. Sleep and Diet: your ideas and solutions**

During this discussion group the idea of creating the *Sleep Pass* was developed. The *Sleep Pass* could be used during the school day and would be for one hour each week and could be used at any time so people could take a short nap and refresh their minds during the school day. It would then be up to each person to catch up on any work that they had missed during the hour.

Food labels that provide more detail about ingredients in food and also where it was sourced was another idea shared. It is important that people know what was in the food they were eating and where the food was shipped from. This information would need to be written in clear and understandable language. People also wanted to create a subsidy on healthy foods to encourage more people to eat healthy food options.

## **11. Technology: your ideas and solutions**

People wanted to create education courses for parents and teachers to increase their understanding of social media which would enable them to assist young people to use social media responsibly and look after themselves online. The content of these education courses would include information about being responsible online, protecting your personal information and how to use filters.

Another idea that was discussed was about creating a resource known as S3 (safe social space) which would be a mental health hub full of information and information, as well as access to professionals. S3 would include an online forum where young people can share their experiences and build new connections.





Above: Mo talking to the whole group after the sharing of ideas and solutions.

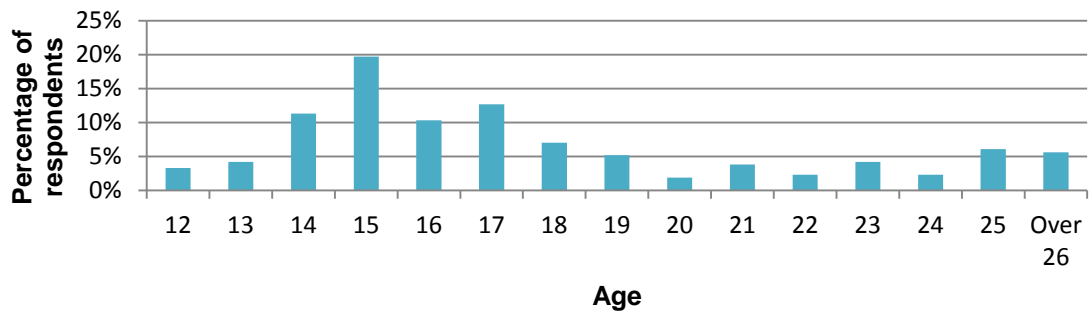
## Survey

An online survey based around mental health and wellbeing was taken by 228 people who were aged 12 to 25 and were from a variety of places. They were from all over Tasmania, including Hobart, New Norfolk, Launceston, Blackmans Bay, Cambridge and Devonport. Here are some of the other places people were from:

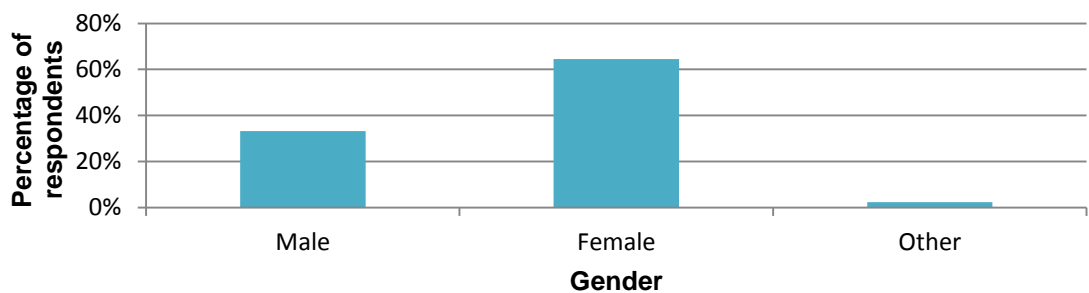


Above: Suburbs where young people who finished the survey are from.

