

# 23 — 29 SEPTEMBER

NĀU TE ROUROU — NĀKU TE ROUROU — KA ORA AI TE IWI

COMMUNITY IS...

WHAT WE CREATE

*together.*



## How to run an event for Mental Health Awareness Week

# MHAW

Mental Health  
Awareness Week

**Kia ora,**

**Want to get your community, whānau, colleagues and friends involved in Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW), but not sure where to start? Ka pai, you've come to the right place!**

This resource is full of tips to help you organise an event in your community this MHAW. By planning an event, you're helping the Mental Health Foundation to raise awareness about the importance of taking care of our mental health and wellbeing, and creating a space for people to come together and celebrate the power of community during the week.

## **Sign up for updates**

If you're not already signed up for updates, be sure to sign up with your email address at [mhaw.nz/register](https://mhaw.nz/register). In the lead up to and during the week we send regular updates to help you plan for MHAW, including resources, stories, events across the motu and more.

## **Theme**

This MHAW, the theme is **Community is... what we create together**. The past few years have been challenging for Aotearoa, with extreme weather events, rising costs, and political divides affecting us all.

We recently commissioned research to understand the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle and other extreme weather events on wellbeing. Over 1,500 people from affected regions revealed a clear theme: **community is the key to getting through tough times**.<sup>1</sup>

Community can look different for everyone – that's the beauty of it. Define, build, and celebrate community this MHAW.



## Resources

We have a range of resources to help you activate your event:

- If you're reading this, it's likely that you have already ordered a resource pack. If you are still yet to order one, head to **shop.mhaw.nz**.
- Download the MHAW guide, poster sets, email signatures, Zoom/Teams backgrounds and lots more! Download your resources at **mhaw.nz**.
- Browse the Mental Health Foundation webstore for additional resources and information: **shop.mentalhealth.org.nz**.

## Activities

Head to **mhaw.nz** to download the below activities and lots more:

- Get to know each other better with our Kōrero Card Set activity.
- Test your knowledge about Mental Health Awareness Week with our MHAW quiz.
- Display our tear-off whakawhetai/gratitude poster and encourage people to share some gratitude with others.
- Print off our colouring template so that people can take a moment for themselves with some mindful colouring.
- Check out the MHAW Guide for daily activity ideas.

You might also like to use the event as an opportunity to raise funds which will support the Mental Health Foundation in uplifting the mental health and wellbeing of everyone in Aotearoa. Set up a fundraiser: **donate.mhaw.nz/fundraise**.

## Promoting your event

Spread the word about your event by:

- Submitting your event to the MHAW 'What's On' calendar. Find this at **mhaw.nz**.
- Using the MHAW digital assets such as social media tiles and email signatures.
- Sharing your event on your own social media profile, or to online community pages, groups or newsletters.
- If you are running a public event, contact your local newspaper or radio station to let them know. It might be that they can add it to their own What's On section, or showcase it as part of a MHAW story.
- When promoting your event, it's helpful to include details such as the location, date, time, contact details and a description of what will happen at your event. You can also include the key messages on the next page to provide people with an overview of MHAW.

## Key messages you can include in your communications

- Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) is on 23–29 September and the theme is ‘Community is... what we create together’.
- The Mental Health Foundation commissioned research to understand the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle and other extreme weather events on wellbeing. Over 1,500 people from affected regions revealed a clear theme: community is the key to getting through tough times.
- Research shows that strong social connections are essential for our life satisfaction and health. Let’s nurture our relationships, to support each other’s wellbeing.
- Community looks different for everyone – that’s the beauty of it. Define, build, and celebrate community this Mental Health Awareness Week.
- Small actions – like introducing yourself to a neighbour, or simply greeting someone on the street, can have a positive ripple effect.
- Head to **mhaw.nz** for stories of community — and discover resources, activities, and tools to connect with your community, or create your own.

Below are a few extra things to consider before you commence your event:

- For some people, MHAW can bring up sadness or distress. If you’ve had a kōrero with someone at the event and you think they need further tautoko, or if you’re worried about yourself, there is help available. Check out our ‘How to have a safe and supportive kōrero’ guide – you may like to print copies to have on display at your event: **[mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/how-to-have-a-safe-and-supportive-korero](https://mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/how-to-have-a-safe-and-supportive-korero)**
- Events like this may prompt people to share their personal lived experience story. To ensure that people are sharing their stories safely, we recommend checking out the ‘How to tell your lived experience story safely’ resource and sharing it with those who might find it helpful: **[mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/how-to-tell-your-lived-experience-story-safely](https://mentalhealth.org.nz/resources/resource/how-to-tell-your-lived-experience-story-safely)**
- Whilst MHAW is about promoting wellbeing and positive mental health, we know that many use the week to shed light on suicide prevention. If this is you, we recommend using our guidelines: **[shop.mentalhealth.org.nz/product/575-your-guide-to-planning-a-safe-suicide-prevention-event?categoryId=64](https://shop.mentalhealth.org.nz/product/575-your-guide-to-planning-a-safe-suicide-prevention-event?categoryId=64)**
- If you or someone you know has immediate safety concerns, please dial 111 or contact your local mental health crisis assessment team. You can find contact details for your local mental health crisis support team, as well as additional support and information here: **[mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines](https://mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines)**