

Supporting healthy relationships during COVID-19

As a trusted, leading provider of relationships services for over 70 years, Relationships Australia continues to support all people in Australia to live with positive and respectful relationships. In light of current circumstances, Relationships Australia is committed and equipped to continue supporting the Australian community, and to meet the inevitable increased demand for services.

Mr Nick Tebbey, Relationships Australia National Executive Officer, says ‘the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic will likely exacerbate and compound existing vulnerabilities and stressors in Australian society. Relationships Australia is working to meet the ongoing needs of Australians at this challenging time’.

Relationships Australia has activated a program of measures to protect clients and staff. Every state and territory has now shifted the majority, and in some cases almost all, of client interactions to alternative modes of service delivery.

Where face-to-face contact cannot be avoided, we are taking additional hygiene and safety precautions, all of which are informed by up-to-date information as provided by the government and health officials.

Given all that Australia has faced in recent times, with drought, bushfires, other natural disasters and now COVID-19, the impacts on people’s relationships may be felt for years to come.

In addition to these stresses and prior to COVID-19, Australia was experiencing a loneliness epidemic. ‘The risk of increased loneliness and social isolation at this time is worrying and while it is vital we adhere to physical distancing rules, we must also prioritise maintaining healthy social connections and relationships as key to good mental and physical health’, says Mr Tebbey.

Relationships Australia remains prepared, and has the ongoing capacity, to support its clients throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and beyond, to ensure that negative effects, on individuals, families and communities, are mitigated and managed.

Relationships Australia acknowledges the Government’s announcement of additional funding to support vital services to families and individuals during this time. We commit to continuing to work with government as the crisis evolves and further evidence of need, and changing service requirements, emerges.