### How old are you?



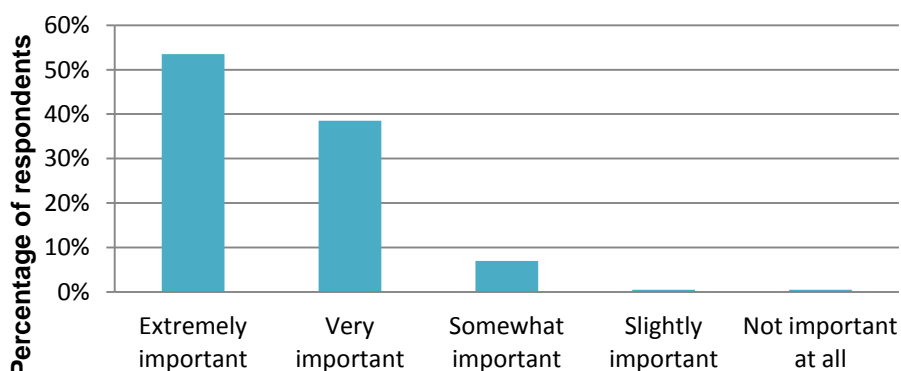
### What is your gender?



Young people aged 12 to 25 filled out the survey. Some people over the age of 25 also answered the survey but their answers for the mental health related questions were taken out because TYF is for young people aged 12 to 25. Despite the amount of people taking the survey, only a small number identified themselves as Aboriginal (4.3%) or Torres Strait Islander (0.9%). There were also people living with a disability (3.3%) and from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background (CALD) (4.7%) who completed the survey.

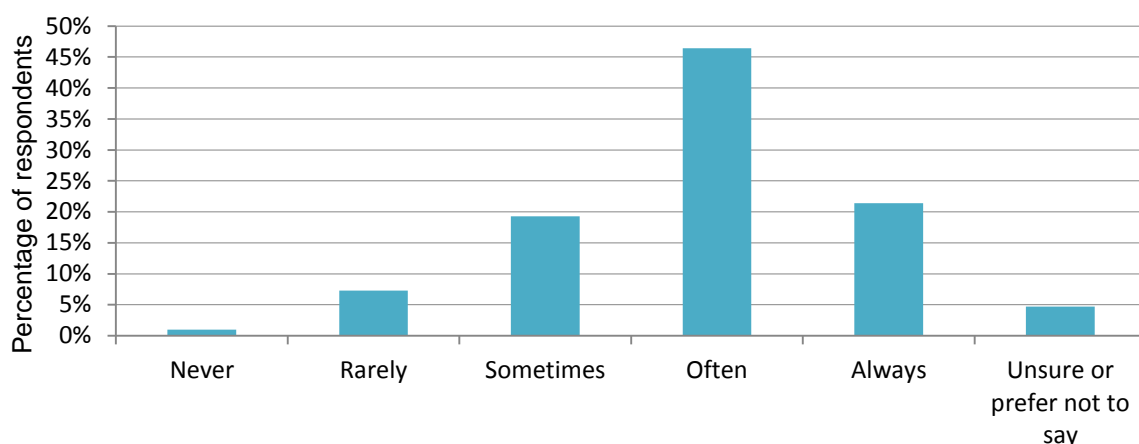
## Being Mentally Healthy

### How important is it to you to be mentally healthy?



The majority of the people that had done the survey had said mental health was, at the very

## How often do you feel mentally healthy?



least, very important. 53.5% of people had said that it was 'extremely important'; however, 7.0% said mental health was 'somewhat important'.

Most people said they often felt mentally healthy. Whilst there were people that felt mentally healthy at least sometimes, some were rarely feeling that way. Only 1.0% said they never feel mentally healthy.

