

MARCH 2021

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Happy Wednesday and welcome to the first edition for 2021!

Throughout the year, Wellness Wednesday newsletters will continue to focus on supporting you with information, events and resources that provide a positive approach to building and maintaining your mental health and wellbeing.

These fortnightly newsletters form part of a broad range of health and wellbeing initiatives that have been developed for 2021, and will include:

- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- on-demand virtual resources
- live webcasts from University providers

In today's edition, you can check out these great articles and information:

- making time for you
- 'lunch and learn' sessions
- This Girl Can - supporting women to get active
- the future of...
- create and maintain good sleep habits

We hope you enjoy this first edition for the year. As always, we encourage you to take the time to prioritise your mental health and wellbeing, through self-care and taking time to incorporate the valuable resources and initiatives into your daily routine.

Stay well.

Making time for you

Taking some 'me time' is important. It also helps strengthen your mental wellbeing.

Your mental wellbeing is the unique way that you handle your emotions, respond to stress

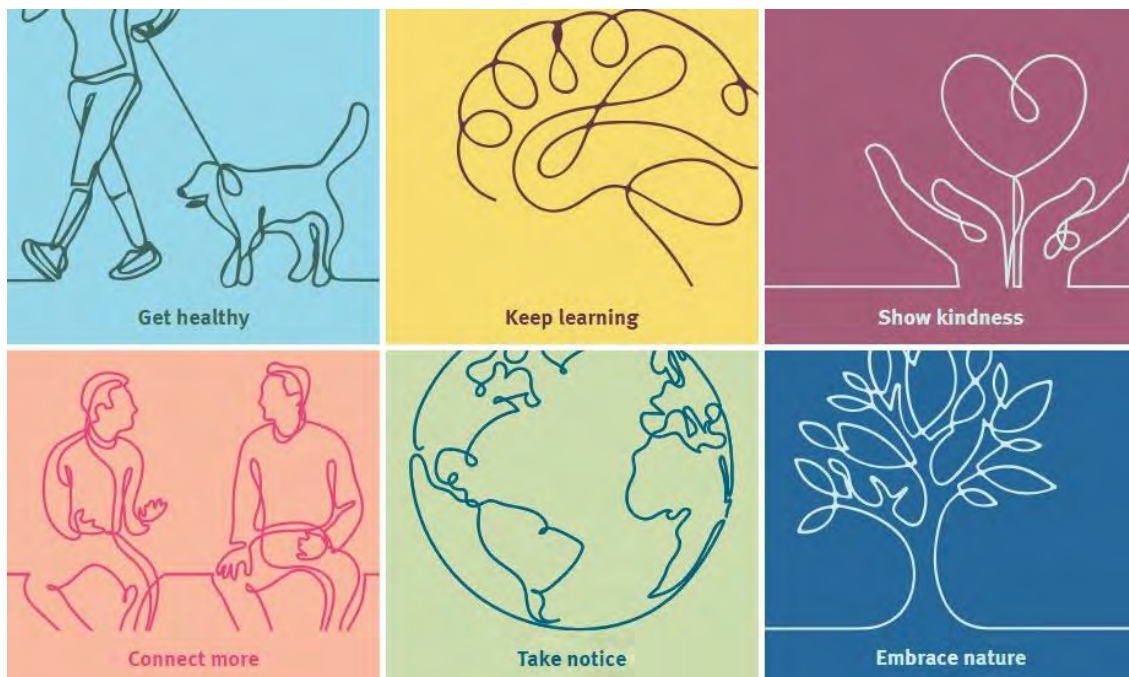
get the most out of life. It doesn't matter who you are, where you live or how you're feeling - taking a few moments for yourself each day will help you be a happier and more resilient you.

A mental health and wellbeing campaign, called 'Dear Mind', has been launched by Queensland Health and encourages adults to prioritise their mental wellbeing and create a healthier relationship with their mind through simple, daily activities.

Based on six building blocks to strong mental health, the campaign encourages you to improve your mental health by undertaking activities in the following areas:

- **Get healthy.** Be active, eat well and get enough sleep.
- **Keep learning.** Challenge your mind and seek out new things.
- **Show kindness.** Give back, show gratitude and bring joy to others' lives.
- **Connect more.** Develop relationships, stay connected and care for each other.
- **Take notice.** Be mindful. Stay in the moment. Experience the world around you.
- **Embrace nature.** Step outside, connect with the nature and take care of the planet.

[Learn more about the 'Dear Mind' campaign and incorporating simple activities into your day.](#)



Lunch and learn sessions

The 'lunch and learn' sessions are designed to provide staff with information and assistance in a range of areas that support their personal and professional needs and interests.

In 2020, over 1,000 staff attended the 22 'lunch and learn' sessions that were held - with the most popular topics covering resilience, movement, diet and sleep.

