

Not feeling like yourself after the bushfires?

It can help to talk

It's normal to have strong emotional and physical reactions after a significant event. There is no right or wrong way to feel – people can respond to the same event in very different ways.

Some normal responses:

- You might feel anxious, overwhelmed or confused.
- You might feel sad, irritable or angry, or numb.
- You might feel unwell – headaches, difficulty sleeping, losing or gaining weight.
- Some people might increase their use of alcohol or drugs. Some may even think of harming themselves.

Simple strategies can help like:



Getting enough sleep



Regular exercise



Talking to family and friends



Finding time to do something you enjoy each day



Talking to a professional

Talking to a professional can help you process your reactions and develop healthy coping strategies.

If you want some more support, if people you know are worried about you, or if you're still feeling unsettled even after a few weeks – it is a good idea to talk to someone. **Help is available.**

What help is available in the Wollondilly area?

Get help through your local Recovery Support Service

The **Recovery Support Service** is a specialised local service assisting people impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires. If you need emotional, personal or practical support, the recovery support service can help.

Your own case worker can connect you with mental health support, counselling, disaster assistance, grants, other services and community resources. They can walk with you as you address the complex challenges and issues during your recovery journey.

You do not need a referral to access this service – simply reach out via phone or email to connect with the **Community Links Wellbeing Recovery Support Service**.

Call **02 4683 2776**
Email intake@communitylinks.org.au

What help is available in the Wollondilly area?

Free counselling sessions

Lots of people are finding it helpful to talk to a counsellor after the fires.


You might too.

Counselling can help you process powerful emotions such as grief or anger, deal with immediate causes of stress and anxiety, and identify options when making decisions.

The **South Western Sydney Primary Health Network** funds the following services in the Wollondilly area. Call the services directly to discuss a referral:

 STAR4Kids (for children aged 3-12).
Call 02 4655 1694

 ReFrame (for young people aged 12 – 25). **Call 0455 104 104**

 You in Mind counselling (for adult mental health support).
Call 0455 104 104 or 02 4683 2776


NSW Mental Health Line

To connect to a **Bushfire Recovery Clinician**, or to seek professional mental health help and advice, you can call the Mental Health Line (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).


 **Call 1800 011 511**


Other help

These local places can help connect you with support for your emotional and mental wellbeing.

 Your local doctor.


Ask your doctor about the **Better Access Initiative**. An eligible psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker or doctor can provide up to 10 Medicare-rebated sessions of psychological therapy (face to face or via telehealth).

 Connection Emotional Reflection for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. To discuss a referral
Call 02 4684 3663

 headspace Campbelltown (for young people aged 12 – 25). **Call 02 4627 9089**

Support for emergency services workers

Fortem Australia provides free wellbeing activities and clinical support to first responders and their families.

 **1300 33 95 94**


 fortemaustralia.org.au


Black Dog Institute provides support for first responders and their loved ones, including free one-on-one sessions with mental health specialists Australia-wide and digital resources.


 **02 8627 3314**


 www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/bush-fire-support-service/

Online and phone services

 Lifeline's Bushfire Recovery Crisis Line supports people who have been affected by the bushfires through free and confidential support from a trained counsellor. **Call 13 HELP (13 43 57)**.

 The Suicide Call Back Service provides free telephone, video and online counselling for anyone who is affected by suicide (including people who are feeling suicidal or are worried about someone who might be).
Call 1300 659 467.

 Visit www.headtohealth.gov.au for online support and resources, from some of Australia's most trusted mental health organisations. This includes apps, online programs, online forums and phone services.

 The Australian Red Cross has information, practical strategies, and advice for coping after a crisis. Visit www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis.

More information

Visit recovery.serviceconnect.gov.au for more information about the range of local support on offer if you have been affected by the bushfires.

National Recovery and Resilience Agency