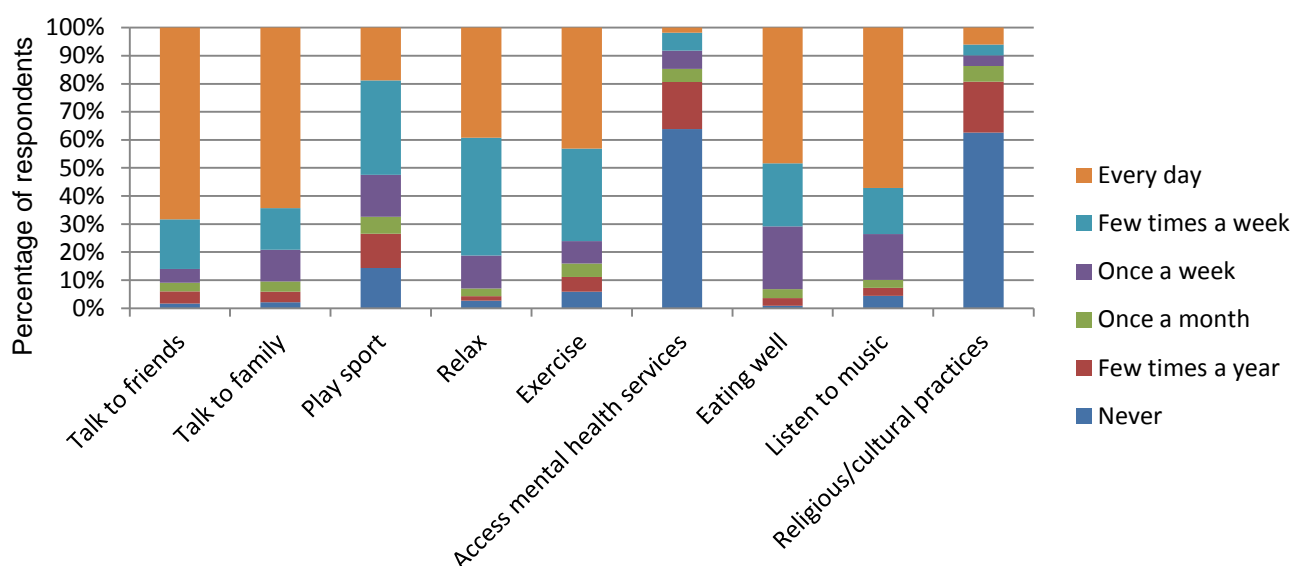
The questions in the survey were based around the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 12-25 and what they, or others, thought. There were lots of ways that people defined mental health. People told us that mental health is about what you feel and think. People also said it is being able to cope with different things that are going on in your life and having people around you who can help if you need it.

We also asked people what makes a person mentally healthy. Lots of people said that they are happy and think positively. There were also answers that mention things like having a safe home, a good network of friends and family, exercising and doing fun activities that help make a person mentally healthy.



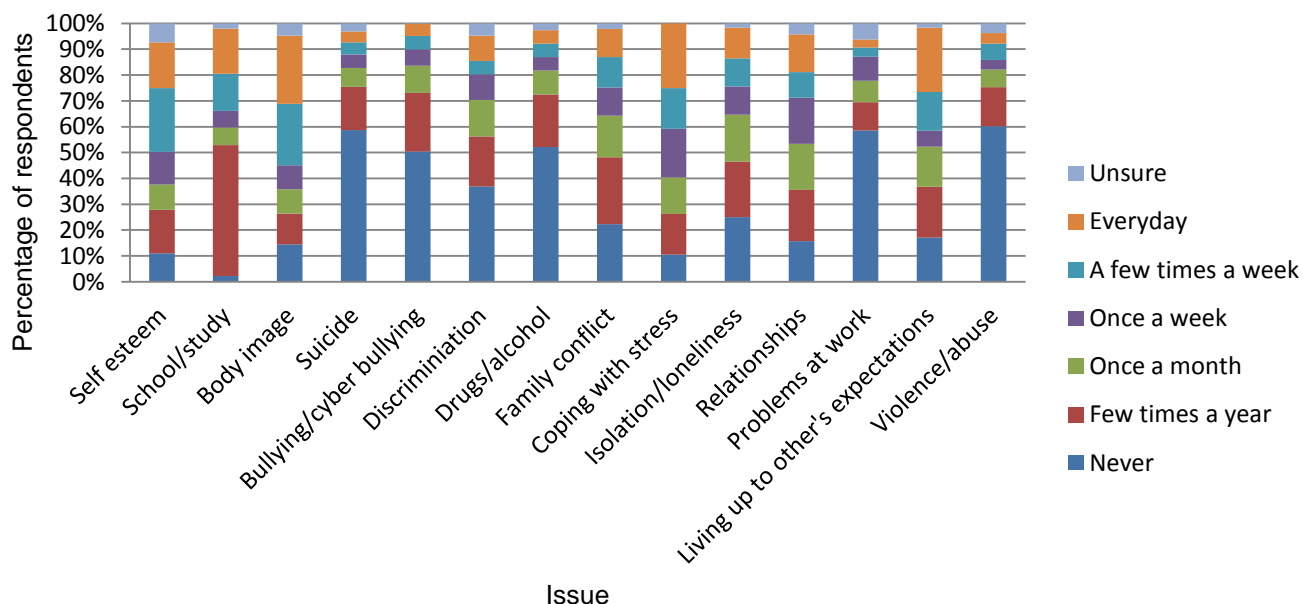
Above: Some ideas about what makes a person mentally healthy.

