

Not feeling like yourself after the bushfires?

It can help to talk

It's normal to have strong emotional and physical reactions after a significant event. There is no right or wrong way to feel – people can respond to the same event in very different ways.

Some normal responses:

- You might feel anxious, overwhelmed or confused; feel sad, irritable or angry, or numb.
- You might feel unwell – headaches, difficulty sleeping, losing or gaining weight.
- Some people might increase their use of alcohol or drugs. Some may even think of harming themselves.

Simple strategies can help, like:



Getting
enough sleep



Regular
exercise



Talking to
family and friends



Finding time to
do something you
enjoy each day



Talking to
a professional

Talking to a professional can help you process your reactions and develop healthy coping strategies.

If you want some more support, if people you know are worried about you, or if you're still feeling unsettled even after a few weeks – it is a good idea to talk to someone. **Help is available.**

What help is available in the Shoalhaven?

Get help through your local Recovery Support Service (financial, practical, emotional)

If you have been impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires and need emotional, personal or practical support, the recovery support service for the Shoalhaven, Barnardos Australia can help.

Your own personal, support worker can connect you with mental health support, counselling, disaster assistance, grants, other services and community resources. They can walk with you as you address the complex challenges and issues during your recovery journey.

You do not need a referral to access this service – simply reach out via phone or email to connect with the Barnardos Australia team.

Call **4275 8547**

Email **shoalhavenrecovery@barnardos.org.au**

What help is available in the Shoalhaven?


Free counselling sessions

Counselling can help you process powerful emotions such as grief or anger, deal with immediate causes of stress and anxiety, manage relationships, and identify options when making decisions.


COORDINARE – the South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network funds the following services in the Shoalhaven. You can contact one of the providers directly to book in:

-  CatholicCare Bushfire Recovery Counselling. Call **1800 068 698**
-  Grand Pacific Health Bushfire Recovery. Call **1800 228 987**
-  Headspace Nowra (for young people aged 12 – 25). Call **4446 7300**
-  Connect for Kids, Royal Far West (for children 0-15 years). A doctor's referral is required to access this video link service. Call **8966 8500**

Anglicare also provide free bushfire support counselling for children (5 years and up), young people and their families.

-  Call **1300 651 728**

NSW Health Shoalhaven Bushfire Recovery Clinicians

-  Available Monday - Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm for one-off conversations, advice, referrals and ongoing support. Call **4424 7888**

Other help

You can call the **NSW Mental Health Line** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) for professional help, advice and referrals to local mental health services.

-  Call **1800 011 511**






An eligible psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker or doctor can provide up to 10 Medicare-rebated sessions of psychological therapy (face to face or via telehealth).

-  Call **4275 8547**

Local places that can help connect you with support for your emotional and mental wellbeing:

-  Shoalhaven Council Bushfire Recovery Customer Service are here to help and connect you the support you need. Call **4429 5888** Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm
-  Your local doctor
-  Your Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation:
 - Waminda - the South Coast Women's Health & Welfare Aboriginal Corporation. Call **4421 7400**
 - South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation (SCMSAC) **1800 215 099** or **4448 0200**
-  Your Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) coordinator. Call **6363 8444**

Online and phone services

-  Lifeline's Bushfire Recovery Crisis line supports people who have been affected by the bushfires through free and confidential support from a trained counsellor. Call **13 HELP (13 43 57)**.
-  Kids Helpline offers free and confidential support for people aged 5 – 25, anytime and for any reason, Kids helpline also provides support and resources online for kids, teens, young adults, parents and carers, and schools and teachers at www.kidshelpline.com.au. Call **1800 55 1800**.
-  The Suicide Call Back Service provides free telephone, video and online counselling for anyone who is affected by suicide (including people who are feeling suicidal or are worried about someone who might be). Call **1300 659 467**.
-  Visit www.headtohealth.gov.au for online support and resources, from some of Australia's most trusted mental health organisations. This includes apps, online programs, online forums and phone services.
-  Red Cross provides mental health support services and programs and supports the wellbeing of young people. Call **1800 733 276 (1800 RED CROSS)**. Visit www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis

More information

Visit www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au

for more information about the range of support on offer if you have been affected by the bushfires.