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[Register here for any 'lunch and learn' session.](#) A Microsoft Teams link will be sent following registration.

Upcoming sessions include:

26 March 2021 12:30pm - 1:15pm	Fast, fuss-free meals and snacks for a healthy lifestyle <i>Murray Lewis, TAFE Teacher</i>
28 April 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm	The neuroscience of compassion and how it underpins our ability to thrive <i>Dr Mary Hollick, FedUni Associate, Federation Business School and Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i>
13 May 2021 12:30pm – 1:15pm	The science behind mindfulness and wellbeing <i>Dr Lynne Reeder, Adjunct Research Fellow, School of Science, Psychology and Sport, and National Director of the Australian Compassion Council (ACC)</i>

Missed one of the 'lunch and learn' sessions, or simply want to refresh your memory? You can access the recordings via the 'lunch and learn' section on the Human Resources [Health and wellbeing page](#).



This Girl Can - supporting women to get active

Newly-released VicHealth research suggests that during 2020 and the Coronavirus pandemic, women's physical activity levels were more severely impacted than men's - with half of Victorian women exercising less than before Coronavirus and 3 in 4 women stopping sport.

The survey of over 1,500 women found:

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- of women who exercised at home during the pandemic, around 57% used online exercise programs to stay active.
- 40% of women who started exercising at home for the first time have continued to do so.
- major barriers for women getting active at home included juggling childcare responsibilities and being able to prioritise their exercise.

To provide greater support for women to return to exercise or try something for the first time, VicHealth launched 'This Girl Can' week which runs from 22-28 March 2021, with a range of accessible and fun activities.

Last week, the UniSports team and staff hosted representatives from VicHealth and the City of Ballarat at the Mt Helen Health and Sports Precinct to promote this important initiative and provide activities that will support the campaign, and assist in breaking down the psychological and physiological barriers to participating in a fitness routine.

We encourage all staff across our campuses to select from the great resources and activities available, including:

- short on-demand online exercise sessions via the [Get Active @ Home](#) webpage
- [walking basketball and soccer activities at Mt Helen - this Friday, 26 March at 12:00pm](#)
- [City of Ballarat's 'Active Ballarat' website](#)
- [exercises and activities in locations across Victoria](#)
- [VicHealth's official 'This Girl Can' website](#)

Get inspired to get active with This Girl Can.



The future of...

The current circumstances has got us thinking about the future. The State Library Victoria recently launched *'The future of...'*, a series of fortnightly topics that explore the cracks in our systems and how we can all make positive changes in the way we live, learn and play.

In each fortnightly episode, creative thinkers will join award-winning journalist Santilla Chingaibe to discuss their brave and bold future-state ideas, ranging from television to politics.

The pre-recorded series will be streamed on State Library Victoria's website and made available after each event as a video and podcast.

Series videos and podcasts can accessed via the [State Library Victoria's website](#), including recent sessions on:

- [The future of women's safety](#)
- [The future of dining](#)
- [The future of fashion](#)



Create and maintain good sleep habits

When focusing on our wellbeing, sleep should be a priority.

Good sleep is essential to good health. A good night's sleep helps you feel good and be more alert, feeling more energetic and able to concentrate better. Getting enough sleep is one of the most important things you can do for your health and wellbeing and to allow you to enjoy life.

On the flip side, a lack of sleep can cause fatigue, poor concentration and memory, mood disturbances, impaired judgement and reaction time, and poor physical coordination. It can also put you at more risk of accidents and injury. Long term lack of sleep can be associated with increased risk of diabetes and obesity.

While you might not be able to control the factors that interfere with your sleep, you can adopt habits that encourage better sleep.

Simple tips to improve your sleep include:

- **Stick to a sleep schedule.** Aim to go to bed at the same time each night and sleep for no more than eight hours. Consistency will reinforce your body's sleep-wake cycle.
- **Watch what you eat and drink.** Avoid heavy or large meals within a couple of hours before bedtime. Similarly, nicotine, alcohol, and caffeine can each impair your ability to fall asleep or reduce the quality of your sleep.
- **Be physically active.** Regular physical activity, particularly outdoors and preferably in the morning or before the evening meal, can promote better sleep.
- **Things to avoid close to bedtime.** Activities that are stimulating such as moderate exercise, computer games, television, movies, having important discussions, using social media and responding to emails and text messages should be avoided in the hour before bed.

Explore these great resources to learn more:

- [Watch the 'lunch and learn' session 'Identifying and addressing factors that impact our sleep'](#) presented by Professor Gerard Kennedy, School of Science, Psychology and Sport.

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- [For more interesting information about sleep, watch the Ted talk 'A walkthrough stages of sleep'](#) by Matt Walker, Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of California.



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Our mailing address is:

hr@federation.edu.au