## How often do you do the following things to look after your mental health?



Over 60% of people said that they talk with the friends, talk with their family and listen to music everyday to look after their mental health. There were also lots of people who said that they relax, exercise, eat well and play sports at least a few times a week. People also said they watch TV, turn off technology, play games and do different activities they like for their mental health.

## How often are you concerned about the following things?

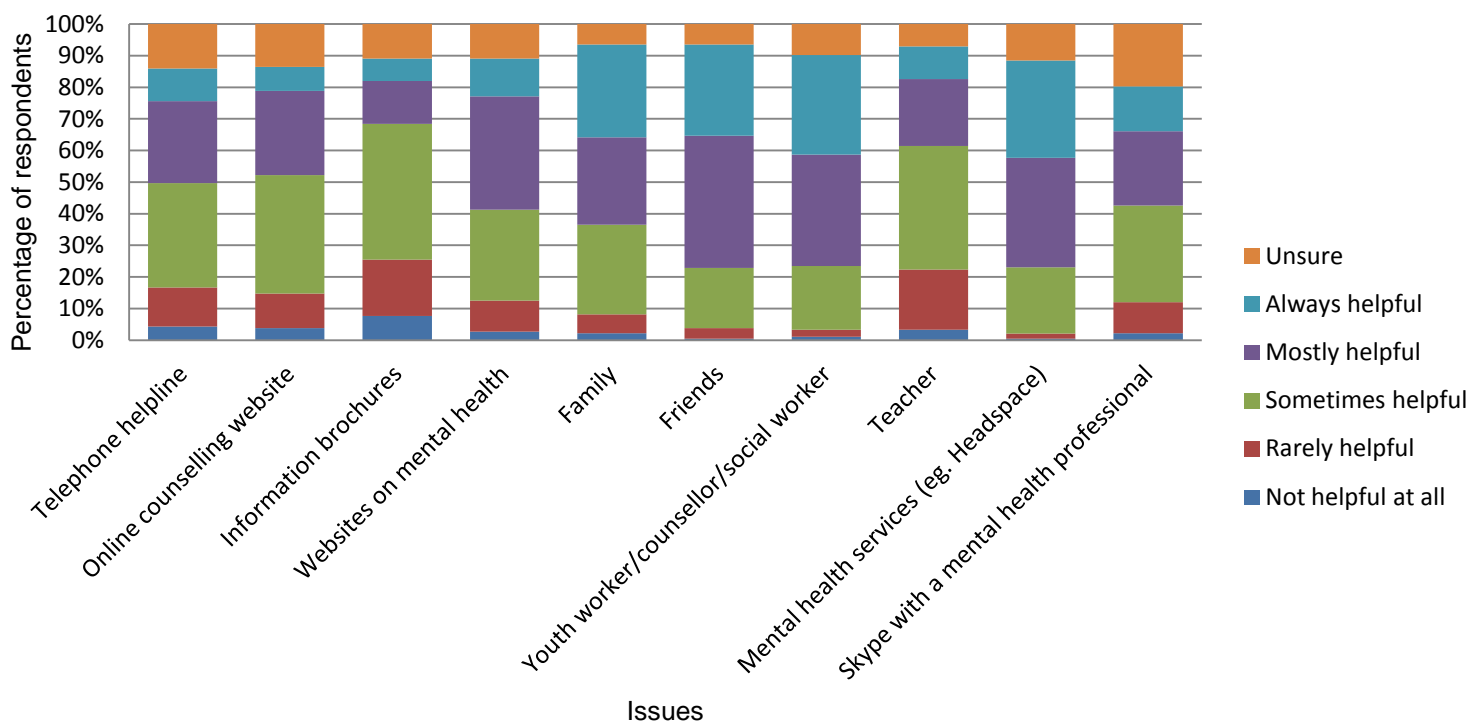


Whilst a lot of people said that they never worried about violence/abuse, suicide and bullying, there were many that had said they often thought about body image, coping with stress, living up to expectations and studying/school. People also thought that other young people were concerned about the same sorts of issues.

## Mental health support

We asked people how they would describe a young person who is mentally healthy. A lot of people said that they would describe them as happy. Other people said they would be friendly, caring and confident. We also asked people why they think young people might not get help for their mental health. People said that stigma, being afraid of being judged or being embarrassed to get help were the biggest reasons why a person may not get help for their mental health. Other barriers to getting help included not having support from others to get help, not knowing where to go to get help, being afraid to talk about problems and worrying that people will find out.

### How helpful do you think the following places, people and resources are for young people looking for help with their mental health?



We asked people about places, people and resources where young people can get support for mental health and wellbeing. Most people said that they found these to be at least sometimes helpful.

People said the people, places and resources that would be most helpful are:

1. Friends (70% of people said it would be always or mostly helpful)
2. Youth worker/counsellor/social worker (67% of people said it would be always or mostly helpful)
3. Mental health service (65% of people said it would be always or mostly helpful)
4. Family (51% of people said it would be always or mostly helpful)
5. Websites (48% of people said it would be always or mostly helpful)



A stacked bar chart titled 'Percentage of respondents' on the y-axis and 'Places' on the x-axis. The y-axis ranges from 0% to 100% in 10% increments. The x-axis lists ten places: Telephone helpline, Online counselling website, Information brochures, Websites on mental health, Family, Friends, Youth worker/counsellor/social worker, Mental health services (eg. Headspace), Teacher, and Skype with a mental health professional. Each bar is divided into six segments representing different levels of comfort: 'Not comfortable at all' (blue), 'Not very comfortable' (red), 'Somewhat comfortable' (green), 'Mostly comfortable' (purple), 'Very comfortable' (teal), and 'I wouldn't get help from here' (orange). The segments are stacked from bottom to top in the order: blue, red, green, purple, teal, orange.

