



Let's talk wellbeing this International Youth Day!

In this International Youth Day special edition newsletter you will learn about:

- The ins and outs of this International Youth Day
- SPARX - an e-therapy tool
- LifeHack Labs - innovative labs to improve wellbeing
- Common Ground
- Getting involved in your community
- School based health services make getting help easier

We would love to hear about how you look after your wellbeing, or how you use any of the above tools.

If you need to talk, Youthline are here to help! Contact their team via free call on 0800 376 633 or free text on 234.

Keep an eye out for our ALL NEW newsletter next month!



From your team at the Ministry of Youth Development

Happy International Youth Day!

Today marks International Youth Day! The theme this year is *Mental Health Matters*, and it really does! Being a young person isn't the easiest thing in the world, so we thought what better time to discuss your wellbeing than today.

Mental health is how you deal with your emotions, feelings, stress, happiness, worry etc. We want to make sure that young people have the skills to cope well with any negative feelings they may have.

There are great programmes out there that can help you nurture your wellbeing and that of those around you. Emerging technology and social innovation means that we can all discuss things in a more comfortable environment as you'll see below.

International Youth Day allows us to acknowledge the efforts of young people who make such positive impacts in our communities but also to take the time to look into things that matter, like youth mental health and wellbeing.

There are also programmes in place across New Zealand that can help you foster a good sense of wellbeing while helping you realise your strengths - these are outlined later.

Happy International Youth Day - here's to a happy and healthy wellbeing for all!



Try SPARX

SPARX may look like an online game but while you're playing it, you're also learning ways to help you deal with stress or feeling down, and get you back to feeling good.

Developed by Auckland University researchers as part of the Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project, SPARX is an e-therapy tool (online help) especially designed for 12-19 year olds.

At the start you meet the Guide who explains what SPARX is and how it can help you. As your avatar completes quests, you restore the world's balance and defeat negative thoughts, solve puzzles and complete mini games.

You can register on the SPARX website www.sparx.org.nz and start using it for free whenever and wherever you want to. All you need is wifi or an internet connection. You don't have to use your name if you don't want to.

There's also a mood quiz to help you figure out your feelings and how you can get help. If you want to talk to someone about how you're feeling, call 0508 4 SPARX (77279).

It's important to know that if you're feeling down, depressed or stressed you're not alone - lots of young people feel that way at times. Sometimes they don't want to see a counsellor,

a therapist or a doctor. SPARX is another way to get help.

To enter the world of SPARX or to read more click [here](#).



LifeHack Labs

Twenty young changemakers have been chosen from more than 80 applicants for the first LIFEHACK Labs 2014. The five week intensive innovation lab kicks off mid-August in Wellington. Participants will be working full-time, and building new technology solutions to enhance youth wellbeing.

The labs will feature a blend of world leading research and insights taken from the best of positive psychology, lean startup, user-centred design, team development, leadership, social innovation and personal wellbeing.

We're excited to see what comes from this and will be sure to share the progress via the Aotearoa Youth Voices Network!

Check out their progress at <http://labs.lifehackhq.co/>

For more on Lifehack visit www.lifehackhq.co



On Common Ground

Common Ground is a central online hub to help parents, whānau and friends support young people in their lives who are struggling with issues that affect emotional wellbeing.

The Common Ground hub features a website and a free phone line where you can get in touch, an information pack and a series of short dramatic videos that explore the challenges faced by young people and their families and friends in a fictional community. Each episode in the web series asks for your thoughts about what you would do in the same situation.

Common Ground is a Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project initiative, in collaboration with the Mental Health Foundation, Skylight and Youthline, with support from Curative and Innovate Change.

[Visit the website and watch the first webisode 'What Now'.](#)



Your involvement affects your wellbeing!

There are many organisations that run great programmes that can help you find and challenge your strengths, and have you learn a lot too. Programmes such as the [Duke of Edinburgh's Hillary Award](#), [the Spirit of Adventure Trust](#), [the Stage Challenge Foundation](#) and [Scouting New Zealand](#) are all examples of these.

The nationwide programmes identified all contribute to the wellbeing of young people along with many other MYD funded services.

Get involved!

School Based Health Services make getting help easier

It's not always easy to talk about how you're feeling or things that you're worried about, but now around 55,000 students can get help at their school, if they need it.

School Based Health Services have been expanded to include decile three secondary schools, as well as decile one and two high schools.

Tairawhiti District Health public health nurse, Sarah Brown, carries out a health check for each Year 9 student at the school assessing things like weight, height and blood pressure, and then they talk about hearing, vision, dental health and any recent visits to the doctor. Students can talk about anything else that is going on for them at home or at school, or anything else.

Sarah treats students' comments seriously, and the discussion is confidential. When a student needs extra support, such as for anxiety or low mood, Sarah can refer them to a GP, school counsellor or external support service.

You can find out more about [School Based Health Services](#) as part of the [Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project](#) webpage.

Pictured to the right is Sarah Brown with a pupil.

