



Key principles for working with young people with complex mental health issues

- Be compassionate
- Listen and validate the young person's current experience
- Take the young person's experience seriously
- Maintain a non-judgemental approach
- Remain calm, respectful and caring
- Engage in open communication
- Be clear, consistent and reliable
- Convey encouragement and hope
- Monitor your own internal reactions
- Do not misattribute extreme distress or impairment as "normal" adolescent difficulties
- Create a welcoming and understanding environment that encourages open discussion about mental health among young people and adults
- Work collaboratively with the young person, parents, guardians, schools and health professionals
- Be aware and supportive of diversity in identity and background, including the indigenous, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), and the LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual) community
- Prioritise the education of the young person, including school attendance and completion of school work
- Support and make reasonable adjustments to assist a young person's return to school after a mental health emergency
- Reinforce the young person's strengths and resilience while implementing trauma-informed care where appropriate