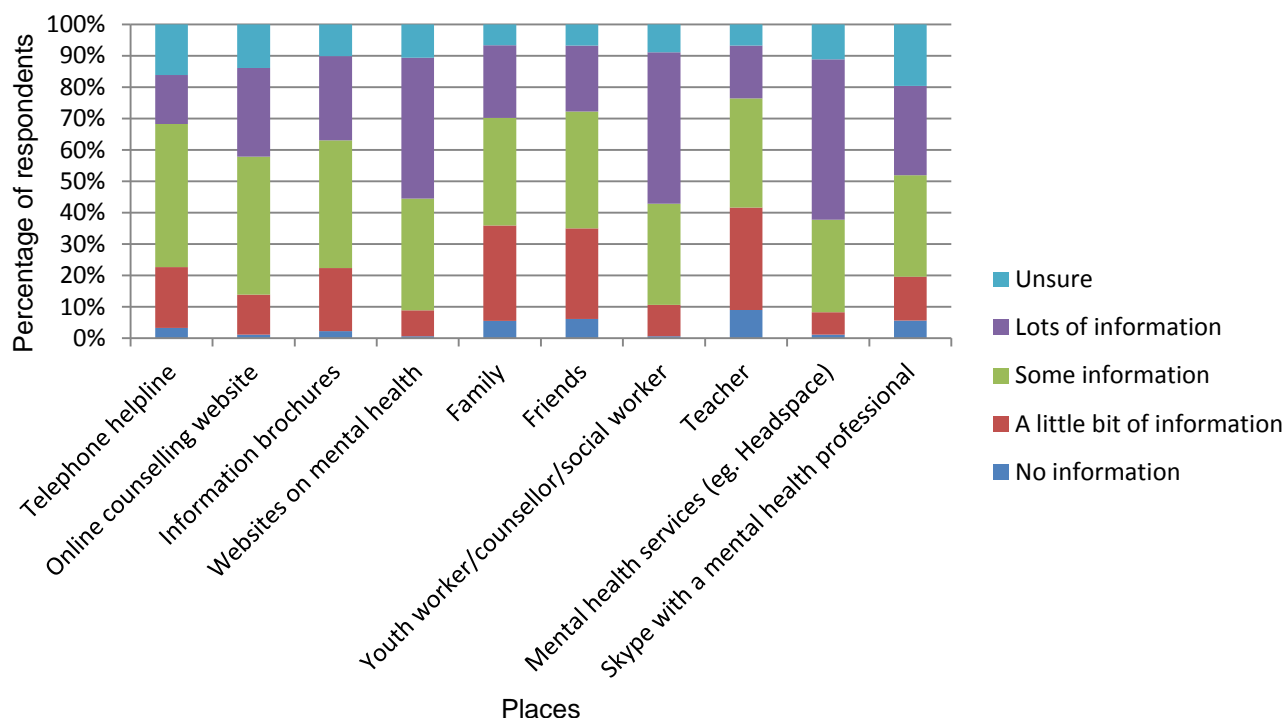
Places	Not comfortable at all	Not very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Mostly comfortable	Very comfortable	I wouldn't get help from here
Telephone helpline	14%	17%	28%	19%	12%	10%
Online counselling website	8%	17%	25%	24%	18%	6%
Information brochures	10%	15%	20%	25%	20%	10%
Websites on mental health	6%	8%	22%	30%	24%	10%
Family	11%	14%	21%	23%	23%	8%
Friends	3%	10%	25%	28%	24%	10%
Youth worker/counsellor/social worker	6%	13%	25%	29%	17%	10%
