

Thursday, 18 March, 2020

Coastrek hikers tackle Sydney's Northern Beaches in Beyond Blue's biggest community fundraiser

Thousands of hikers will trek along Sydney's coastline on Friday, 19 March, 2021, as part of Beyond Blue's biggest community fundraiser.

Every dollar raised will go towards the Beyond Blue Support Service, which is experiencing record contacts coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sydney Coastrek, one of Australia's most popular hiking challenges, gives participants the choice of completing a 15km, 30km or 60km route along Sydney's stunning Northern Beaches.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman thanked Coastrek organisers and participants for supporting the Beyond Blue Support Service at such an important time.

"The past 12 months have been really tough for many people in Australia, and that's been reflected by the increased demand for our support services," Ms Harman said.

"While it is concerning that the pandemic is affecting people's mental health and wellbeing, it is encouraging to know a growing number of individuals are seeking support and advice on how to cope.

"The amazing support we get from Coastrek participants means we can be there for thousands of people when they need us most.

"It's great to see Sydney's Northern Beaches hosting this year's event, particularly after a tough end to 2020, and it's fabulous to see so many people supporting their mental health and wellbeing by getting out and being active with friends.

"To everyone taking part in Sydney Coastrek, I wish you all the very best and thank you for your support."

Wild Women On Top Coastrek founder Di Westaway said: "We're thrilled to be back creating hiking adventures to help women fall in love with fitness, while raising funds to build a healthier, happier world."

"And we can't wait to let our Coastrekkers go wild on the stunning coast of the Northern Beaches after an extremely challenging year."

Participation in this year's sold-out event was capped at 3000 people to ensure the trek is COVID-safe.

Sydney Coastrek hikers aim to raise \$1.8 million this year for the Beyond Blue Support Service, which will fund free, immediate and confidential counselling for 37,500 people.

The service provided free mental health counselling, advice and referrals to more than 270,000 contacts across Australia in 2020 via phone, email and web chat.

To support an individual or team, visit coastrek.com.au/trekkers

Donations can be made until Sunday 28 March 2021.

ENDS

The Beyond Blue Support Service is available via phone 24/7 on 1300 22 4636 or via beyondblue.org.au/get-support for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).

The new Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Service is available 24/7 at coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au. Its dedicated phone line, staffed by mental health professionals briefed on the pandemic response, is now open on 1800 512 348.