

# SIMPLE TIPS TO MAKE THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH EASIER

## Be someone who can be trusted with sensitive topics.

- Keep the conversation confidential
- Show you have an open mind
- Take your time to really listen
- Keep your word about any agreements you make

## Let go of judgements. Show empathy and understanding.

- Respect their right to tell their story
- Focus on what's best for them, not what you would do in their situation
- Put yourself in their shoes and try to understand their point of view

## Have clear expectations about work to be done.

- Be clear about what you need as a minimum, and by when
- Be understanding and flexible about how this work can be achieved

## Make a time to check back in.

- Show you care and are willing to take the time
- Check everything is okay and safe for them
- Keep the kōrero going

## Choose the right time and place to listen and talk.

- Choose somewhere private to avoid distractions
- Think about going off-site for a chat
- Make sure neither of you have anything urgent to deal with
- Consider any early warning signs e.g. changes to behaviour

## Don't jump to solutions. Use the power of focused listening.

- When someone is talking, try not to think about what you will say next
- Leave space for pauses or silences
- Repeat back what you heard to make sure you understood

## Know where to access further support.

- Remember, you're not a counsellor
- If you feel unsettled or are worried about someone, use a support service:
  - If it's an emergency, call **111**
  - Call Healthline **0800 611 116**
  - Free-call or text a counsellor **1737**

## Lean on your own support networks.

- Take the time to look after yourself
- Have a chat with a supportive manager or peer
- Focus on your feelings and reactions and remember to maintain confidentiality