Mental health services (eg. Headspace)	14%	21%	30%	14%	11%	10%
Teacher	5%	13%	30%	22%	20%	20%
Skype with a mental health professional	12%	26%	22%	14%	12%	14%

We asked people what would make a service youth friendly so that people felt like they could go and get help from there.

Tasmanian Youth Forum *Mental Health Matters* Forum: What You Said Report

## Information about mental health

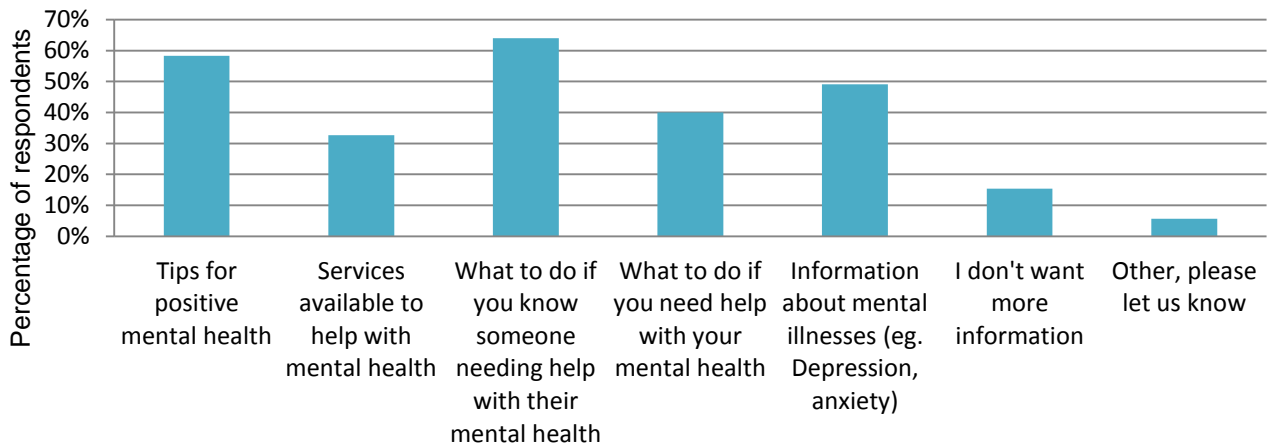
### How much information do you think the following places provide to young people about being mentally healthy?



