



Media Release

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Beyond Blue and Hawthorn Football Club call on fans to 'play their role'

Beyond Blue and community partner Hawthorn Football Club are encouraging football fans to get involved in the Play Your Role campaign ahead of the 2021 AFL Beyond Blue Cup.

The Hawks take on the Melbourne Demons this Sunday for the Cup as fans enjoy eased restrictions and the opportunity to catch up with mates at the footy.

Fans are encouraged to make an online commitment to support their mates in one of the following ways:

- **Look** out for changes in behaviour that may be a sign a mate might be struggling. They might seem on edge or are less social than usual.
- **Ask** how they are going. Even if they say they're fine, checking in shows you care.
- **Listen** openly and without judgement if a mate says they're not fine.
- **Support** a mate by making sure they know you're there for them and connect them with support if they need it.

Fans will have the opportunity to "make the commitment" to which role they will play prior to the game by visiting www.beyondblue.org.au/playyourrole which will put them in the running to win a Hawthorn jumper signed by the playing group.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said the community partnership with the Hawks continues to spark important conversations as people reconnect with one another face to face.

"Now we're able to gather with friends again to barrack for our team and share in the spectacle of a live match, let's remember to check in and continue the conversation," Ms Harman said.

"Sports like AFL offer a great platform to connect and support others on and off the field, to make mental health a part of everyday conversations, to smash stigma and encourage support-seeking.

"I want to thank the Hawthorn Football Club for their unwavering partnership as we work together to support the community."

Hawthorn CEO Justin Reeves said Hawthorn was proud of the impact the partnership with Beyond Blue has been able to have over a long period of time.

"Hawthorn is proud to once again host the Beyond Blue Cup, playing a valuable role in advocating the importance of creating conversations and remembering to reach out and offer support to those around you," said Reeves.

"Following a year that placed significant challenges on every individual's physical and mental wellbeing, this year's Beyond Blue Cup further highlights the importance of prioritising our mental health and implementing small yet significant strategies to ensure even the hardest of days are easier to tackle.

"There are lots of simple ways we can all play our role and make a difference to those around us."

For more information on how you can play your role and to make your commitment, visit beyondblue.org.au/playyourrole

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).

Contact: media@beyondblue.org.au

Beyond Blue
GPO Box 1883 Melbourne VIC 3001
Beyond Blue Support Service 1300 22 4636
www.beyondblue.org.au

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.