



# Jai Rowell MP

Minister for Mental Health  
Assistant Minister for Health

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **VITAL MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING TO BE EXTENDED TO YOUTH WORKERS ACROSS NSW**

Minister for Mental Health Jai Rowell today announced \$250,000 in NSW Government funding to boost the expertise of youth workers across NSW in dealing with mental health issues among young people.

The training, to be coordinated through peak body Mental Health First Aid Australia (MHFA) will provide youth workers, particularly those in rural and regional areas, with the skills and confidence to recognise signs and symptoms of common mental health problems in young people and respond effectively.

“Half of all mental illnesses manifest before the age of 14 and three quarters by the age of 25, so it’s important that youth workers are equipped to recognise and respond to emerging mental health problems,” Mr Rowell said.

“Mental health problems can have a profound impact on the lives of young people , making it difficult for them to connect with family and friends, live healthy lives and reach their potential.

“Youth workers play a critical and pivotal role in helping children and young people make sense of the world around them.”

Mr Rowell was joined by Member for Camden Chris Patterson in making the announcement today at local youth services provider, Camden Community Connections, with Mr Patterson saying the training would provide potentially life-saving skills to youth workers.

“Youth workers perform a vital role in helping our young people face up to all sorts of challenges, so it’s fantastic to see the NSW Government now providing financial assistance to help them undertake mental health training too,” Mr Patterson said.

Managing Director of Youth Action NSW, Katie Acheson was also present for the announcement, and congratulated the NSW Government for extending the training to the state’s youth workers.

“This is an outstanding initiative which will ensure youth workers are equipped with the skills they need to support young people facing mental health issues,” Ms Acheson said.

MHFA Australia is a not-for-profit organisation focused on mental health training and research. It provides evidence-based courses which teach mental health first aid strategies to members of the public.

The training will provide participants with skills in how to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, awareness of a range of treatments available and skills on how to respond to a comprehensive range of mental health crisis situations. More information about the MHFA courses can be found at: [www.mhfa.com.au](http://www.mhfa.com.au).