

2024 TALK-AND- WALK-A-THON



Students' Guide to the Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon

We are hosting a Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon to build student connections.

October is Mental Health Month and we are encouraging students to talk and walk.

The aim is to build connections between students, as relationships are crucial to good mental health.

What is the Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon?

You will be invited to stretch your legs and strike up a conversation with peers you may not have connected with before.

Engaging with others for the first time may not come easily. You will be supported with conversation cards to help prompt discussion as you walk. If you find conversation easy, you will be challenged to use your skills to increase connections beyond your usual friendship groups.

When is it?

The Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon is on **<insert date>**.

If you have any questions, please reach out to **<insert school representative>** to find out more.

Your teachers will guide you on the day.

What will you talk about?

You will be provided with some questions to help start conversations. This could be anything from 'What's your favourite movie?' to 'What's one thing you're good at?'. You can also deviate from the cards and talk about other topics, such as music, sports or food. There may even be an opportunity for you to write your own conversation prompts to use on the day.

This is a fun opportunity to get to know other students at your school. You can find out what you have in common and what makes you different. You may have more in common than you think, and you might even make some new friends.

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Who is behind the Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon?

The Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon is an initiative by the not-for-profit, Peer Support Australia. Their mission is to help all students build their mental wellbeing, and one way to do this is by nurturing social connections, which are important for your mental health.

Practising conversation at home

In addition to the Talk-And-Walk-A-Thon at school, there are conversation prompts for you to use at home with your family or carers. Perhaps when you're around the dinner table or walking your dog.

If your family or carers can't take part, think about someone else you might be able to talk to, such as a neighbour, grandparent, coach or cousin.

How to be a great conversationalist

Being good at conversation is a useful skill to have throughout life – and it's something many adults are still developing too. One of the most challenging parts of being a good conversationalist is being a good listener.

Here are some tips for having good conversations:

- Be curious about other people. Try to find out something interesting about the person you are talking to.
- Listen. This shows you care about the other person, and value their thoughts and opinions.
- Listen and think about what the other person is saying. Ask follow-up questions.
- Share something about yourself. Opening up can sometimes feel uncomfortable, but it's a great way to build connections with other people. Start small with new people, and open up more as you become closer to someone and trust them.
- Be polite and respectful. Treat the other person in the same way you would like to be treated. Try not to interrupt.
- Take turns. Make sure you are both talking for about the same amount of time. This can change from time-to-time, if one person has something in-particular they want to discuss, but it's a good guide to follow generally when in a conversation.
- Talk to a teacher if you're concerned about anything that was raised in your conversation. Your teacher can guide you if someone shares a personal story or any information and you think they need support.

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