



# Media Release

8 January 2018

## **beyondblue** welcomes National Education Initiative funding extension

**beyondblue** Chair **Julia Gillard** has welcomed the Commonwealth Government's two-year funding extension for the *beyondblue* National Education Initiative to 30 June 2021.

Today's announcement by Federal Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP, follows the June 2017 grant of \$52.7 million over two years for *beyondblue* to deliver the groundbreaking project.

The National Education Initiative will support early learning and school communities – school principals and teachers, service managers and staff, parents and carers – to support the mental health of Australian children and young people from the day they enter the education system to the end of year 12.

The new initiative is currently in the development and design phase and will be available free to all early learning services and primary and secondary schools later this year. *beyondblue* is leading the initiative with the support of Early Childhood Australia and headspace.

Ms Gillard said the Commonwealth Government's decision to now commit four years of funding to the initiative is a significant contribution to seizing the opportunity to build the most mentally healthy generation of young people we have ever seen.

"Minister Hunt attended *beyondblue*'s December Board Meeting and showed in those discussions a deep knowledge of what is needed in mental health and a personal commitment to change. Today's announcement demonstrates the Minister's action orientated approach to mental health and a much-needed longer-term perspective on funding," Ms Gillard said

"Knowing the Minister is so invested in seeing the National Education Initiative succeed gives *beyondblue* an even greater determination to create a world class initiative for early learning services and schools.

"Knowing we have secured funding to 2021 will give early learning services and schools the confidence to invest time and effort in taking action to build and improve the mental health and wellbeing of their students.

"And we know when children and young people are mentally healthy they do better at school.

"The *beyondblue* National Education Initiative will support busy early learning services and schools to set kids up to thrive, and provide a how-to guide and easy access to training, lesson content and services. We want educators to know what to look out for when kids start to struggle and where to turn for help, and how to look after their own mental health," Ms Gillard said.

Research shows one in seven children in Australia has had a mental health disorder in the past 12 months and half of all mental health issues emerge before the age of 14.

The *beyondblue* National Education Initiative will provide online and on-the-ground information, support and advice on how to promote and maintain good mental health practices among staff and students. It will also help schools to support those experiencing a mental health issue and provide crisis support in the event a secondary school community experiences a suicide.

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Ms Gillard said schools and early learning services can and do play a powerful role in nurturing good mental health and in the prevention and early intervention of mental health issues.

Mental health professionals are available 24/7 at the *beyondblue* Support Service – 1300 22 4636 or via [beyondblue.org.au/get-support](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support) for online chat (3pm-12am ADST) or email responses (within 24 hours).

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