


Wellbeing of young people


The **health, wellbeing and autonomy of children and young people** receiving mental health and wellbeing services are to be **promoted and supported**, including by providing treatment and support in **age and developmentally appropriate settings and ways**. It is recognised that their lived experience makes them **valuable leaders and active partners** in the mental health and wellbeing service system.

Respect and value the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people. Acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal Culture and its role in wellbeing and safety. Encourage and support Aboriginal young people to express their culture and exercise cultural rights. Address racism. See [cultural safety](#) principle.

Create a safe, inclusive environment for children and young people to meet diverse needs relating to culture, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, neurodivergence, family violence, sexual safety, education, transport (for example, public transport) and housing. Connect young people with relevant supports.

 **Promote and protect rights** including the unique rights of children and young people. For example,

explain how children and young people can expect adults at the service to behave and how they can raise concerns for themselves or others (see [Child Safe Standards](#)). Be mindful of the importance of online connection for young people and the potential impact of any restriction to their right to communicate. See [dignity and autonomy](#) principle.

 **Promote autonomy and decision making:** Remember the presumption of capacity also applies to young people. Give young people information in ways they can understand it, providing supports if needed. Encourage young people to access IMHA advocacy. See [supported decision making](#) and [dignity and autonomy](#) principles.

Involve carers, families, supporters and kin in line with the young person's preferences. Be clear with the young person about when the service is required to share information or involve parents. Recognise that family looks different for everyone. Actively support and strengthen important relationships, including when there is disagreement, if safe to do.

Prevent and mitigate risks: Prevent, identify and mitigate risks of child abuse and harm in both physical and online environments within your service. For example, balancing risks with young people and children's rights to privacy, access to information, social connection and learning.

Provide age and developmentally appropriate support: Support young people to make and participate in decisions about their treatment, including the type and setting of treatment that is best for them. If a young person (16+) is treated in an adult service, talk to them about their needs and ensure they are met. For example, cultural and gender safety, and access to outdoor space and meaningful, age-appropriate activities. Hold space for any uncertainty or worry about being in a service, including whether it is a first admission, and how it may affect their routines and supports such as school, family and friends.

Value young people's lived and living experience and include them in service design. See [lived experience](#) principle.