Most young people found that these options had a lot of information, although some of the options that were a little less personal, or too personal, only had some information. The people, places and resources that people said would have the most information were:

1. Mental health service (51% of people said they would have at lots of information)
2. Youth worker/counsellor/social worker (48% of people said they would have at lots of information)
3. Websites on mental health (45% of people said they would have at lots of information)
4. Skype with a mental health professional (28% of people said they would have at lots of information)
5. Online counselling websites (28% of people said they would have at lots of information)

## What would you like to learn more about?



Most people want to know more about different things such as tips about positive mental health and what to do if another person needs help. Very few people said they didn't want any more information.

## Your ideas for mental health in the future

We asked people what they would create to help young people with their mental health. These ideas were mentioned the most:

1. Website or app that gives information about events happening in the community that you can go to, lets you talk to counsellors online and has a forum to ask questions online that could be answered by a mental health professional.
2. Having a space to have fun and talk to people which would include games, activities and having access to mental health professionals.
3. Doing activities for fun to be mentally healthy such as volunteering, art, music, sports, exercise, festivals and spending time with animals.
4. Having a support group for young people where young people can meet and talk to each other about what is going on and help each other out.

We also asked people about what advice they would give to other people about mental health. Lots of people said to go and get help if you need it and not to be afraid about doing this. There were also lots of answers about being positive and taking care of yourself by doing fun activities that you like.

## Your Feedback

We asked everyone if they had learnt new tips for looking after their mental health at the end of the Forum. 75% of people said they had learnt something new. People said they had learnt about talking to others about mental health, finding new places to get information or help, and doing fun activities. 75% of people said that they could share these tips with a friend.

We asked everyone what the best part of the Forum was. People said it was good to meet new people, listen to new ideas, learn about mental health and have big group discussions. People also said they wanted more activities and more people at the Forum.

## Quotes from the Day

This is a collection of quotes that have been collected from the Forum and the online Survey. All of the ideas that were contributed during the Forum and the Surveys are important and have been summarised to write this report. However, these quotes provide the opportunity for your ideas to be communicated directly and reflect some of the discussions and ideas that were presented.

### **Future Vision: What would you like Tasmania to be known for?**

“Remove the stigma through education. There is stigma because people are in fear of being excluded by family, friends and society. They don’t want to be judged or seen as crazy. People resort to silence as a result of this.”

“Everyone matters. We need to listen and work together.”

### **What do people need to know about supporting young people’s mental health?**

“Your mental health matters take care of yourself because you are loved.”

“Small problems dealt with, don’t turn big.”

“Mental health problems are nothing to be ashamed of.”

“My friend told me I have a mental weakness, not mental illness. People need to know that having a mental illness does not make a person weak; in fact they are incredibly strong. Since my diagnosis I have been able to do things I would never have thought possible.”

### **What do you do to look after your mental health?**

“I think about a time when things were going really well and then I think about how I got there and how I can do it again.”

“I have made my own ‘recovery folder’. I have coping ideas that I turn to. I am a big believer in self help.”

## What happens next

This report was launched in June 2015. The findings and ideas in this report, as well as an accompanying report for the youth sector, will be presented to key decision makers in government, community organisations and will be made available to anyone who would like to read it on the YNOT website. The reports will also be sent out through YNOT’s networks via email. YNOT and TYF will continue to work to progress the issues and ideas that have been identified and we will use the information to inform the work we do.

If you want to know more or find out how you can get involved in our future events please contact us:

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